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# DICTIONARY OF THE MODERN POLITICS OF SOUTHEAST ASIA

FIFTH EDITION

JOSEPH CHINYONG LIOW



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*Joseph Chinyong Liow*

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## Introduction

Southeast Asia has been both blessed and cursed by its geography. Located at the historical crossroads of great Sinic and Indic civilizations, the cultures of the region have developed a rich and deep diversity through centuries of interaction and exchange with external forces. At the same time, its geographical location has meant that the region also often finds itself inadvertently and reluctantly an arena of external power competition and rivalry. Indeed, this is a script that has played out over much of its modern international history.

Since the closing stages of the Second World War, when it was a major theatre of operation and military command for Allied forces as they fought to dispossess Japan of its wartime gains, Southeast Asia has gone through a number of transformations. From the Pacific Theatre of World War II, the region was thrust into the era of the Cold War where global superpower rivalry complicated the decolonization process in Southeast Asia. The most profound and devastating example of this was undoubtedly Vietnam, one of the two 'hot' wars that erupted during the Cold War in Asia, but the reality was also that communist insurrections afflicted just about every Southeast Asian state. Confronted with the centrifugal forces generated by external powers, regional coherence and autonomy grew to become a matter of strategic urgency that shaped efforts at regionalism, foremost being the creation of ASEAN, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. From rather inauspicious beginnings in 1967, ASEAN grew in confidence as it developed and refined a corporate culture of close consultation and cooperation which underpinned the gradual expansion of the collective influence of its member states. When Vietnam was accepted into membership in 1995, it set in motion an expansion process which saw ASEAN grow to encompass the ten states of the region. This period also witnessed the economies of Southeast Asia register remarkable growth rates based on export-led growth and a steady expansion of foreign

direct investments attracted to the stability of the region. At the same time, since the end of the Cold War new transnational challenges in the form of economic adversity, terrorism, and public health crises have emerged to further threaten the stability of the region and test the resolve of its states to work together. Today, it is the accelerating downturn in Sino-US relations that casts a long and foreboding shadow over Southeast Asia, giving new urgency to the region's struggle for autonomy.

A major characteristic of Southeast Asia is the diversity of not just its cultures, but its political systems. With a combined population of close to 675 million today, Southeast Asia comprises governments with parliamentary systems of varying kinds, constitutional monarchies, Leninist and communist states, military rule, and a ruling monarchy. Resistance to democratization, justified in the name of economic development and social order, had long been a feature in many states in the region, although circumstances contrived to compel the liberalization of political systems. These include economic duress (such as with the Asian Financial Crisis of 1997–8), explosion of the reach of social media, emergence of more politically socialized and engaged youth, and authoritarian overreach as well. The Philippines led the way with its People Power movement in 1986, followed by Indonesia which experienced a dramatic change almost overnight in 1998 from the authoritarianism of Suharto's New Order to a multiparty democracy. Growing pressures for liberalization continue to gather pace. In the 2010s, Malaysia witnessed a series of mass demonstrations under the banner of *Bersih*. In Thailand, protest politics have dominated the landscape since the 2006 coup that deposed Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra. Breaking the mould, in Myanmar it was not pressure from mass movements but decisions taken within the inner sanctum of the ruling junta that set the country on a precarious road of democratization in 2010.

## 2 Introduction

The past few years have also been striking in terms of political change that have gripped some regional states. For example, 9 May 2018 marked a monumental moment in Malaysian history. At the country's 14th general election held on that day, the Malaysian opposition reached their highwater mark and unseated UMNO and the *Barisan Nasional*, which had ruled Malaysia since independence in 1957. Yet the euphoria of that historic episode would pass all too quickly as the successor *Pakatan Harapan* government would come undone by internal discord and distrust, leading to its loss of power barely two years into its term. Since then, Malaysian politics has been mired in turbulence and uncertainty, and on 20 August 2021, UMNO found itself back in the seat of power. On 1 February 2021, tanks rolled into the streets of Yangon and other major cities in Myanmar, bringing an end to a decade-long tryst with democracy. Elections in Thailand, held in 2019, also unveiled telling results. Though the polls saw the junta-linked *Palang Pracharat* Party predictably ushered into power via coalition, it was the *Pheu Thai* Party, the latest manifestation of populist former prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra's political support base, that emerged with the single largest parliamentary block. Indeed, despite two recent coups – 2006 and 2014 – that were mounted to remove them from power, political parties linked to Thaksin continue to leave their mark on the political landscape. Not as dramatic, elections in Singapore nevertheless witnessed an erosion of popular support for the dominant People's Action Party as the opposition gained ground in Parliament, symbolically marked by the appointment of the first *de jure* leader of the opposition in the history of the country's parliamentary system. Needless to say, there have been patterns of continuity as well, at least on the face of it. Elections in Cambodia in 2018 and Indonesia in 2019, and party congresses in Vietnam and Laos in 2021, either returned or appointed familiar faces to power. Despite this continuity, in Indonesia, President Joko Widodo is halfway into his final term and is not eligible for re-election, and discussions on leadership succession are also hastening

in Cambodia and Brunei, where Sultan Hasanal Bolkiah has been enthroned since 1967. In Vietnam, Nguyen Phu Trong's health has prompted speculation about possible succession before completion of an unprecedented third term as party secretary, in the event a successor acceptable to all factions within the party can be found.

Since 1995, the *Dictionary of the Modern Politics of Southeast Asia* has attempted to map, capture, and illuminate the contours of domestic and international politics in the region. When the first edition was published that year, authored by the late Michael Leifer, its main preoccupation was to identify and analyse the key players and institutions that emerged, and events that transpired, as the region came of age during the era of the Cold War. Subsequently two revised editions, published in 1996 and 2001, added to the wealth of information as events unfolded. I had the honour of building on Michael Leifer's monumental effort and authored the fourth edition, published in 2015, that took the story of Southeast Asia into the 21st century. To say that much has changed in Southeast Asia in the six years since 2015 is to state the obvious. Be that as it may, I believe it is a truism that warrants contemplation, if only because the significance and consequences of some of these developments will likely shape regional politics for years to come. To that end, this volume contains more than 600 entries including revised and updated surveys of the original ten states of Southeast Asia, and Timor-Leste as well. Several hundred entries have also been substantially revised and updated, and more than a hundred new entries have been added. Readers will also see that several entries have been retained for their historical significance and continued salience in the broader context of the region's unfolding political history.

The intent here is not to provide an exhaustive list. Indeed, that would be an impossible task given the depth, richness, and complexity of this region, let alone its relations with external parties. Rather, the entries have been chosen to give a flavour of the personalities, institutions, and events that have shaped – and continue to shape – the contemporary history and politics

of Southeast Asia. Apart from providing a quick reference, this *Dictionary* also provides a curated bibliography of scholarship on all the countries of Southeast Asia for readers who desire to delve deeper into selected topics or countries. A project of this nature obviously encounters the proverbial 'shifting goalposts' conundrum as it seeks to be as up to date and relevant as possible. To that end, this fifth edition takes the discussion up to the end of August 2021.

I wish to acknowledge Dorothea Schaefer at Taylor and Francis for encouraging me to take on this fifth edition, and Alexandra de Brauw for her support and assistance. Finally, my deepest gratitude is reserved for my wife, Ai Vee, and my children, Euan and Megan.

Joseph Chinyong Liow  
Singapore  
September 2021

## Brunei, Sultanate of

The sultanate of Brunei or *Brunei Darussalam* (Abode of Peace), which is located along the northern coast of Borneo, is the sole ruling monarchy in Southeast Asia. Its head of state and government, Sultan **Hassanal Bolkiah**, has been on the throne since October 1967. In August 1998, he installed his eldest son, Al-Muhtadee Billah, as crown prince. In the 15th and 16th centuries, Brunei exercised suzerainty over much of Borneo (giving its name to the island) and into the south of the Philippines archipelago. Its territorial extent was whittled down considerably over the centuries, while its separate identity was preserved only through British colonial intervention, albeit with further loss of territory. Brunei became a protected state in 1888 and acquired internal self-government only in 1959, with internal security powers transferred in 1971 when Britain gave up an automatic defence guarantee for a consultative defence arrangement. It became fully sovereign in January 1984 when Britain transferred its residual responsibility for foreign affairs. Brunei then comprised two territorial enclaves of some 5,765 square kilometres accessible from one another only by water and surrounded on the landward side by the Malaysian state of Sarawak. Its population is estimated at around 440,000, of whom some 355,000 are Muslim, the majority of whom are ethnic Malays who dominate the political and bureaucratic life of the sultanate. Ethnic Chinese, most of whom lack citizenship, number around 50,000. Non-Malay indigenous people add up to about 10,000, while the balance is made up of expatriates, including skilled professionals from the West and construction and factory workers from other parts of Southeast Asia. The official religion is **Islam**, while the state is represented as a Malay Islamic Monarchy (**Melayu Islam Beraja**) in the interest of sustaining political conservatism. The sultan, by combining religious and royal roles, seeks to contain more radical expressions of Islam, which is viewed as a threat to the established political order. In recent times however, Islam

has come to assume a more prominent place in this traditional Malay kingdom. This trend was underscored in October 2013 when the government announced its intention to extend the authority of its *shari'a* court beyond its traditional confines of family law to the national penal code, a move that came to fruition in February 2014 when an Islamic penal code was implemented formally as part of the initiative to introduce *shari'a* law (see **Shari'a Law**). The sultan announced in May 2019 a moratorium on the death penalty in Brunei, as no offenders had been sent to the gallows over the past two decades, evidently in an effort to head off international criticism that had been gathering pace against the implementation of the hudud penal code as part of *shari'a* law legislation. That same month also saw the sultan return a honorary law degree which was conferred to him by the University of Oxford in 1993, presumably in a pre-emptive response to a petition that was circulating at the time calling for the withdrawal of the doctorate.

Modern Brunei is bound up with the discovery and exploitation of oil and natural gas. Onshore production of oil began in 1929 with the active involvement of the Shell Company, which in time became the joint venture Brunei Shell, in which the government of the sultanate owns a 50 per cent share. Offshore oil production began in 1963 and corresponding natural gas production in 1973, with the involvement of Mitsubishi and with the subsequent engagement of Elf Petroleum. A consortium comprising Fletcher Challenge Energy of New Zealand, Unocol Borneo Utara and the government of Brunei is involved in the biggest offshore drilling programme for a decade. Six operational offshore oil and gas fields account for virtually the whole of the sultanate's great wealth, either directly, or indirectly through overseas investments funded from oil and gas revenues. National reserves have never been disclosed, nor has the great personal wealth of the sultan and other members of the royal family. At

one time, national reserves were estimated at over US\$100 billion but are believed to have been run down dramatically as a result of the collapse, with losses estimated at US\$15 billion, of the country's largest private company, Amedeo Development Corporation, headed by the sultan's youngest brother, Prince Jefri. In March 2000, he was the subject of a civil lawsuit brought by the Brunei government for misappropriating funds from the Brunei Investment Agency (BIA), which he also used to head. The government sought to recover B\$25.8 billion, but the matter was settled out of court in May 2000 with an agreement that all assets acquired with funds derived from the BIA and under the control of Prince Jefri and his family be returned to the agency.

Brunei's economic tribulations came to a head during the peak of economic crisis within Southeast Asia, compounded in its case by the relatively low world oil price. By the turn of the century, that price had recovered significantly to Brunei's advantage. In the past, the huge resources at the disposal of the state, which gave it (at US\$25,000) one of the highest average per capita incomes in the world, enabled the introduction of a unique system of social welfare. Free education and healthcare as well as guaranteed pensions and housing have been provided on a generous basis but have been under review because of changing economic circumstances. Economic planning has concentrated on developing alternative forms of employment to the energy industry and government service in the interest of political stability, but with very limited success. In July 2000, radical economic reforms were announced in an attempt to broaden the revenue base before the depletion of oil and gas reserves which were expected to run out in 25 years. In the last decade and a half, Brunei has vigorously pushed an economic diversification policy and shifted its economic gravity away from overdependence on dwindling oil and gas reserves. Launched in July 2009, the success of Brunei Halal has had a positive spill-over effect by providing business opportunities for local small and medium-sized enterprises while also expanding the size of the regional market by establishing a presence in Singapore, Malaysia,

and Indonesia. In 2017 the population celebrated the golden jubilee of Hassanal Bolkiah's reign with the unveiling of a raft of policy and infrastructure initiatives, culminating in a royal procession that took place on 5 October.

The government of Brunei is literally a family business, with the sultan as prime minister as well as holding the portfolios of finance and defence. One brother, Prince Mohamed Bolkiah, has been foreign minister since January 1984, while Prince Jefri was finance minister until his dismissal in 1998. Speculation remains rife about the rivalry between the three brothers. During British protection, the current sultan's father, the late Sir Omar Ali Saifuddin, was persuaded to introduce a measure of democracy. Elections in September 1962 gave a majority of elective seats to the radical **People's Party** (*Partai Rakyat*) with links to the Indonesia of President **Sukarno**. In December 1962, after the sultan had refused to convene the Legislative Council, the People's Party, led by **A. M. Azahari**, launched a revolt, which was put down through British military intervention from Singapore. Brunei has been ruled by decree ever since, without any reversion to electoral politics and with all political parties effectively proscribed. Moreover, in order to hold off British pressure for democratization, Sultan Sir Omar Ali Saifuddin abdicated in favour of his son, Hassanal Bolkiah, in October 1967, shortly before he was due to graduate from the British Military Academy at Sandhurst. Sir Omar remained a powerful and decisive influence behind the throne until his death in 1986. Following his father's death, Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah sought to throw off the playboy image depicted in western media and to demonstrate a seriousness of political purpose in the absence of political change. Despite the neoconservatism associated with the sultan, expressed in a ban on the public consumption of alcohol in January 1991, social delinquency has grown among a young unemployed sector. The vulnerability of monarchical rule is well understood in royal circles, especially to a military coup arising from social discontent. For that reason, the armed forces, on whom some 10 per cent of the national budget is spent, are well paid and provided for in modern equipment. The officer



## 6 Brunei, Sultanate of

corps is also monitored and personal interests balanced in a way that ensures loyalty. Since the revolt was crushed in 1962, a battalion of British Gurkha Rifles had been deployed in the sultanate on rotation from their brigade headquarters (which until mid-1997 was located in Hong Kong) under a secret exchange of letters, ostensibly in a training role. In addition, the sultanate recruits a further battalion of retired Gurkhas directly from Nepal. These forces serve as a deterrent against any challenge by rebellious elements.

In September 1984, shortly after independence, Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah addressed the General Assembly of the United Nations, maintaining: 'We wish to be left alone and free from foreign intervention'. Brunei had been reluctant to assume full independence from Britain because of an acute sense of vulnerability arising from experience of hostile relations with both Indonesia and Malaysia. At one stage, Brunei had contemplated joining the Federation of Malaysia on its inception in 1963 but decided against political union. The **Brunei Revolt** had served as Indonesia's pretext for its campaign of **Confrontation**, while, during the mid-1970s, Malaysia had sought to destabilize the sultanate in part to consolidate its control in northern Borneo. It was only in the late 1970s that the evident cohesion of **ASEAN** (Association of Southeast Asian Nations), to which Indonesia and Malaysia were strongly committed, encouraged Brunei to assume full independence and place its security in membership of ASEAN, which was openly pledged to uphold the sanctity of national sovereignty. Even then, independence was accomplished in 1979 through a treaty of friendship with Britain, which contained a unique five-year grace period before the transfer of full sovereign status in January 1984. On independence, Brunei joined the Commonwealth and the Organization of the Islamic Conference as well as the United Nations and ASEAN. It also participated in **APEC** from its advent in 1989 and hosted the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting in November 2000, as well as the **ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF)** and the **Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM)** from their respective inceptions in 1993 and 1996. Diplomatic relations have been gradually expanded

beyond Britain, the United States, ASEAN, and other major powers to the Islamic world and the People's Republic of China. In 2005, Brunei joined the Trans-Pacific Strategic Economic Partnership Agreement (TPSEP), which was initiated by Chile, New Zealand, and Singapore. TPSEP would eventually expand to become the **Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP)** in 2011, and later morph into the **Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP)** in 2016. Tensions existed with Malaysia over its **Limbang Claim**: the district of Limbang was incorporated into Sarawak in 1890 after Britain's protectorate had been established. In 2009, Brunei and Malaysia signed a package of arrangements to solve the territorial dispute. Brunei agreed to give up territorial ownership over Sarawak and Limbang, in exchange for oil exploration and development rights in Borneo's offshore waters.

In addition, there are differences with Malaysia over maritime jurisdiction in Brunei Bay and also with China and Vietnam over jurisdiction within that part of the sea space within the Spratly Islands which falls within Brunei's continental shelf. Among its neighbours, Brunei has enjoyed a special relationship with Singapore, with which a common vulnerability over size and location has been shared. The Singapore military undergoes regular training in the Temburong enclave, while military exercises are conducted with Australian forces. Relations have improved significantly with Indonesia, which has assumed a protective regional role, while an underlying coolness remains in the relationship with Malaysia. A residual relationship has been maintained with Britain, which still plays an important role in training and servicing the Royal Brunei Armed Forces. An agreement to deploy the Gurkhas beyond 1998 was concluded between the sultan and Britain's prime minister in London in December 1994, when they also signed a memorandum on defence sales. In addition, limited military links have been established with the United States. In December 2002, the sultan of Brunei paid a visit to Washington. Following the impasse at the ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting in Phnom Penh the previous year, which resulted in the absence of a joint communiqué, in April 2013

Brunei, which had taken over chairmanship of the organization, adroitly steered the Association away from further controversy and managed to secure collective re-commitment to the **Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea** (DOC). Notwithstanding the South China Sea disputes, relations with China have made considerable progress, especially on the back of economic cooperation. China is presently involved in more than a dozen infrastructure projects in Brunei, and the Brunei-China Belt and Road Association was created in 2018 to facilitate cooperation in trade, investments, and cultural exchange. In November that year, President Xi Jinping also made a stop in Brunei en route from the APEC Economic Leaders Meeting in Papua New Guinea. The sultanate took over from Vietnam as ASEAN Chair in 2021, only to be thrust into the forefront in that capacity when the February 2021

military coup in Myanmar removed the civilian government and threatened yet again to undermine the credibility of ASEAN. In the event, together with the ASEAN Secretary-General, Brunei had to carefully shepherd several emergency summits in an effort to corral consensus among member states on how to respond to the coup.

*see also:* APEC; ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) 1994–; Asia–Europe Meeting (ASEM); Azahari, A. M.; Bolkiah, Sultan Hassanah; Brunei Revolt 1962; Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership; Confrontation; Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (ASEAN) 2002; Islam; Limbang Claim; *Melayu Islam Beraja*; People’s Party; *Shari’a* Law; Trans-Pacific Partnership.

## Cambodia, Kingdom of

Cambodia is situated in the central-south of the Indochina peninsula adjoining Thailand, Vietnam, and Laos. It is 181,000 square kilometres in size and has a population of around 14.8 million who mostly adhere to Theravada **Buddhism**. Formerly a great Hindu empire, its culture still plays an important role in the country. The ethnic breakdown of the population shows an overwhelming majority of Khmers, with a minority yet sizeable representation of Vietnamese and Chinese ethnic groups. Due to its geographical location, Cambodia has historically been periodically drawn into conflicts involving warring polities of Vietnam and Thailand. This lasted until 1863, when King Norodom sought protection from France, and Cambodia became a French protectorate.

Under its colonial rule, France restored Cambodia's historical monuments from the Angkor period which helped generate a sense of ethnic and cultural pride among the people. The French retained the institution of the monarchy and ruled Cambodia through the royal family. In 1941 they returned the title of king to the senior branch of the royal family in favour of **Norodom Sihanouk**, then in his late teens. It was assumed that he would be a pliant instrument of colonial rule, then subject to the authority of the government in Vichy. This was a gross miscalculation which failed to take account of his innate ability to exploit the aura of monarchy among a predominantly peasant population which regarded him as semi-divine. Cambodian politics after the end of the Pacific War were marked by factional struggles representing royalist, republican, and revolutionary interests. This development may be traced to the modest opening of the political system by the French on the restoration of their rule following the interregnum of Japanese occupation. King Norodom Sihanouk exploited the aura of monarchy and French failure to restore colonial authority to outmanoeuvre his republican and revolutionary opponents. Through political theatre, he was able to claim the credit for

France conceding independence in November 1953. Once independence had acquired international recognition through the **Geneva Agreements on Indochina** in July 1954, Norodom Sihanouk abdicated the throne in favour of his father Norodom Suramarit, reverting to the title of prince so as to enjoy full political freedom. King Suramarit ruled Cambodia as a populist but ruthless leader in part through the vehicle of **Sangkum Reastre Niyum** (Popular Socialist Community), a mass movement subject to his manipulation. Prince Sihanouk became head of state after the death of his father in April 1960. Prince Sihanouk's commitment to neutrality in foreign policy had served to keep Cambodia out of the Vietnam War until communist use of his country's territory provided a pretext for his republican opponents to oust him when he was visiting the Soviet Union in March 1970. Cambodia then experienced five years of civil war, becoming the **Khmer Republic** under the leadership of Marshal **Lon Nol**. Prince Sihanouk went into exile in Beijing, where he established a united front in opposition to the new regime in Phnom Penh. He was joined in this front by a revolutionary faction led by a close-knit group of Cambodian intellectuals, the **Khmer Rouge**. The overthrow of Prince Sihanouk propelled Vietnam's communists to invade Cambodia to destroy Lon Nol's army and extracted the administration of the eastern part of the country from the government of Phnom Penh, which served to assist the Khmer Rouge to become a formidable military force. Aided by association with Prince Sihanouk, the Khmer Rouge fought their way to power by mid-April 1975 just two weeks before the fall of Saigon. The Khmer Rouge under the leadership of the notorious **Pol Pot** subjected the people of Cambodia to a terrible ordeal in the name of revolutionary idealism between April 1975 and the end of 1978. They sought the total transformation of Cambodian society by murdering its political and religious elite and by driving the inhabitants of the towns into the countryside, where they

were engaged in a primitive and punishing agriculture. The unstable and precarious new state of **Democratic Kampuchea** generated a great deal of internal strife marked by paranoia and treachery, and eventually it fell to an invasion by the Vietnamese on 25 December 1978, who then established the **People's Republic of Kampuchea** in January 1979. Prince Sihanouk, who had returned to Cambodia to experience house arrest, was able to leave the country on a Chinese aircraft and to go on from Beijing to the United Nations in New York to condemn both his jailors and the Vietnamese occupiers.

While the Vietnamese invasion revealed the full extent of the horrors perpetrated by the Khmer Rouge, the new government in Phnom Penh failed to receive full international recognition. As a regional organization with an immediate interest in stability in Indochina, **ASEAN** (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) stood at the forefront of international condemnation of Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia and lobbied extensively for Vietnamese withdrawal at various international forums. Vietnam eventually withdrew in September 1989 following the collapse of the Soviet Union and its own economic failure, abandoning the government in Phnom Penh and leaving behind a fractious society ridden by civil war. After protracted diplomacy, an **International Conference on Cambodia** in Paris concluded an accord in October 1991 whereby the United Nations would assume responsibility for implementing a peace plan tied to general elections in 1993. The **Supreme National Council** was established under Prince Sihanouk's chairmanship as a formal repository of sovereignty which would delegate powers to **UNTAC** (United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia) with a supervisory role in administration and responsibilities for peacekeeping and conducting elections. However, the Khmer Rouge refused to cooperate with UNTAC, charging them with failure to verify the withdrawal of Vietnamese forces, and called for the replacement of the Phnom Penh administration by the **Supreme National Council**. They were prepared to participate in elections only if they would serve to advance their prospect of resuming power. Contending factions with force at their disposal were bent

on abusing the rules of the electoral game in their own interests.

By early 1993, the Paris Agreement appeared to be in serious jeopardy. The Khmer Rouge had called for a boycott of the elections, which they disrupted through acts of violence. Nonetheless, UNTAC went ahead with the elections as scheduled during 23–28 May, which were conducted surprisingly without serious disruption, despite intimidation of opponents by the **Cambodian People's Party (CPP)**. Some 4.6 million voters had been registered, of whom nearly 90 per cent cast their ballots in a poll which the United Nations Security Council judged to have been free and fair. **FUNCINPEC** (National United Front for an Independent, Neutral, Peaceful and Cooperative Cambodia) led by Prince **Norodom Ranariddh** won a narrow plurality with 58 seats in the Constituent Assembly of 120 members. The incumbent government's Cambodian People's Party secured 51, while the Buddhist Liberal Democratic Party obtained ten seats. CPP contested the outcome, threatening territorial secession in eastern provinces; UNTAC stood firm but conceded a provisional coalition government, while the Constituent Assembly set about drafting a new constitution. That constitution, which reinstated the monarchy, was promulgated by Norodom Sihanouk on 24 September 1993. He was then enthroned nearly four decades after he had abdicated the throne. Prince Ranariddh and the former prime minister, **Hun Sen**, became first and second prime ministers respectively in a fragile coalition sustained by a common fear of the Khmer Rouge and of a loss of external assistance. Control of the armed forces and the police remained with CPP, whose dominant position in the rural administration had not been challenged, despite the greater electoral success of FUNCINPEC.

The last UN peacekeepers left the country towards the end of 1993 amidst simmering tensions within and between the component parties of the ruling coalition as well as charges of endemic corruption. Ironically, the Khmer Rouge were unable to benefit from the degeneration of Cambodian politics after the advent of the coalition government and were eventually outlawed by the National Assembly in July

## 10 Cambodia, Kingdom of

1994. Human rights abuses and draconian press laws, on top of the murder and intimidation of journalists marred Cambodia's precarious coalition government. Similarly, members of the coalition government who did not follow the script were harshly dealt with. Finance minister **Sam Rainsy** was dismissed in October 1994 for his persistence against corruption. Rainsy continued his campaign out of office and was stripped of his membership of FUNCINPEC before being expelled from the National Assembly in June 1995 without debate or vote. He would later emerge as a standard bearer of the opposition against the CPP government of Hun Sen. Foreign minister Prince Norodom Sirivudh was imprisoned on a trumped-up charge of attempted assassination after being removed from office. By 1997, the working relationship between Norodom Ranariddh and Hun Sen had broken down, with both sides competing to solicit defections from the Khmer Rouge. One such defection which dealt a major blow to the Khmer Rouge was that of **Ieng Sary**, onetime deputy prime minister of Democratic Kampuchea and Pol Pot's brother-in-law who had been sentenced to death *in absentia* in September 1996. However, he was subsequently granted a royal pardon, a move which elicited criticism from the UN Commission of Human Rights (UNHCR) and paved the way for the formation of the Khmer Rouge Tribunal (KRT) (*see Khmer Rouge Trials*) to try senior leaders of the Khmer Rouge for grave human rights violations including genocide between April 1975 and January 1979. Conservative estimates put the number of deaths during the Khmer Rouge regime at 1.7 million, almost 25 per cent of the population at the time.

In July 1997, while Norodom Ranariddh was out of the country, Hun Sen seized power through a violent coup in Phnom Penh to effectively end the coalition government. Cambodia's bid to join ASEAN towards the end of July 1997 was shelved due to the coup, which had caused embarrassment to ASEAN whose governments decided to postpone Cambodia's entry. Cambodia was admitted into ASEAN only in April 1999, following fresh elections and the formation of a new government in Cambodia. The elections in July 1998, which were

supervised by international monitors, were predictably won by CPP after which Hun Sen assumed the exclusive office of prime minister with Norodom Ranariddh relegated to chair the National Assembly. An ageing and ailing Norodom Sihanouk played a role in brokering an agreement whereby a new coalition government was formed in November 1998, but without any effective sharing of power, which had become concentrated in the hands of Hun Sen. It was clear by this time that the dawn of a new era had arrived, effectively obliterating the remnants of Khmer Rouge influence. Pol Pot died in April 1998 in a remote jungle base, apparently of a heart attack. The final surrender of Khmer Rouge forces took place in December 1998, ending any prospect of a return to a murderous rule, whose legacy casts a continuing shadow over Cambodia. Even so, the KRT, monitored closely by the United Nations, continued the process of formulating the tribunal despite its being fraught with difficulties. The KRT successfully completed its first case in February 2012, giving a life sentence to Duch, who had been in charge of running a notorious prison and was held responsible for some 15,000 deaths. 'Brother Number Two' **Nuon Chea**, second in command to Pol Pot, and **Khieu Samphan**, former head of state, were later sentenced to life imprisonment in November 2018 for crimes against humanity and genocide. Ieng Sary, former foreign minister of the Khmer Rouge regime, was a co-defendant during the same trial but died in 2014 before any verdict on him could be delivered. His wife and fourth co-defendant, former social action minister Ieng Thirith, was deemed mentally unfit for trial and died in 2015. Nuon Chea died in prison in 2019.

In 2003, Cambodia held its third parliamentary elections since the signing of the 1991 Paris Peace Accords. Even with claims of a corrupt electoral process in favour of the incumbent party, CPP did not manage to secure the two-thirds majority vote required to re-elect a prime minister and form a new government. The elections also saw support for FUNCINPEC dwindle while support for the **Sam Rainsy Party**, a liberal party whose vocal and persistent opposition to the ruling government had gained steady

momentum, increased. A new government was finally installed in July 2004 after CPP entered into coalition with FUNCINPEC. Following the impasse of the 2003 parliamentary elections, Hun Sen sought to amend the constitution and do away with the two-thirds requirement in favour of a simple majority. This constitutional amendment was put in place in 2006. Meanwhile, the ailing King of Cambodia, Norodom Sihanouk, finally relinquished his position in 2004, making him one of the longest serving political figures in history. The mercurial Sihanouk spent his final years in China and passed away in Beijing in October 2012. The 2008 parliamentary elections saw 12 parties contending, with CPP winning a clear mandate with 90 out of 123 seats in Parliament. On the other hand, support for FUNCINPEC dwindled considerably, and they managed to retain only one seat in Parliament, while the Sam Rainsy Party saw growing support and came in second to CPP with 26. The story at the 2013 election, however, was markedly different. Spurred on by growing urban disenchantment, high unemployment, persistent land conflicts, the return of opposition figure Sam Rainsy from self-imposed exile (even though he was eventually barred from contesting) and the formation of a new coalition in the form of the **Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP)**, opposition forces tapped into wellsprings of discontent and combined as CNRP to limit CPP to 68 seats on the way to winning 55 seats themselves. This considerable reduction in support, which amounted to the loss of a two-thirds parliamentary majority, was unprecedented given how CPP had grown its majority since competitive elections were reintroduced in 1993. In the event, CNRP refused to accept the result, alleging widespread electoral fraud, and subsequently boycotted Parliament and called for fresh elections. In December 2013, anti-government protests erupted as tens of thousands took to the streets in a clear demonstration of widespread discontent with the personalized rule of Hun Sen. The government retaliated with a crackdown on protestors, and in April 2014 Cambodian courts convicted 13 people, purportedly from an opposition organization known as the Khmer National Liberation Front, of treason and plotting to overthrow the

government and sentenced them to up to nine years' imprisonment. The move to circumscribe political opposition saw **Khem Sokha** removed as vice-president of the National Assembly for criticizing the government over social media and was later charged, convicted, and sentenced *in absentia* to five years' imprisonment in September 2016 for an extramarital affair, while Sam Rainsy was charged and convicted of defamation, for which he was to serve a two-year sentence. In the event, Sam Rainsy fled into exile in France in December 2015. Khem Sokha was arrested on 5 September 2017, charged with treason for allegedly colluding with the United States, convicted, and placed under house arrest. Five-year bans were imposed on another 118 senior CNRP politicians for a range of offences. The political decapitation of CNRP culminated in its dissolution, which happened by way of a constitutional court decision based on amendments to laws that expanded the government's powers to dissolve political organizations and based on allegations of a plot to overthrow the government, on 17 November 2017. This paved the way for CPP to sweep the 2018 election, which it did by securing 77 per cent of valid votes and all 125 National Assembly seats, propelled by strong economic growth. Khem Sokha was released in November 2019 and was scheduled to stand trial again in 2020, but the onset of the **Covid-19** pandemic led to its postponement. On 1 March 2021, Sam Rainsy was sentenced *in absentia* to 25 years' imprisonment for a purported role in an alleged plot to overthrow the government.

After October 1993, despite persistent tensions with immediate neighbours Thailand and Vietnam, Cambodia sought regional integration through engagement with **ASEAN**. It signed the Association's **Treaty of Amity and Cooperation** in 1995, and was expected to join ASEAN towards the end of July 1997 together with Myanmar and Laos at a meeting of foreign ministers commemorating the 30th anniversary of its formation. Membership was attained only in April 1999 after fresh elections and a new government in Cambodia. Cambodia's chairmanship of ASEAN in 2012 was marked by controversy over brewing tensions in the **South China Sea** involving China

## 12 Cambodia, Kingdom of

and the Philippines. At the July 2012 ministerial meeting in Phnom Penh, differences between Cambodia on the one hand and the Philippines and Vietnam on the other over the issue of a reference to the **Scarborough Shoal dispute** resulted in the inability of ASEAN to agree on a joint communiqué for the first time in the Association's history. The imbroglio drew attention to China's growing influence in Southeast Asia, in particular over regional states which are heavily reliant on Chinese economic support. It cast a particularly harsh light on the deepening diplomatic and economic ties between China and Cambodia, which has gravitated away from their traditional ally in Hanoi, to an extent bordering on dependency by way of Chinese loans and investments that have flooded the country's economy. Significantly, Chinese support for Cambodia has not been confined to the realm of commerce. Military aid and training from China to Cambodia has increased substantively in recent years, and bilateral exercises, termed *Dragon Gold*, have become a feature of defence relations. For his part, Prime Minister Hun Sen has been unapologetic in promoting the Chinese position on the South China Sea disputes that set Cambodia at odds with its ASEAN counterparts. Differences between Hun Sen and his ASEAN counterparts surfaced again in January 2022 when, having taken over chairmanship of ASEAN, the Cambodian prime

minister made a visit to Myanmar and was received by the military junta that had taken over power via a military coup a year earlier. This is not to say that China's growing clout in Cambodia has been welcomed in all segments of Cambodian society. Cambodian workers have persistently complained against Chinese firms about poor working conditions and ill treatment, community leaders have protested against environmental degradation caused by Chinese-funded projects, and consumers have railed against price increases which they attribute to the presence of Chinese in the country.

see *also*: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Buddhism; Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP); Cambodian People's Party (CPP); Covid-19; Democratic Kampuchea; FUNCINPEC; Geneva Agreements on Indochina 1954; Ieng Sary; International Conference on Cambodia, Paris 1991; Khem Sokha; Khieu Samphan; Khmer Republic; Khmer Rouge; Khmer Rouge Trials; Hun Sen; Lon Nol; Pol Pot; Ranariddh, Prince Norodom; Sam Rainsy; Sam Rainsy Party; *Sangkum Reastre Niyum*; Scarborough Shoal Dispute; Sihanouk, King Norodom; South China Sea; Supreme National Council; Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (ASEAN) 1976; UNTAC (United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia).

## Indonesia, Republic of

The Republic of Indonesia is the largest and most populous country in Southeast Asia. It comprises a distended archipelago of some 18,000 islands that extend from south of the Indian sub-continent to north of Australia; the most sizeable and important of these are Sumatra, Java (on which is located the capital Jakarta), the major portion of Kalimantan (Borneo), Sulawesi (Celebes), and West Papua Province (known as West Irian Jaya until 2007). They comprise a land area of almost two million square kilometres. Its population of around 273 million is the fourth largest after the People's Republic of China, India, and the United States. Some 90 per cent of its citizens profess an adherence to Islam and constitute statistically the largest Muslim community in the world. The degree of religious observance varies, however, and orthodox Islamic practice is diluted and combined regionally with underlying Hindu-Buddhist and animist traditions, although recent decades have witnessed the popularization of more fundamentalist strains through an uptick of Saudi funding to Islamic schools. Islam has been denied a prerogative place in political life through a state philosophy, **Pancasila**, which was enunciated before independence by the country's first president, **Sukarno**. *Pancasila* enjoins all Indonesians to believe in a single deity but permits them to worship any god of their choice. This philosophy was introduced initially in the interests of religious and cultural tolerance but was then exploited to serve the cause of political demobilization during the authoritarian rule of the country's second president, and former general, **Suharto**. An Islamic revival encouraged from the late 1980s for political advantage found expression in sectarian conflict between Muslims and the country's Christian minority from the late 1990s attendant on an acute economic adversity, which paved the way for the resignation of President Suharto in May 1998. A transitional rule under his constitutional successor, Vice-President **B. J. Habibie**, enabled a return

to democratic practice, which was followed by the election in October 1999 of **Abdurrahman Wahid** as Indonesia's fourth president. Since then, three other presidents have been elected into office through open democratic presidential elections, with two of them having also been re-elected to office for a second term. In 2014, **Joko Widodo**, who goes by the moniker 'Jokowi', assumed high office as the first Indonesian president without the familiar political or military connections, and was re-elected in 2019.

Indonesia is a unitary republic without historical antecedent within its contemporary territorial bounds, which were established by a waxing Dutch colonial rule from the end of the 16th century. Independence was proclaimed by Sukarno and Vice-President **Mohammad Hatta** on 17 August 1945 shortly after the end of a cruel Japanese occupation from March 1942. Full international status was attained only on 27 December 1949 after a bitter national revolutionary struggle against the returning colonial Dutch, who refused to transfer the western half of the island of New Guinea. In October 1965 an abortive coup (*see Gestapu*) attributed to the Communist Party of Indonesia paved the way to a fundamental change in Indonesia's political system and priorities. The circumstances of the coup discredited Sukarno and enabled the armed forces led by Major General Suharto with Muslim support to take violent measures against the communists and their alleged supporters. On 11 March 1966 Sukarno was obliged to transfer executive authority to Suharto, promoted to lieutenant general, who became acting president in the following year. Confirmed as president in March 1968, Suharto held office continuously with military support for over three decades. He secured re-election for a seventh successive term in March 1998 but was obliged to give up office within two months against a background of social and political unrest, known in the Indonesian political lexicon as *era reformasi*, generated by



economic collapse. For the most part, however, his authoritarian rule had provided a stable background for notable economic development, which rested initially on the exploitation of natural resources, especially oil and natural gas. Foreign direct investment enabled that process of development to extend to manufacturing for export, generating high levels of growth. However, with accelerated development came a culture of corruption, to the advantage, in particular, of Suharto's close family and business circle. The attendant structural weaknesses in the economy were exposed with the onset of devastating economic crises from the late 1990s. Nevertheless, Suharto's clout went beyond his years in office. Hutomo Putra Mandal, better known as Tommy Suharto, the youngest son of the former president, was jailed for 15 years for the assassination of a Supreme Court judge who had convicted him of graft. However, he was released from jail on 30 October 2006, serving just five years. The Indonesian government's persistent attempts to charge Suharto with graft were never successful, and the charges were formally dropped with his demise on 27 January 2008.

Under President Suharto's proclaimed **New Order**, political participation was strictly controlled, while the media were subject to draconian controls. Parliamentary elections were resumed in 1971, but political parties were compelled to merge into two groupings entitled to canvass popular support only every five years. The government revived an association of functional groups, **Golkar**, to serve as its electoral vehicle. *Golkar* secured approximately two-thirds of the votes cast in parliamentary elections between 1971 and 1997 but lost support dramatically after the political downfall of Suharto. Members of Parliament and political nominees, including representatives of the armed forces, made up the constitutionally supreme **People's Consultative Assembly** of Indonesia (*Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat Republik Indonesia*, MPR), which re-elected Suharto to a seventh consecutive five-year term of office in March 1998. Suharto had previously assumed the title of 'father of development' in a demonstration of his claim to legitimacy. By that juncture, however, Indonesia was deep in

economic crisis. Suharto appeared determined to soldier on to the end of his term and had secured the appointment of B. J. Habibie as vice-president on the assumption that he would be a politically unwelcome successor. In the event, a reluctance to meet the economic priorities of the International Monetary Fund served to accelerate the process of economic crisis, which gave rise to serious social and political unrest in Jakarta, including anti-Chinese violence. The catalyst in generating political change was a student-led activism, which was met by force from the security services, killing four students at Trisakti University in Jakarta. It was in this turbulent context that Suharto found himself unable to reconstitute his cabinet, and without the support of the armed forces' leadership, he decided to resign on 21 May 1998. The end of his personalized quasi-monarchical rule left a political vacuum distinguished by the absence of viable national economic and legal institutions. He was succeeded by Vice-President Habibie, who restored the practice of democracy but attempted to use it to secure a fresh term of office. In January 1999, President Habibie, in an unprecedented move, suggested the possibility of a referendum on independence for East Timor. This triggered a chain of events that culminated in international intervention and eventually, East Timorese independence on 20 May 2002.

In the immediate post-Suharto dispensation, there was a proliferation of political parties. Forty-eight of them contested parliamentary elections in June 1999. The most successful was **Partai Demokrasi Indonesia-Perjuangan** (Democratic Party of Indonesia-Struggle, PDI-P), which secured 154 of 462 elective seats. It was led by **Megawati Sukarnoputri**, the daughter of the republic's first president who would herself later be conveyed into office as the fifth president of Indonesia. PDI (Democratic Party of Indonesia) was one of three legal parties during Suharto's rule, but PDI-P would emerge as its dominant faction. A much diminished and divided *Golkar* came second with 120 seats. In third place with 58 seats, in alliance with smaller parties, was the Islamic **Partai Persatuan Pembangunan** (United Development Party, PPP), another legal party from the

Suharto era. Fifth with 51 seats was the **Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa** (National Awakening Party, PKB), which was new in form but represented the interests of the moderate Islamic **Nahdlatul Ulama** and its leader Abdurrahman Wahid, which had once been a constituent part of the PPP. The ostensibly constitutionalist but modernist-Islamic **Partai Amanat Nasional** (National Mandate Party, PAN) came last among the more successful participants with 35 seats. With the exception of the Islamic **Partai Bulan Bintang** (Crescent Star Party, PBB) with 14 seats, 13 other parties secured six seats or fewer each. Amongst these 13 parties that failed to have an impact on the elections was *Partai Keadilan* (Justice Party, PK) which reconstituted itself as **Partai Keadilan Sejahtera** (Prosperous Justice Party, PKS). PKS eventually became a major player in Indonesian politics when it gained significant electoral ground in the 2004 elections as the best-organized of Indonesia's Islamist parties. The parliamentary elections placed Megawati as front-runner for president. However, she did not command a working majority either in the Parliament or in the MPR. Moreover, an Islamic-based coalition led by Amien Rais of PAN coalesced against her. In the event, Abdurrahman Wahid was elected president on 20 October 1999, defeating Megawati by 373 votes to 313. She was then elected vice-president on the following day in an act of political reconciliation, while Amien Rais became speaker of the MPR.

President Wahid adopted a populist leadership style, marred by a willingness to tolerate acts of intimidation by members of the youth wing of his party against his political detractors. An immediate major challenge for his presidency was the management of sectarian conflict between Muslims and Christians on the Moluccan Island chain, with around 4,000 fatalities, as well as on Sulawesi and the island of Lombok. The **Maluku Violence** that saw a declaration of civil emergency in Ambon city in July 2000 was further exacerbated by the arrival of external militant forces such as **Laskar Jihad**, which turned the conflict into a full-fledged religious war. Religio-political violence was also engulfing Poso in central Sulawesi. The Wahid government was unable to contain the

violence and allowed it to simmer for almost two years. The violence was contained in 2002 only when *Laskar Jihad* was persuaded by its military patrons to unilaterally disband itself immediately after the Bali bombings in October. The early promise of President Wahid's tenure gave way after six months to disillusionment at home and abroad as a result of his erratic style of leadership, which neglected economic priorities, particularly banking reforms and corporate restructuring. The rupiah continued to deteriorate, and inflation was at 10 per cent. In August 2000, he sought to reassert his authority through reconstituting his cabinet at the cost of alienating the majority parties in Parliament as well as his vice-president. However, he failed to impose any effective control over the armed forces beyond the removal of General Wiranto, former armed forces commander and minister of defence. President Wahid also faced immense pressure from the international community because of the deteriorating security situation in East Timor and the ensuing sectarian conflicts. President Wahid's popularity was steadily declining as he failed to address the dire economic situation of the country and the escalation of socio-political and religious conflicts. Consequently, on grounds of incompetence along with accusations of corruption, President Wahid was impeached on 23 July 2001. Megawati Sukarnoputri replaced Abdurrahman Wahid as the fifth president of Indonesia. Megawati was able to bring about a measure of political stability, but her government was dogged by issues of corruption, slow economic growth, separatist conflicts, and escalation of terrorist activity in the country. Indonesia witnessed the deadliest terrorist attack on home soil on 12 October 2002 at the popular tourist resort island of Bali, which killed nearly 200 people. The island was again targeted in October 2005 by terrorists. On 9 November 2008, Imam Samudra, Amrozi Nurhasyim, and Huda Abdul Haq, members of the **Jemaah Islamiyah** (JI) network, were executed for their role in the 2002 Bali bombings. Western targets continued to come under terrorist attack. Car bombs exploded on 5 August 2003 at the Marriott Hotel in Jakarta, and outside the Australian Embassy on 9 September 2004. The

Marriott Hotel in Jakarta was again bombed in a July 2009 twin attack that also included the bombing of the Ritz Carlton Hotel. Indonesian counterterrorism operations, epitomized by the effective *Densus 88*, have managed to control the scourge of terrorism through operations that have led to the arrest and killing of several key terrorist leaders. At the same time, terrorist organizations have managed to survive through a combination of legal incapacities, displayed in the judiciary's inability to outlaw *Jl* until 2008, and metamorphosis, as factions of *Jl* have over the years managed to transform themselves and relocate to other areas of Indonesia. The terrorist threat also underwent a further transformation in 2013 as a new generation of fighters started to associate themselves with the Islamic State of Iraq and as-Sham, *ISIS*. They further introduced a new element to the equation by way of foreign fighters, namely, Indonesian militants who ventured (or tried to) to Iraq and Syria to fight under the *ISIS* banner. In something of a replay of the mobilization in support of the *jihād* in Afghanistan in the 1990s but on a larger scale, it was estimated that at its peak, as many as 600–800 Indonesians, including entire families, were in the Middle East fighting for *ISIS* and other militant organizations. Meanwhile, this connection with *ISIS* also catalysed another wave of terrorist attacks in Indonesia, this time involving the mobilization of women and children in suicide bombings (see **Terrorism in Southeast Asia**).

Much maligned for the passivity of her government, Megawati lost the presidency to the former general, **Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono**, of **Partai Demokrat** (Democrat Party, *PD*) after the 2004 election, and her *PDI-P* remained in opposition. Although Indonesia showed signs of stabilizing both politically and economically by the time Yudhoyono's first term in office drew to a close, residual challenges remained in the form of Islamist vigilantism which found expression in organizations such as **Front Pembela Islam** (Islamic Defenders Front, *FPI*), **Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia** (Indonesian Mujahidin Council, *MMI*) and the Islamic Community Forum (*Forum Umat Islam*, *FUI*). These vigilante movements were well entrenched in Indonesian society through their association

with international Islamist organizations which had local networks, and they became the self-proclaimed voice of disenfranchised Muslims in Indonesia who desired a more muscular approach to the assertion of orthodox Islamic identity. It was pressure from such groups that forced a 2008 decree banning the **Ahmadiyah**, a minority Muslim sect which was portrayed as heretical and deviant by these fundamentalist movements. The decree in many respects made it easier for these movements to sanction violence against *Ahmadiyah* even as they closed down a number of their mosques and disrupted their peaceful gatherings. The Christian community was also not spared periodic violence against them. The moral postulations of these movements were further justified by the state with the passing of the equally controversial anti-pornography bill in October 2008 which was aimed at pleasing certain segments of the Islamist parties and their supporters.

While President Yudhoyono's first term was generally viewed as a success, assessments of his second term were considerably more ambivalent. Yudhoyono was criticized for his inability to take firm decisions on critical issues, most notably on the matter of costly fuel subsidies that were popular but a huge drain on the country's finances, his faltering campaign against corruption, which became starkly evident with a series of high-profile corruption cases involving members of his own *Partai Demokrat*, and his inability to rein in coalition members. After serving two terms as president, Yudhoyono was succeeded in July 2014 by Joko Widodo, who accumulated populist appeal as a humble man of the people and political outsider, and who triumphed on a campaign platform that promised change.

Indonesia's parliamentary elections of 9 April 2014 saw *PDI-P* emerge with the most votes. Even then, its 19 per cent fell short of the 25 per cent required for a party to nominate a presidential candidate of its own. Concomitantly, a coalition was built that included *PKB*, which put in a strong performance to regain some of its previous lustre by securing 9 per cent of the vote, and two smaller parties, the National Democratic Party and *Hanudra*. The coalition nominated popular Jakarta governor

Joko Widodo as their candidate for the July 2014 presidential election and **Yusuf Kalla**, the former vice-president and *Golkar* party chairman, known to be a competent organizer and administrator, as his vice-president. A second coalition emerged, comprising **Gerindra**, *Golkar*, PAN, PKS, and PBB. *Gerindra*'s controversial strongman leader **Prabowo Subianto**, a former military general and former son-in-law and confidante of Suharto, and PAN leader Hatta Rajasa declared their candidacies as president and vice-president on 20 May. The presidential election was cast as a contest between a humble Jakarta governor whose popularity was predicated on his broad appeal and willingness to engage with the grassroots, and a former Suharto-era general known for fiery rhetoric and promises of firm leadership, but who also carried the baggage of alleged past involvement in human rights abuses while serving in the military. In the event, Joko Widodo prevailed and was elected to the presidency in July 2014 amidst unproven allegations by his competitor of electoral fraud. As Indonesia's seventh president, and in keeping with his campaign platform, Joko Widodo prioritized domestic economic reforms, which found expression in his efforts to introduce 'Jokowinomics' in the form of massive investments to improve infrastructure and connectivity across the vast archipelago that covers three time zones. To finance his economic plan, President Widodo grasped the nettle by eliminating billions of dollars allocated as public subsidies for the oil and gas industry, redirecting the funds to finance major projects such as toll roads, housing developments, and airports. The boldness of this move to remove subsidies – his successors had also expressed intent and conviction to do so but more often than not flattered to deceive – won him plaudits, as did his efforts to appeal to the younger generation, which he cultivated through an embrace of social media and broadening the industrial base for digital technology. At the same time, Joko Widodo demonstrated adroitness and, significantly, growing assertiveness in how he consolidated power by expanding his coalition by resolving intra-party disputes, strategically distributing cabinet positions, and distancing himself

from his erstwhile political patron, Megawati Sukarnoputri. Over the course of the second half of his first term, however, bureaucratic inertia contrived to undermine his economic reform programmes while Islamist mobilization threatened to undermine Indonesia's pluralist principles. This rendered him vulnerable to political challenge, which took the form of a reinigorated Prabowo Subianto, as the 2014 losing candidate launched another bid for the presidency in 2019. As his running mate, Joko Widodo eventually chose **Ma'aruf Amin**, a conservative Muslim cleric who previously led *Nahdlatul Ulama*, after his initial choice, Mohammad Mahfud MD, a former cabinet minister and constitutional court judge, was repudiated by his coalition partners. In the event, the choice of a prominent cleric allowed Jokowi to head off Islamist opposition that were also rallying behind a narrative that the president was sidelining indigenous Muslim economic interests in favour of the non-Muslim and Chinese business community. At any rate, Widodo eventually secured a second term at Indonesia's first simultaneous presidential and legislative elections in April 2019, winning 55.5 per cent of the popular vote against a ticket featuring Prabowo and Sandiaga Uno, the wealthy deputy governor of Jakarta, who campaigned on a populist and nationalist platform. The legislative elections saw President Widodo's party, PDI-P, poll just shy of 20 per cent of the popular vote as it emerged the largest party in the newly constituted DPR, *Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat* or **People's Representative Council**. In collaboration with several other parties including *Golkar*, *Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa*, and *Partai Persatuan Pembangunan*, President Widodo commanded 63 per cent of the vote. Although Jokowi was re-elected in 2019, his populist presidency had lost much of its reformist shine by that time. Intriguingly, Jokowi would later appoint Prabowo to his cabinet in October, as defence minister.

A key feature of the evolution of Indonesian politics since the end of the New Order era of authoritarian rule was political reform, decentralization, and the devolution of powers. Although Indonesia is a unitary republic, a law came into effect in January 2001 that gave provincial administrations greater autonomy

in education, health, land rights, and transport policies as well as investment approvals. Further changes were introduced to the political system in August 2002, when the MPR approved an amendment that required all legislators to be elected to office. Henceforth, the MPR could no longer elect the country's president and vice-president. Instead, they would be directly elected with a significant majority of more than half of the popular vote and at least 20 per cent of the vote in half the provinces; otherwise, there would be a second round of elections. This amendment eventually saw Yudhoyono become the sixth president of Indonesia and the first to be directly elected through elections in 2004. Another significant change was the establishment of the **Regional Representative Council** (*Dewan Perwakilan Daerah*, DPD), which held its first elections in 2004, replacing the 200 unelected members of the MPR who represented various provinces, districts, and municipalities across the country.

A separatist challenge in Aceh in northern Sumatra was mitigated with a ceasefire signed in May 2000. In the wake of continued violence, however, martial law was imposed in Aceh in May 2003, putting the brakes on back-channel talks that had at the time begun to take place between the Indonesian government and *Gerakan Aceh Merdeka* (**Aceh Independence Movement**, GAM). At the end of 2004, Aceh was hit by a major calamity when a tsunami caused the death of more than 150,000 Acehnese, with tens of thousands more missing, and the wholesale destruction of coastal villages and towns in Aceh (see **Tsunami 2004**). The humanitarian crisis that followed focused the world's attention on Aceh and compelled both parties to set aside differences in order to cooperate in disaster relief operations. The disaster also created a new set of conditions for negotiations, which after a stuttering reboot culminated in the signing of a memorandum of understanding on 15 August 2005 in Helsinki, which allowed for special autonomy status, amnesty for GAM separatists, and the withdrawal of government troops from the region. In return, GAM undertook to abandon its goal of independence and to disarm. In the following year, a pro-GAM independent candidate and former separatist

leader, **Irwandy Yusuf**, was elected governor of Aceh. **Zaini Abdullah**, co-founder of GAM who was directly involved in the negotiations leading up to Helsinki, succeeded Irwandy Yusuf in 2012. While serving his second five-year term, Irwandy was charged and convicted of corruption in relation to the misuse of the Aceh special autonomous fund in 2018. He was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment and was replaced as governor of Aceh by Nova Iriansyah. A second separatist challenge that continues to bedevil Indonesia is occurring in the eastern province of **Irian Jaya**, where Papuan rebels have been waging a decades-long armed struggle that remains unresolved.

Indonesia returned to the United Nations in September 1966 and reinstated a declaratory policy of non-alignment, while forging close economic and political links with the United States and Japan as well as suspending diplomatic ties with China. General Suharto presided over the end of the **Confrontation** with Malaysia and played a decisive role in cementing regional reconciliation through promoting the formation of **ASEAN** (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) in August 1967. Within Indonesia, ASEAN was conceived as a vehicle for managing regional order to the exclusion of the major powers. Indonesia's central place within ASEAN was registered in June 1976 when its secretariat was located in Jakarta. Another cornerstone of Indonesian foreign policy has been a strategic perspective that centres on an **Archipelago Declaration** proclaimed in December 1957. That declaration asserted the same right of jurisdiction over waters surrounding and intersecting the islands of Indonesia as over its land space. Indonesia's archipelagic status, with prerogative rights, was recognized in the Convention concluded at the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea in 1982, which came into force in 1994. After Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia in December 1978, Indonesia's foreign ministers played leading roles in the diplomacy of the Cambodian conflict. Foreign Minister Ali Alatas served as co-chair of the international conference in Paris in October 1991 which resolved the conflict, although it was the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council that

were instrumental in fashioning the final settlement. In August 1990, after the end of the Cold War, Indonesia restored diplomatic relations with China, which removed an impediment to a long-sought goal of assuming the chair of the Non-Aligned Movement, whose summit was held in Jakarta in September 1992. Indonesia also hosted an APEC summit in Bogor in November 1994. Despite recurrent tensions with the United States over human rights, Indonesia has maintained an informal strategic relationship and has permitted US naval vessels access to the port of Surabaya for repair and supply, although the United States did impose an arms ban on Indonesia between 1999 and 2006 in response to human rights violations by the Indonesian military in East Timor and Irian Jaya.

The post-Cold War relationship with the United States was augmented indirectly in December 1995 through an unprecedented security agreement with Australia that then fell victim to acrimony over East Timor in September 1999, when Indonesia's condition of economic adversity and international pressure obliged President Habibie to tolerate the intervention of a United Nations-sanctioned international force led by Australia to restore order and to transfer responsibility for the territory to the world body in October that year. The deepening of security cooperation with the United States and Australia in the past decade has no doubt been driven foremost by concerns over terrorism and the perceived need to strengthen Indonesia's counterterrorism capabilities. This was particularly so in the early 2000s, when it was not yet clear that Indonesia's security forces could handle the emergent terrorist threat in the form of JI, as well as the various sectarian crises that were spawning across the archipelago. As Indonesia recovered from the turbulence of the immediate post-Suharto era, it shifted its foreign policy orientation towards more proactive leadership within ASEAN. Seizing upon its hosting of the **Ninth ASEAN Summit in Bali** in 2003, Indonesia rolled out the Declaration of ASEAN Concord II, which provided a blueprint for the establishment of an **ASEAN Community** by 2020. Symbolically, this declaration was made 27 years after the

first ASEAN Summit was held, also in Bali, and when the foundational ASEAN documents – ASEAN Concord and the **Treaty of Amity and Cooperation** – were signed. Similar leadership was demonstrated when Indonesia drafted the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific, which was accepted into the regional diplomatic lexicon at the **Bangkok Summit June 2019**.

Under President Yudhoyono, Indonesia pursued a foreign policy that extended beyond its traditional focus on ASEAN. Indonesia was a non-permanent UN Security Council member in 2008–9. By virtue of its size and potential, Indonesia was invited to join the G-20 forum in 2009, the only ASEAN country in the organization. Yudhoyono attempted to promote Indonesia's democratic experience internationally through the Bali Democracy Forum. Indonesia's confidence was demonstrated at a regional level when Indonesia took over the chairmanship of ASEAN in 2011, two years before its turn. At the same time, it has also offered to play a mediation role in a number of conflicts ranging from the **South China Sea** territorial claims and the **Preah Vihear Temple Dispute** to the internal conflicts in Myanmar and in Thailand's southern border provinces. Soon after assuming high office, President Joko Widodo articulated Indonesian aspirations to position the country strategically as a **Global Maritime Fulcrum** straddling the Pacific and Indian oceans, which he proceeded to present at the **East Asia Summit** of 2014 as Indonesian grand strategy. Meanwhile, relations with China have made steady progress since the normalization of ties in 1990. Bilateral ties have mostly been predicated on economic cooperation, which has accelerated along with the rise of China as an economic power. The China-backed Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank disbursed its first loan to an Indonesian project in 2016, and Indonesia has been a major partner for the Belt and Road Initiative. The periodic appearance of Chinese vessels in the waters of the **Natuna Islands** have, however, blighted bilateral relations. In May 2020, Indonesia became the first ASEAN state to make formal reference to the 12 July 2016 UN Arbitral Tribunal ruling on the Philippine case against Chinese claims in the South China Sea when mention was made of it in a *Notes Verbale*

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that the Indonesia Permanent Mission at the UN submitted to the UN Secretary-General. Indonesia assumed the presidency of the G-20 in 2022 amidst the dark cloud of the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

see also: Abdullah, Zaini; Aceh Independence Movement; *Ahmadiyah*; APEC; Archipelago Declaration; ASEAN (Association of South-east Asian Nations) 1967–; ASEAN Community; Bangkok Summit (ASEAN) June 2019; Confrontation; East Asia Summit 2005–; *Front Pembela Islam*; *Gerindra*; Global Maritime Fulcrum; *Golkar*; Habibie, B. J.; Hatta, Mohammad; Irian Jaya; *Jemaah Islamiyah*; Kalla, Yusuf; *Laskar Jihad*; Ma'aruf Amin; *Majelis*

*Mujahideen Indonesia*; Maluku Violence; Megawati Sukarnoputri; *Nahdlatul Ulama*; Natuna Islands; New Order; Bali Summit (ASEAN) 2003; *Pancasila*; *Partai Amanat Nasional*; *Partai Bulan Bintang*; *Partai Demokrasi Indonesia–Perjuangan*; *Partai Demokrat*; *Partai Keadilan Sejahtera*; *Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa*; *Partai Persatuan Pembangunan*; People's Consultative Assembly; People's Representative Council; Prabowo Subianto; Preah Vihear Temple Dispute; Regional Representative Council; Suharto; Sukarno; South China Sea; Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (ASEAN) 1976; Tsunami 2004; Wahid, Abdurrahman; Widodo, Joko; Yudhoyono, Susilo Bambang; Yusuf, Irwandy.

## Laos, People's Democratic Republic of

The People's Democratic Republic of Laos was established on 2 December 1975 in succession to the Kingdom of Laos. The political change was effected by the ruling **Lao People's Revolutionary Party** (LPRP), which had been created in the 1950s as a virtual branch of the Communist Party of Vietnam. The party had assumed power progressively during 1975 as a direct consequence of communist victories in Cambodia and Vietnam in April that year. It has ruled Laos continuously with close reference to the changing priorities of its senior fraternal partner in Hanoi. While maintaining this relationship, the People's Republic of China has had a growing influence on the party's decisions.

Laos is an elongated landlocked state of around 240,000 square kilometres situated in the mainland of Southeast Asia. The country is bounded to the north by the People's Republic of China, to the east by Vietnam, to the south by Cambodia, to the west by Thailand, and minimally to the northeast by Myanmar. Its topography is very mixed, with a great contrast between the fertile valley of the river Mekong to the west and the forested mountainous uplands in the east. A population of some seven million is distinguished by an ethnic diversity, in particular between the lowland Lao with linguistic and cultural affiliations to Thailand, and the upland hill tribes who have kinship links across the eastern border in the upland area of Vietnam. The contemporary configuration of the state owes much to colonial intervention in the late 19th century, with a French protectorate established initially over the kingdom of Luang Prabang in 1893. The imposition and expansion of French colonial dominion prevented the absorption of the several local principalities by the expanding Thai and Vietnamese states. An occupied France was obliged to give up territory west of the Mekong to Thailand in May 1941. Japan inspired the independence of Laos in April 1945, but the protectorate was reinstated at the end of August 1945 after Japan's surrender to the Allied powers.

The restoration of French rule and the establishment of the kingdom of Laos was resisted by a nationalist revolutionary movement which received direction and military support from a patron movement in Vietnam. From the end of the Pacific War, the country was caught up in a wider struggle for Indochina whose prime locus was in Vietnam (*see Indochina Wars*). Civil conflict within the Lao elite over ideology and external patronage attracted intervention from the United States and Thailand as well as from China, the Soviet Union, and Vietnam and was contained only temporarily by the settlement reached in the **Geneva Agreements on Indochina** in July 1954 which confirmed national independence. After a revival of conflict, a further settlement exclusively for Laos was reached in the **Geneva Agreements on Laos** in July 1962 and the country was ostensibly neutralized under a coalition government comprised of warring political factions. Neutralization failed, and the country continued to be a hostage to the fortunes of competing sides in the **Vietnam War**. On 21 February 1973, just weeks after the **Paris Peace Agreements** for Vietnam, hostilities in Laos were ended by the **Vientiane Agreement on the Restoration of Peace and Reconciliation in Laos**. Another coalition government was established in which the balance of advantage shifted inexorably to the communist side until their complete seizure of power in December 1975, when King Savang Vatthana abdicated.

Laos began its socialist era with a commitment to the same doctrinal priorities that inspired the ruling party in Hanoi. Indeed, Laos has moved in both domestic and international policy in parallel with its eastern neighbour, which has served as mentor and patron for over three decades. In July 1977 a **Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation** between Laos and Vietnam affirmed a special relationship in a context of deteriorating Sino-Vietnamese relations which overcame any Laotian desire at the time for greater political autonomy. Laos



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shared Vietnam's experience of miscalculating the pitfalls of an accelerated collectivization of agriculture and nationalization of industry and commerce, and suffered economic distress as a consequence. That distress was aggravated after the onset of the Cambodian conflict in which Laos sided with Vietnam to its cost. Parallel with Vietnam, Laos was obliged from the start of the 1980s to sacrifice ideology and to embark tentatively on market-based economic reforms while striving to maintain single-party rule. Those reforms were pursued vigorously from the mid-1980s concurrently with the ending of the Cold War and Vietnam's loss of Soviet patronage, which had the attendant effect of weakening but not dissolving the special relationship enshrined by treaty. Laos made corresponding adjustments in foreign policy by improving fractured ties with China and Thailand, which have become important economic partners. In July 1992 in Manila, Laos acceded to ASEAN's (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) **Treaty of Amity and Cooperation**, thereby securing observer status at annual meetings of ASEAN's foreign ministers. In July 1993 in Singapore, Phoune Sipaseuth, foreign minister of Laos, took part in the inaugural dinner meeting of the **ASEAN Regional Forum**. Laos became a member of ASEAN in July 1997. However, in October 1999, a meeting in Vientiane of the heads of government of Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam indicated a reversion to a political alignment in opposition to ASEAN that had been forged during the height of the Cambodian conflict. In recent years, Vietnam's influence over Laos has waned somewhat as China's influence has grown, particularly through loans and investments pursued under the Belt and Road Initiative but also with the institution of the **Lancang-Mekong Cooperation** initiative. At the same time foreign institutions, especially development banks, as well as international non-governmental organizations and investment corporations have had increasing influence in the country. Laos applied to join the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1998 and became a member of the WTO in February 2013. In 2004 Laos successfully hosted the ASEAN summit in Vientiane. It chaired ASEAN again in 2016, although for reasons of resource

constraints it could host only one summit instead of two annual summits as mandated by the **ASEAN Charter**. Along with the ASEAN summit, it also hosted the accompanying **East Asia Summit**, ASEAN Regional Forum, and the series of ASEAN meetings with dialogue partners. These meetings also marked the first visit by a sitting US president, Barack Obama, to Laos. In a symbolic gesture of probity, President Obama made the unprecedented move during the visit to acknowledge the devastation of American bombing of Laos during the Vietnam War.

Laos has long ceased to be a battleground in Indochina but has been troubled by a limited revival of insurgency on the part of the **Hmong** minority who were recruited by the American CIA to fight on the anti-communist side in a spill-over from the Vietnam War. By 2010 the insurgency was confined to remnants, and the remaining Hmong refugees in Thailand had been returned to Laos. Laos continues to be governed by apparatchik drawn from the LPRP, which is the sole legal political organization and in which the military exercise a leading role. Following the death of founding leader **Kaysone Phomvihanh**, General **Khamtay Siphandon** took over as head of the party in November 1992. In March 2006 he was succeeded by General **Choummaly Sayasone** as head of the party and later as president in June 2006. General Sisavath Keobounpanh, who took over as prime minister from Khamtay in 1998, was succeeded by **Bounnhang Vorachith** in 2001. In 2006, Bounnhang became vice-president and was replaced by **Bouasone Bouphavanh**, who remained prime minister until December 2010, when he was suddenly replaced by **Thongsing Thammavong**. Bounnhang rose to the position of party secretary in 2016 at the tenth quinquennial party congress while his prodigy, **Thongloun Sisoulith**, the second highest ranking individual in the Politburo, assumed the position of prime minister. Meanwhile, the single-party state system was reinforced when the LPRP secured 144 out of 149 seats in the National Assembly, with the remaining five going to party-approved independent candidates. Significantly, after years of market liberalization, Bounnhang and Thongloun, both

of whom were involved in the socialist revolution of 1975 and are known to have close ties to Vietnam, oversaw a gradual swing back towards socialism in both economic and social policy over the following five years. In 2021, Bounnhang was replaced as party secretary by Thongloun, who was himself succeeded by **Phankham Viphavanh** in the office of prime minister.

The ease with which political succession has repeatedly been accomplished indicates an underlying party control. Only one out of 99 members of the National Assembly elected in December 1997 was not from the ruling party. By the 2006 elections, the assembly had expanded to 115 members, of which two were non-members of the LPRP. In the 2011 elections, the assembly was expanded again to 132 seats, all but four of which were won by LPRP members. Despite that control, Laos is a weak state for which subsistence agriculture remains the primary economic activity. Annual average per capita income is around US\$2,700. Laos was badly hit by the economic crisis that afflicted Southeast Asia at the end of the 1990s, primarily as a result of Thailand's acute difficulties leading to collapse of its currency, the *kip*. In August 1999, Laos' finance minister and the governor of its central bank were dismissed on grounds of mismanaging the country's fiscal and banking policy in terms that suggested an involvement in corruption. Laos' economic conditions have improved since the turn of the century, driven by its tourism industry, including gambling, and exports of textiles, minerals, and hydropower. Agricultural production is also up, stimulated by foreign investment, largely from China, Vietnam, and Thailand. China has shown the greatest increase in investment and its economic influence is expanding. Still, the country is heavily dependent on economic investment for foreign exchange. Laos faces major problems in creating an adequate infrastructure to overcome physical and human resources barriers to development. China has invested heavily in improving infrastructure, especially in the northern portion of the country, as well as the development of hydroelectric power. In October 2019, a severe drought in the Mekong occasioned tension between

Laos and other members of the Mekong River Commission as suspicious eyes were cast in the direction of massive dam projects in Laos, such as the **Xayaburi Dam**, where the damming is expected to have severe ramifications within Laos and downstream of the Mekong on which the economies of mainland Southeast Asian states rely (*see Mekong River Project*). In March 2021, in a move that prompted concern for its over-reliance on its northern neighbour, Laos granted China a 25-year concession to build and operate its main power grid.

Although slow to have an impact, the **Friendship Bridge** linking Vientiane with Thailand, together with several newer bridges across the Mekong, has increased trade, especially through an improved road network linking Laos with China, Thailand, and Vietnam. As Laos becomes increasingly connected with the region, it is becoming a crossroads for trade in mainland Southeast Asia. While the government has gradually opened up and liberalized the economy, it has been reluctant to enact reforms geared towards making it more transparent and accountable. There are also growing concerns about the widening gap between rich and poor, and between rural and urban areas. There is also growing concern about the influx of Chinese migrants as a result of their expanding economic influence.

Laos' ruling party, like that in Vietnam, remains cautious in opening up the country to foreign influences that might pose a threat to its conservative political system. While it has shown signs in recent years of increasing transparency and accountability, it remains singular in its remarkable ability to project a unified front. Though exchanges with China have increased in importance, the Laotian leadership have been careful to make sure their growing relationship with Beijing does not undermine their traditional close political and military relationship with Vietnam, or give reason for suspicion that Laotian foreign policy has genuflected in the direction of Beijing.

*see also:* ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; ASEAN Charter (Charter of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations); ASEAN Regional Forum

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(ARF) 1994–; Bouasone Boupavanh; Bounnhang Vorachith; Choummaly Saysone; East Asia Summit 2005–; Friendship Bridge; Geneva Agreements on Indochina 1954; Geneva Agreements on Laos 1962; Hmong; Indochina Wars; Kaysone Phomvihan; Khamtay Siphandon; Lancang-Mekong Cooperation; Lao People's Revolutionary

Party; Mekong River Project; Paris Peace Agreements 1973; Phankham Viphavanh; Thongsing Thammavong; Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (ASEAN) 1976; Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation 1977; Vientiane Agreement on the Restoration of Peace and Reconciliation in Laos 1973; Vietnam War; Xayaburi Dam.

## Malaysia, Federation of

The Federation of Malaysia was established on 16 September 1963 from former British colonial possessions in Southeast Asia around the core of the Federation of Malaya. It contains a population of 32.5 million within a land area of around 330,000 square kilometres. Comprising the Malay Peninsula and much of northern Borneo, Malaysia shares common land and maritime boundaries with Thailand, Brunei, and Indonesia, and maritime boundaries with Singapore, the Philippines, and Vietnam, some of which are contested. The federal enterprise was designed primarily to protect the political dominance of the indigenous Muslim community of the Malay Peninsula from the economically based challenge of ethnic Chinese of migrant origin. It was intended also to facilitate a smooth process of decolonization. Malay-Muslim political dominance in the federation is symbolized in a constitutional monarchy whose incumbent is drawn, on a rotating five-year basis, from the sultans or rulers of the states of the Malay Peninsula (*see* **Yang di-Pertuan Agong**) and the centrality of **Islam**, the religion of the Malay-Muslim population, in Malaysian society. It has also found practical expression in the commanding role that Malay-based political parties such as **UMNO (United Malays National Organization)** and, more recently, **Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia** or *Bersatu* play in the constellation of Malaysian politics, as well as the distribution of parliamentary seats and cabinet posts.

Malaysia superseded the Federation of Malaya, which had been independent since 31 August 1957. The ambit of the government of Malaya, based in Kuala Lumpur, was extended to the self-governing island of Singapore and two British colonial possessions in northern Borneo – Sarawak and Sabah – located several hundred miles away across the **South China Sea**. The British-protected sultanate of Brunei, also in northern Borneo, had contemplated membership but in the event did not join. Singapore's membership was short-lived. The island

constituent was expelled from the Federation on 9 August 1965. Malaysia was established in a climate of controversy because of objections, from President **Sukarno's** Indonesia in particular, to the extension of Kuala Lumpur's political domain across the South China Sea to a common border in Borneo. That dispute was resolved after Sukarno's downfall in 1966, and Indonesia and Malaysia became founder members of **ASEAN** (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) in 1967. The initiative for extending Malaya into Malaysia came from the prime minister, **Tunku Abdul Rahman**, who viewed the federal undertaking as a way of securing the dominant political position of the Malay community represented by UMNO, which he led. That initiative, first made public in May 1961, had been inspired by apprehension at the prospect of the self-governing island of Singapore, joined to the Malay Peninsula by a causeway, becoming fully independent. Its predominantly Chinese population and the growing influence of the Communist Party of Malaya made Singapore a potential source of political infection. The Malayan government's wish to neutralize Singapore through political encapsulation was tempered by a fear of the consequences of the demographic change for the Malay-Muslim community. To avoid such an outcome, the two Borneo states were included in Malaysia on the facile assumption that their non-Chinese indigenous people, akin to Malays, would help to maintain the right kind of racial and political balance.

The peninsular Malaya model of politics – based on intercommunal coalition government led by its Muslim component – was extended to northern Borneo, although there remains a strong indigenous political spirit which has prevented peninsular political parties from gaining a foothold especially in Sarawak. Concomitantly, attempts to sustain this **Alliance Party** model in a very different racial context provoked recurrent federal-state tensions which have persisted. When Singapore's ruling

**People's Action Party (PAP)** entered peninsular Malaysia elections in 1964 to challenge the Chinese partner of UMNO in the federal coalition cabinet, it laid the ground for expulsion from Malaysia in August 1965. The challenge was construed as masking an ulterior intent to displace UMNO from its leading political role. The sequel took the form of intercommunal violence (the **May 13 Racial Riots**) in Kuala Lumpur in 1969 in the wake of general elections. UMNO had lost support from its communal constituency, while non-Malay opposition parties publicly trumpeted their success at the expense of UMNO's non-Malay coalition partners. A state of emergency was imposed and government placed in the hands of a National Operations Council. When it was lifted, the rules of politics had been revised in the Malay interest. To that end, a **New Economic Policy** was introduced to ensure that a constitutionally founded dominance would be underpinned by corporate economic ownership. Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman, associated with appeasing Chinese interests, was obliged to resign. He was succeeded in September 1970 by his deputy, **Tun Abdul Razak**, who was identified with Malay rural development. From that juncture, Malay political dominance has never been challenged, although non-Malay votes have increasingly been gravitating away from coalitions that are overwhelmingly dominated by Malay parties even as intra-Malay contention has intensified.

Successful economic development with diversification into export-led growth in manufactures in addition to plantation agriculture and extractive industry, including oil and natural gas, has traditionally provided a strong material base for political stability in a plural society. Such stability has been enforced also by authoritarian government, which has curbed the role of independent institutions in providing those political checks and balances associated with parliamentary democracy. Nevertheless, as that political dominance became more entrenched under the leadership of Prime Minister **Mahathir Mohamad** since 1981 during the course of his first term in high office, intra-Malay contention has also become more evident. As Malaysia's longest serving prime minister, Mahathir found himself troubled far more by challenges

based on personal ambition from among his cabinet colleagues than from racial tension. Major internal discord was signalled from February 1986, when the deputy prime minister, **Musa Hitam**, resigned from the government complaining of Mahathir's managerial style. In April 1987 **Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah**, minister for trade and industry, who had been demoted from finance, launched an abortive challenge to Mahathir for the presidency of UMNO at the party's triennial elections. He did so in tandem with Musa Hitam, who failed to retain the office of deputy president. The contest exposed deep factional divisions within UMNO. Those divisions became institutionalized after a challenge in the courts to the credentials of a number of UMNO branches led to the party being declared an unlawful society. After a confrontation between Mahathir and senior members of the judiciary, during which its head was removed from office, UMNO was reconstituted as a new party with the power to screen applications for admission. In May 1988 Tengku Razaleigh registered **Semangat '46** as a new party. Its meaning (Spirit of 1946) was intended to convey direct lineal descent from UMNO, which had been established in that year. The sustained challenge to Mahathir was then mitigated by Musa Hitam's announcement in January 1989 that he was rejoining UMNO; this was possibly prompted by the heart attack suffered by the prime minister, whose health was restored through bypass surgery.

At the October 1990 general election *Semangat '46* entered into an electoral pact with the Islamic opposition party, **Parti Islam Se-Malaysia** or PAS, within a Muslim Unity Front which gave them an overwhelming victory only in the legislature in Tengku Razaleigh's home state of Kelantan, where his nephew was sultan. Nonetheless, UMNO secured more than the two-thirds parliamentary majority required to amend the federal constitution at will. In the event, the *Semangat '46* challenge soon withered on the vine; by October 1995, the party dissolved and, in an act of contrition, its members, including Tengku Razaleigh, returned to UMNO. During this time, Mahathir's political dominance was further asserted when an impetuous act by the sultan of Johor provided the opportunity in

1993 to have the legal immunity of the Malay rulers removed by constitutional amendment and to diminish their political influence. Jockeying for political succession, however, became evident in the run-up to UMNO's general elections in November 1993, during which **Anwar Ibrahim** displaced the deputy prime minister, Ghafar Baba, from the office of deputy president in a generational change reflected also in the team which he carried into the three posts of vice-president. Prime Minister Mahathir was returned unopposed as president of the dominant party, but its activists had indicated their choice of the next prime minister. Mahathir showed no inclination to step aside, setting the stage for a political epic that would play out over the next three decades.

The golden age of Malaysia's economic growth was brought to a halt in 1998, when the country was afflicted by the **Asian Financial Crisis**. In the wake of the downfall of President **Suharto** in May 1998, Mahathir judged that his deputy prime minister and finance minister, Anwar Ibrahim, was making a bid to replace him. Anwar was dismissed from both offices on 2 September 1998 and expelled from UMNO on the following day. He was arrested later in the month and charged with corruption (abuse of power) and sexual misconduct. On his first appearance in court, Anwar's neck and arms were badly bruised and he had a black eye. He was found guilty on four charges of corruption in April 1999 and of a further count of sodomy in August 2000. One reaction to Anwar's arrest, trial, and imprisonment was public disorder in Kuala Lumpur, put down with a heavy hand by security forces. Another was the emergence of a new political entity promoted by Anwar's wife Wan Azizah Ismail, *Parti Keadilan Nasional*, which would later morph into **Parti Keadilan Rakyat** (People's Justice Party, PKR). PKR would draw into its fold a host of hitherto UMNO members who were aligned with Anwar. The first of a string of political sequels to the Anwar affair was the outcome of elections in November 1999, in which BN was returned to federal office with a reduced majority of 148 seats in a legislature expanded to 193. Malay reaction to Anwar's arrest, trial, and imprisonment on charges of corruption and

sexual misconduct provided an opportunity for PAS, the main Malay opposition party, to make considerable gains at UMNO's expense by increasing its federal representation to 27 seats from 7, although UMNO managed to retain its two-thirds parliamentary majority. PAS had entered into an electoral pact with other Malay opposition parties, including PKR (at the time, still *Parti Keadilan Nasional*), which won five seats, and the non-Malay **Democratic Action Party (DAP)** within a **Barisan Alternatif** (Alternative Front). PAS also displaced UMNO as the government in the state of Terengganu, while holding onto government in Kelantan, and provided the leader of the federal parliamentary opposition for the first time. Mahathir replaced Anwar with **Abdullah Ahmad Badawi** as deputy prime minister in January 1999. He was confirmed, without contest, as deputy president of UMNO in May 2000. In keeping with his controversial character, Mahathir dramatically announced his intention to step down during an UMNO general assembly in 2002. The announcement evidently caught the party leadership by surprise, and upon their appeal Mahathir decided to delay his retirement by a year. In October 2003, after 22 years at the helm, Mahathir handed over the reins of power to Badawi.

Badawi's tenure began with a resounding mandate at the 2004 election, when BN won a landslide 198 out of 219 parliamentary seats as Malaysians welcomed a new era of more consultative government compared to the strong-arm leadership of Mahathir. Nevertheless, Badawi's promises of a more responsive government never quite materialized. Inter-ethnic relations were strained by increasingly assertive Malay-Muslim activism. In addition, Badawi's attempts to curtail futile megaprojects inherited from the Mahathir years were met with visceral recrimination by his predecessor, who remained vocal after his retirement and eventually started a media campaign to criticize Badawi's leadership. Meanwhile, civil society movements were mobilizing against the inertia of the Badawi government, whose performance by then was a far cry from the hope he inspired when he first took over. Massive movements like **Hindraf** and **Bersih** demonstrated the

extent of popular frustration. Released in 2004 when his 1999 conviction was overturned, Anwar galvanized a hitherto disparate reform movement as opposition to BN swelled, especially among non-Malays. By then, Anwar had been released and had taken on the role of *de facto* leader of the opposition. He anchored a pact between opposition parties DAP, PAS, and PKR, which later became institutionalized as **Pakatan Rakyat** or PR after the previous *Berisan Alternatif* coalition fell apart, and which resulted in a massive swing of support away from the ruling coalition at the 2008 elections. It proved at that time to be BN's worst-ever performance, as it lost not only its two-thirds parliamentary majority but also the state governments of Kelantan, Kedah, Penang, Selangor, and Perak, although Perak would return to the BN fold a year later following a controversial takeover of the state legislature after defections from PR. Prior to that, Anwar attempted to engineer his own takeover, in this instance of the federal government, by declaring that 31 parliamentarians were prepared to defect from BN on the occasion of 'Malaysia Day' on 16 September 2008 to join the opposition, thus enabling them to form the government. Though Anwar's gambit failed, it was widely believed that he had managed to secure enough potential defectors, and the plan was only thwarted when the government recruited some of them for a government-sponsored 'study trip' to Taiwan in September. Still smarting from the debacle at the 2008 polls, which provided a *casus belli* for added pressure from Mahathir, Badawi was forced to resign in April 2009. This paved the way for the appointment of **Najib Tun Razak**, son of the second prime minister of Malaysia, **Tun Abdul Razak**, to ascend to high office.

Clearly cognizant of the challenge before him, Najib Razak began his term of office by positioning himself as a technocrat and reformer. In order to win back non-Malay votes lost in 2008, he bravely asserted that blanket affirmative action was no longer viable. He also introduced an ambitious Economic Transformation Programme geared towards achieving high-income nation status for Malaysia. Nevertheless, without his own election mandate, Najib's reform initiatives met with stiff resistance from

within both the party and the bureaucracy. Right-wing segments of UMNO, and their civil society allies, continued to espouse inflammatory racial rhetoric with impunity, which generated and played on existential fears especially of rural Malays. At the same time, corruption and mismanagement of state resources continued to plague the government. A particularly visible scandal was uncovered that saw a sitting minister's family use funds allocated to the National Feedlot Corporation for the purchase of livestock to purchase private properties in Singapore instead. In terms of the order of magnitude, however, it would pale in comparison to the **1MDB** scandal that was soon to come.

The growth of alternative and social media amplified discontent, resulting in a further swing of support away from BN at the 2013 elections, when the incumbent managed to secure only 133 parliamentary seats. More significant was the fact that BN secured only 47 per cent of the popular vote to the 51 per cent won by PR and lost the majority of the ethnic Chinese vote. The election itself was plagued by allegations of massive fraud and irregularities, and the result was disputed by Anwar Ibrahim and PR, which staged a series of post-election rallies. Since the election, BN has been unable to regain support from the non-Malay communities to any significant measure. Prime Minister Najib also came under heavy domestic and international criticism for his government's poor handling of the mysterious disappearance of Malaysian Airlines flight MH370 in March 2014.

A state development fund, 1MDB, that was established in 2009 to promote development through foreign investments and partnerships would become the centre of attention as a tale of brazen malfeasance and wanton abuse of power was gradually uncovered by Clare Rewcastle-Brown, a British journalist who ran the Sarawak Report news website. Following further investigations by a host of governments including the US Justice Department, it was believed that as much as US\$4.5 billion had been stolen by way of large sums of borrowing that were accumulated and siphoned into offshore bank accounts in Switzerland, the United States, and Singapore. This was by some distance the largest corruption scandal in

Malaysian history. More devastating was the fact that it implicated Prime Minister Najib and his wife, Rosmah Mansor, who had acquired a hearty appetite for luxury goods. As pressure mounted on Najib, he responded by firing the attorney general, who was then leading the investigation by the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission, evidently as he was just about to issue a warrant for the prime minister's arrest, and dismissed his deputy prime minister and UMNO deputy president, **Muhyiddin Yassin**, who by then had become a vocal critic of the mismanagement and scandal involving 1MDB. Once an advocate of Najib, Mahathir Mohamad was outspoken in his criticisms of the prime minister in the wake of the graft scandal, resigned from UMNO in February 2016, and, using the vehicle of *Bersatu*, eventually came out of retirement to unite Malaysia's disparate opposition against the serving prime minister. Any doubts about Mahathir's mastery of Malaysian politics were laid to rest when he worked with his erstwhile political adversary, Anwar, to plot the downfall of Najib and BN. In winning 121 out of the 222 parliamentary seats contested, the Malaysian opposition **Pakatan Harapan** or PH, a new opposition coalition and the third in two decades, and its ally, the Sabah-based *Warisan* party, made history by inflicting a monumental defeat on the incumbent, compelling a change in government for the first time since independence. Mahathir Mohamad was sworn in as prime minister, the second time in his storied career, on 10 May 2018. The PH government that Mahathir helmed would, however, come undone within two years. An inability to find consensus over a succession plan that would have purportedly seen power handed over by Mahathir to Anwar after two years led to internal dissonance as discord gave rise to splits within *Bersatu* and PKR, resulting in their respective splinter factions re-aligning with UMNO and PAS to form a new government in March 2020 by way of political machinations (*see Sheraton Move 2020*). Mahathir was forced to resign when his attempt to form a unity government failed, and with the support of this new configuration of political parties, Muhyiddin Yassin was sworn in as the eighth prime minister of Malaysia. A new coalition

emerged in the form of **Perikatan Nasional**, which brought together *Bersatu* and PAS, and they were joined by UMNO in an uneasy marriage of convenience. The new government operated with a paper-thin majority and constant internal squabbling that Muhyiddin struggled to contain. To contain brewing political dissent within the ruling coalition, Muhyiddin seized upon the **Covid-19** pandemic situation and, with the agreement of the *Yang di-Pertuan Agong*, declared an emergency ostensibly to handle the public health crisis. The utility of the emergency was immediately questioned by political opposition and members of the public, given that several Movement Control Orders were already in place. Nevertheless, the emergency declaration allowed Muhyiddin to suspend parliament in the wake of growing rumours that UMNO was about to withdraw its support for his government. In the event, the support was effectively withdrawn by way of a public announcement by the UMNO president, **Ahmad Zahid Hamidi**, on 7 July 2021 as calls were made for a resumption of Parliament and for fresh elections to take place. Without the full support of UMNO, Muhyiddin found his position untenable. He resigned on 16 August 2021, becoming Malaysia's shortest-serving prime minister. He was replaced by UMNO vice-president, **Ismail Sabri Yaakob**, who was appointed by the *Agong* to become Malaysia's ninth prime minister on 20 August.

A critical factor in modifying the pattern of politics in Malaysia has been the resurgence of **Islam** as a result of international and local causes. An experiment of incorporating the Malay opposition PAS into the ruling coalition from the early 1970s failed by the end of the decade, although a subsequent attempt since 2018 appears more durable. More successful was the co-option of non-Malay parties, including those from the northern Borneo states. When Mahathir became Malaysia's fourth prime minister in July 1981, he decided to reinforce UMNO's Islamic identity in order to overcome its political vulnerability because of its close cooperation with non-Malay parties. That policy was expressed more in form than in substance. It proved effective, however, for example, through his co-option of Anwar



Ibrahim while he was a radical Islamic youth leader with **ABIM**. At the same time, the opposition PAS also began to take on an even more Islamic complexion with their introduction of clerical rule. Acrimony and mutual distrust between UMNO and PAS, which at one level epitomized intra-Malay contention, resulted in a dangerous game of religious brinkmanship as each sought to embellish their own Islamic credentials while undermining the other. This created challenges for the party as it attempted to partake in several opposition coalitions but struggled to sustain its commitment especially considering its exclusivist Islamic agenda. Political expediency, however, inspired both to enter into a coalition, *Muafakat Nasional*, in September 2019, ostensibly for Muslim unity, although it was for all intents and purposes a political alliance designed to counter *Pakatan Harapan*.

Malaysia's foreign policy has for the most part reflected domestic political change. Its first prime minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman, was an Anglophile who valued the Commonwealth connection and who was obliged to draw on British and Commonwealth support to cope with the threat posed by Indonesia's **Confrontation**. Reconciliation with Indonesia and membership of **ASEAN** (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) encouraged an extension of international links, especially membership of the Non-Aligned Movement, under the leadership of Tun Abdul Razak. He was identified with a proposal to neutralize Southeast Asia and took the initiative in 1974 in establishing diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China in order to gain support from his large number of ethnic Chinese constituents. Following Razak's premature death in 1976, **Hussein Onn** succeeded him but without imposing any distinctive stamp on foreign policy. He did, however, curtail an adventurist tendency expressed in particular in an attempt to destabilize Brunei.

Foreign policy did not change in great substance when Mahathir became prime minister in 1981 after Hussein Onn had retired because of ill health. ASEAN remained at the centre of regional calculations, but Malaysia became more self-assertive under his leadership. He acquired a reputation as a sharp-tongued

spokesman in support of Third World causes, and early in his tenure he directed his anger at Britain, which was subject to economic discrimination (see **Buy British Last Policy**) in retaliation for insensitivity to Malaysia's interests. Membership of the Commonwealth was reconsidered, while international Islamic links were strengthened. Initiatives were taken to promote international cooperation in control of drug trafficking and over Antarctica and South-South relationships. A change of political heart over the utility of the Commonwealth resulted in Malaysia playing host to the meeting of its heads of government in October 1989. In 1994 Mahathir returned to attack the former colonial power over British press allegations of his financial impropriety. He was also vocal over the alleged hypocrisy of the west through its failure to safeguard human rights in Bosnia. Mahathir's personal role in foreign policy gave rise to some tensions in regional relations. For example, he interpreted Singapore's willingness to receive the president of Israel in November 1986 as an insult because of his own identification with the Palestinian cause. Relations with Indonesia were uneasy partly because of an unwillingness to respect President Suharto's seniority. Such unease was reinforced in the early 1990s, after Mahathir had unilaterally put forward a proposal for the establishment of an East Asian Economic Caucus to cope with a global trend towards trade blocs. That proposal generated tensions with the United States and Australia. Tensions with the United States were generated also during 1998 when Mahathir claimed that an international Jewish conspiracy was behind Malaysia's economic tribulations. Malaysia took a strong stand on incorporating Myanmar and the states of Indochina within ASEAN and aligned with Vietnam against other regional partners in supporting Cambodia's early membership, despite the violent coup in Phnom Penh in July 1997. Malaysia has also been prominent within ASEAN in promoting close relations with China. An agreement to boost defence cooperation and to use peaceful means to resolve tensions over disputed maritime jurisdiction in the South China Sea was concluded in Beijing in June 1999. That agreement

gave rise to suspicions that Malaysia had come to terms with China at the expense of ASEAN partners. Tellingly, in June and August 1999, Malaysia occupied two unoccupied features in the Spratly Islands, which provoked a strong protest from the Philippines but only a mild rebuke from China. The key to Mahathir's ability to receive a hearing internationally for his outspoken views was the underlying success of Malaysia's economy. The economic crisis of the late 1990s had the effect of diminishing his credibility in preaching to the West. Nevertheless, Mahathir would be more circumspect towards China during his second run as prime minister. Frustrated with Chinese reluctance to cooperate on his efforts to renegotiate Belt and Road Initiative projects signed with the preceding government of Najib Tun Razak, Mahathir irked his Chinese host when he used the occasion of his August 2018 visit to Beijing to warn of 'a new version of colonialism'.

While testy during the Mahathir years, relations with Singapore improved significantly following Abdullah Badawi's appointment as prime minister. This upturn found expression in the creation of the **Iskandar Development Region** in the southern Malaysian state of Johor bordering Singapore. Ties advanced further under Najib Razak, with both governments agreeing to build a high-speed railway between Singapore and Kuala Lumpur to deepen integration. During Badawi's tenure, Malaysia chaired the Organization of the Islamic Conference in 2003, the Non-Aligned Movement from 2003 to 2006, and ASEAN in 2005 when the **East Asia Summit** was inaugurated. Malaysia's foreign

policy focus on Islamic countries has gradually deepened since the Mahathir administration. Malaysia was at the forefront of regional opposition to the American invasion of Iraq, which it criticized as a manifestation of the neo-conservative Washington government's assault on the Islamic faith. Malaysia's resolute support for the Palestinian cause was marked by Prime Minister Najib's landmark visit to Gaza in January 2013, when he signed an agreement with the Hamas government to help rebuild the prime minister's office which was destroyed by Israeli forces in November the previous year.

see also: 1MDB; Abdul Rahman, Tunku; Alliance Party; Anwar Ibrahim; ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Asian Financial Crisis 1997–8; Badawi, Tun Abdullah Ahmad; *Barisan Alternatif* (BA); *Barisan Nasional* (BN); *Bersih*; Buy British Last Policy; Confrontation; Covid-19; Democratic Action Party (DAP); East Asia Summit 2005–; Hindraf; Hussein Onn, Tun; Iskandar Development Region; Islam; Ismail Sabri Yaakob, Datuk Seri; Mahathir Mohamad, Tun; May 13 Racial Riots 1969; Muhyiddin Yassin, Tan Sri; Musa Hitam, Tun; Najib Tun Razak, Datuk Seri Mohamad; New Economic Policy; *Pakatan Rakyat*; *Parti Islam Se-Malaysia*; *Parti Keadilan Rakyat*; *Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia*; People's Action Party; *Perikatan Nasional*; Razak, Tun Abdul; Razaleigh Hamzah, Tengku; *Semangat '46*; Sheraton Move 2020; South China Sea; Suharto; Sukarno; UMNO (United Malays National Organization); *Yang di-Pertuan Agong*; Zahid Hamidi, Ahmad.

## Myanmar (Burma)

Myanmar (or, in its colonial nomenclature, Burma) is the second largest country in South-east Asia with an area of 676,000 square kilometres. It is situated to the east of India and Bangladesh, to the southwest of the People's Republic of China, and to the west of Laos and Thailand. Its coastline extends from Bangladesh to Thailand and fronts the Bay of Bengal. The country has an estimated population of over 55 million, the vast majority of whom are devotees of Theravada **Buddhism**. A host of ethnic minorities, long disaffected from the central government, inhabit the border areas of the state. Myanmar's primarily agricultural economy struggled to advance after independence from British colonialism. Indeed, for more than 50 years, it regressed economically in the charge of a military junta for whom power became an end in itself, as reflected in defence expenditure consistently consuming a third of the annual budget. In reconstituted form since 1988, that junta attempted to open the county to foreign investment and trade, in particular from the early 1990s, but with only superficial success. The initial momentum of foreign investment was reversed, partly as a consequence of external sanctions driven by a deplorable human rights record and evidence of regime involvement in narcotics production and trafficking. An unexpected move to gradually release its grip on power in 2010 set in motion a process of political transformation which allowed for democratization of the political landscape, leading to the election of a civilian government in 2015. This process was brought to a grinding halt, however, with the 1 February 2021 coup that has resulted in a gradual return of sanctions.

Burma was colonized by Britain from the early 19th century and was accorded a limited form of self-government only in the late 1930s, when it was separated from the administration of India against a background of nationalist challenge. It was occupied by the Japanese during the Pacific War with the support of Burmese

nationalists, who in 1943 were accorded a nominal independence. When it became apparent that the Japanese were going to lose the war, the Burma National Army rebelled against its military mentors in support of the Allied cause. Burma attained full independence in January 1948 after the British Labour Party administration had revised its gradualist timetable in the light of the demonstrable support enjoyed by the **Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League** (AFPFL), the militant nationalist movement led by **Aung San**. Initially self-styled as the Union of Burma, its governments have struggled to overcome the centrifugal political pull of its ethnically diverse population. Geography has combined with ethnicity to obstruct the reach of central power. The majority of the population of Myanmar adhere to Theravada Buddhism, as do some of the ethnic minorities, who also observe **Islam** and Christianity.

The Union of Burma began independence as a parliamentary democracy in inauspicious circumstances. Nationalist leader Aung San had come to an agreement in January 1947 with the British government for the transfer of sovereignty a year later, but in July 1947 he was assassinated together with six cabinet colleagues in a plot mounted by a political rival. Independence went ahead on 4 January 1948 with **U Nu** as prime minister. From independence, Burma was subject to violent internal upheaval as the government in Rangoon was confronted with insurrection by two communist and a number of ethnic minority insurgencies challenging both the identity and the constitutional arrangements of the new state. The ethnic minorities were distributed in concentrations around the northern perimeter of the country from east to southwest, as well as in the Irrawaddy Delta, and tensions between them and the Burman majority had been inflamed during the Pacific War. These mixed challenges were contained, if not defeated, by the mid-1950s, in part because of the inability of the opponents of the central government to unite among themselves and

also because of the success of the Burmese army in pushing them back.

Until 2015 when a civilian government was established, Myanmar had been ruled continuously by a military regime since March 1962 when the armed forces, led by General **Ne Win**, seized power. Because of its roots in the nationalist movement against both the British and the Japanese, the army, known as the *Tatmadaw*, displayed a sense of political entitlement which came to affect the future of the country. Violent challenge to the state and its integrity was succeeded by ferocious factional fighting within the ruling political party. To repair this situation, in July 1958, the prime minister, U Nu, invited General Ne Win to form a caretaker government and to prepare the country for fresh elections. Power was returned to civilian government in March 1960. With the electoral success of his faction of the AFPFL, U Nu resumed office as prime minister. In March 1962, however, Ne Win mounted a coup in response to concessions by the government to the insurgent ethnic minorities and set up a Revolutionary Council to run the country. Under military rule, the country became committed to an ersatz ideology called the Burmese Way to Socialism, which was a potted version of Marxist and Buddhist formulae. The declared purpose of the undertaking was Burma's development on an autonomous basis. In July 1962 the Revolutionary Council established the **Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP)** with the mission to realize the Burmese Way to Socialism. All other parties were abolished, while BSPP served as the political arm of the army. In 1974 a new constitution was promulgated, BSPP was opened up to a mass membership, and the name of the state was changed to the Socialist Republic of the Union of Burma, with Ne Win in the office of president. Ne Win stepped down from the presidency in November 1981 but remained in control as chairman of BSPP. These changes in political form did nothing to arrest a relentless economic decline, as the dogma, bureaucracy, and corruption of the so-called Burmese Way to Socialism, combined with a policy of international isolation, affected the availability and distribution of basic goods in a country rich with natural resources and once regarded as

the rice bowl of Southeast Asia. In addition, the cost of containing the disparate insurgencies which increased in number after the 1962 coup and an invasion out of China by elements of the Burmese Communist Party served to bring the country closer to economic collapse. For a decade and a half, this continuing decline did not lead to any political reaction beyond the ready control of the military. However, an acute economic crisis was signalled in 1987, when the government in Rangoon applied to the United Nations for Burma to be accorded the status of 'least-developed country' in order to secure grants in aid.

Burma erupted in political turmoil when the government adopted desperate measures to cope with a deteriorating economy. Demonetization of larger currency notes in circulation in September 1987 provoked student unrest which exploded in demonstrations and violence in March 1988. This challenge was matched by ruthless military repression, which came to a head in August and September. In the interim, Ne Win resigned as chairman of BSPP in July but failed to stem popular protest which responded to the leadership provided by **Aung San Suu Kyi**, daughter of nationalist hero Aung San, who had coincidentally returned to the country to nurse her ailing mother. In September 1988, in response to a popular challenge put down with violence and bloodletting, and with Ne Win having abdicated formal responsibility in the previous July, the army chief of staff, General Saw Maung, assumed power on behalf of the military in an incumbency coup, marking the culmination of an awesome bloodletting. The military government transformed itself into the **State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC)**, and all state organs were abolished by the new junta. Political opposition was ruthlessly repressed, including the use of torture and forced labour. On 18 June 1989, the name of the state was changed from the Socialist Republic of the Union of Burma to the Union of Myanmar through the enactment of the Adaptation of Expression law. The English spellings of several regions and cities were officially changed, including the capital Rangoon, which was changed to Yangon. The country was placed under martial law, but

SLORC promised that multiparty elections would be held for a constituent assembly. In the meantime, all references to the Burmese Way to Socialism disappeared from public pronouncements, while the junta sought foreign exchange to buy arms by according logging and fishing rights to foreign entrepreneurs. Political parties were allowed to register in 1989, but although more than 200 emerged, only a handful of any significance were formed, above all, the NLD led by Aung San Suu Kyi, who was placed under house arrest in July 1989 just prior to the anniversary of the period of bloodletting in 1988. In polls permitted by the junta in May 1990, NLD won an overwhelming electoral victory over the **National Unity Party**, which was the political reincarnation of BSPP. The constituent assembly in the form of a National Convention was not convened until 1993, however, while the position of NLD was undermined through contrived expulsions, including that of Aung San Suu Kyi, who was kept in incarceration. SLORC's attempt to discredit her nationally and internationally was thwarted when she was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in October 1991. Despite almost universal condemnation of its appalling human rights record, the ruling junta held on to power, with Ne Win apparently influential in the background despite his ailing condition.

Senior General Saw Maung stepped down as head of SLORC in April 1992, believed to be suffering from a mental disorder; he was succeeded by General **Than Shwe**, who also assumed the office of prime minister. However, Ne Win's close confidant and head of intelligence as well as SLORC's first secretary, General **Khin Nyunt**, was considered his proxy and wielded considerable power in the junta. He inspired the inauguration of the constituent assembly or National Convention in Yangon in January 1993, suitably purged of dissident political elements, but the convention was suspended in 1996 following a boycott by NLD, which labelled it undemocratic. Aung San Suu Kyi was released unexpectedly from detention by SLORC in July 1995 but without any other political concessions. In 2000, she was again placed under house arrest, only to be released again in 2002. During an upcountry tour in 2003

which was met by huge crowds of supporters, her convoy was attacked by a government-backed mob and Aung San Suu Kyi was placed back under house arrest. She would remain in detention until just after general elections in late 2010, when she was released and subsequently spearheaded the gradual introduction of democracy over the next decade until the military coup of 2021.

In November 1997, SLORC was replaced by the **State Peace and Development Council** (SPDC). The change in nomenclature and in implied orientation did not change the substance of military despotism. Yet in 2003, Khin Nyunt announced a seven-point '**Roadmap to Democracy**' to guide the country's transition from military rule to a more democratic civilian form of government. The process, which was heavily criticized for its genuflection towards the military, went forward, and the National Convention was reconvened in 2004 with an eye to the preparation of a new constitution. Mass demonstrations led by Buddhist monks in 2007 threatened to interrupt the process of constitutional drafting, when initial protests against rising costs of living eventually became explicitly anti-government. The protests were violently suppressed amid widespread arrests and heavy international criticism. In May 2008 Cyclone Nargis devastated much of southwestern Myanmar, sparking a humanitarian crisis that was badly handled by the regime as it tried unsuccessfully to limit the inflow of international aid and foreign aid workers. The government was subject to criticism for going forward with a nationwide referendum on the **2008 Constitution** despite the destruction and massive loss of life in the disaster. Nevertheless, the constitution was approved. A new name for the country was adopted, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, along with a new national flag.

The new constitution was promulgated through a controversial national referendum, and elections, the first since 1990, were scheduled for 2010. The NLD, in protest against electoral rules and the continued detention of political prisoners including Aung San Suu Kyi, announced it would boycott the polls. In the event, countrywide elections were held in November 2010 with the **Union Solidarity**

and Development Party (USDP) winning an overwhelming majority. A new, junta-friendly civilian government led by former general and prime minister **Thein Sein** was conveyed into power, albeit with a strong military influence and amidst widespread allegations of intimidation and electoral fraud. With the handover of power from SPDC to the new government, Myanmar's leadership embarked cautiously on yet another major reform drive. The civilian government opened up the economy, repealed repressive laws governing civil society, and pursued peace processes with the majority of ethnic insurgents. Aung San Suu Kyi was released from house arrest and, apparently persuaded of the sincerity of the reforms, joined the political process. In by-elections in 2012, NLD handily defeated USDP, winning 43 out of 45 seats, and became the largest opposition party in Parliament, and for the first time, Aung San Suu Kyi assumed a role as an elected politician.

Free nationwide elections on 8 November 2015 saw NLD win just under 80 per cent of contested seats, similar to the result in 1990. This landslide victory allowed the government to pass into civilian hands in Myanmar in a genuine fashion since 1960, although constitutional provisions were made for the military to continue retaining a major role in political affairs through a 25 per cent bloc in Parliament. Notwithstanding the magnitude of the victory – NLD won almost 80 per cent of the seats contested – Aung San Suu Kyi was prevented by Article 59f of the Constitution, which disqualifies candidates who have children of foreign citizenship from holding high office, from assuming the presidency. In response, and despite opposition from the military, the civilian government created the position of state counsellor, to which she was appointed, making her effectively *de facto* head of government. Economic sanctions were gradually lifted and the country's reputation improved with greater press freedom and civil society activism, as it received enormous interest from foreign investors from Asia as well as from Europe and the United States. NLD's term in office was, however, tainted by humanitarian crisis in Rakhine State, when military violence displaced more than half a million Muslim **Rohingya**. During

this time, Aung San Suu Kyi's reputation as a human rights icon diminished considerably in international eyes in view of the NLD government's complicity in the military's heavy-handed approach towards the Rohingya issue. Her defiance at the International Court of Justice hearing on the situation in December 2019, where she refused to use the term 'Rohingya' in her entire 30-minute speech, marked a turning point in how the international community viewed 'The Lady', as she had been popularly called, as howls of protests for her Nobel Peace Prize to be revoked grew louder.

Notwithstanding the Rohingya controversy, the process of democratization received a further boost in 2020 when NLD again handily won elections. In polls conducted on 8 November, NLD won 396 out of 476 or 83 per cent of eligible parliamentary seats, on its way to another landslide. The election however, was not without controversy. Voting was suspended in border areas, ostensibly for security reasons, prompting dissatisfaction in ethnic minorities keen to exercise their right to vote. The outcome was also challenged by USDP, which alleged widespread electoral fraud, but its allegations were rejected by the Union Election Commission without investigation. In response, the *Tatmadaw*, led by their commander-in-chief, Senior General **Min Aung Hlaing**, seized power on 1 February 2021, the day a newly elected Parliament was supposed to be sworn in, and reversed the democratization process. The NLD civilian government was removed, its leaders including Aung San Suu Kyi and President U Win Myint detained, and a state of emergency declared purportedly for a year, ostensibly on grounds of electoral fraud involving more than ten million ballots. A host of charges were levelled on Aung San Suu Kyi, including corruption. Conviction would effectively disqualify her from holding public office. The junta established the **State Administration Council**, chaired by Min Aung Hlaing, to run the country for the duration of the emergency. A new election commission was put into place and, in a replay of events of 1990, promptly annulled the results of the 8 November 2020 election. With this move, Myanmar returned to the days of junta rule. The ensuing weeks and

months saw an upsurge of various acts of civil disobedience, including strikes and street protests, and event violence even as the foreboding shadow of violent crackdowns loomed large. On 5 February, civilian representatives elected at the November polls formed the Committee Representing the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH, or Committee Representing the Union Parliament) and swore themselves into office in an act of defiance against the military junta. The committee would later be renamed the **National Unity Government**. Shortly after the coup, the political violence quickly spread beyond cities into the border regions, where armed ethnic organizations, many of which had themselves been waging armed rebellion against central military authority for decades, made common cause with anti-junta protestors against the State Administration Council.

During half a century of military rule, an ability to reinforce power at the centre has been matched with an increasing assertion of state power against dissident ethnic minorities. The revolt of northern Wa tribesmen against ethnic Chinese dominance of the Communist Party in the late 1980s enabled the Yangon government to exercise greater control over the flow of opium and military supplies to rebel minorities. Such control has been facilitated by effective cooperation with the government in Beijing, which has been a major source of arms transfers but in return for access to intelligence facilities in the Andaman Sea. In October 1993 a ceasefire was concluded with the **Kachin** Independence Army, regarded as the most significant of the insurgent groupings fighting against the government; the ceasefire was formalized in February 1994. This accord meant that the armed forces could concentrate their efforts against the **Karen** and the **Shan** rebels to great military effect. By 1996, the government in Yangon had effectively turned the tide of battle against the country's ethnic insurgencies, although armed resistance has been sustained by the Karen and Shan minorities among other smaller groups. In 2009, though, the ceasefire appeared to unravel, as the government attempted to force the groups to convert their armed wings to army control and to join the political process, a move most of the groups resisted. After March 2011

the civilian government embarked on a peace drive which has resulted in ceasefire agreements and ongoing peace negotiations with several of the ethnic minority groups. There were exceptions, such as with the Kachin, who in 2011 returned to armed struggle. Although they participated actively in the polls of 2010 and 2015, in 2020 some ethnic parties were frustrated in their attempts to participate in the election after they were denied their right to exercise their vote when the elections commission scrapped voting in several border regions. Of those ethnic parties that did get voted into power in November 2020, several would also subsequently cast their lots with the military junta after the 2021 coup, such as the Arakan National Party and the Mon Unity Party. Others like the Shan and Karen would either resume or escalate hostilities after the February 2021 coup.

In foreign relations, Burma was an early advocate of non-alignment, being represented at the historic **Asian–African Conference** in Bandung in 1955 and at the founding conference of the Non-Aligned Movement in Belgrade in 1961. Indeed, a passionate anti-colonialism had prevented membership of the Commonwealth in advance of the arrangement made to accommodate India, which, as an independent republic, could not pledge loyalty to the British Crown. The military regime which assumed power in 1962 maintained the same commitment to non-alignment that complemented the aims of the Burmese Way to Socialism. The commitment did not prevent the development of a close association with northern neighbour China. That relationship was never allowed to become unduly deferential, however. During the period of the Cultural Revolution, Burma displayed a testy independence in response to evident intimidation. In September 1979 at the summit meeting in Havana, Burma withdrew from the Non-Aligned Movement on the ground that it had ceased to be neutral enough under the chairmanship of Cuba, which claimed a special relationship for the Soviet Union. However, international reaction to SLORC's violation of human rights, especially against its Muslim minority, caused the government in Yangon to revise its view by the time of the Non-Aligned Summit in Jakarta in September 1992.

Repressive action in 1992 against the Rohingya minority in Arakan Province bordering Bangladesh drew condemnation from Islamic states, which Myanmar sought to counter by securing readmission to the Non-Aligned Movement. Myanmar's Rohingya problem flared again in 2012 when widespread violence against the Rohingya was triggered in Rakhine State. Further violence against the Rohingya led to a UN investigation which resulted in a lawsuit case, filed by Gambia in 2019, alleging that a bloody crackdown of Rohingya in 2017 violated the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

Throughout its international isolation, Myanmar was able to attract China's support as both an arms supplier and a patron of a kind, which was willing to help deflect international criticism of its brutal repressive regime in return for extensive economic opportunities. China has also developed communication facilities which will enable direct physical access from its borders to the Indian Ocean, while an extensive Chinese business/migrant presence has been established in upper Myanmar. Under the NLD government, Myanmar has sought to deepen ties with China in the wake of growing international condemnation of its treatment of the Rohingya minority, and this has come to be expressed in the status of China as its largest trading partner. At the same time, the Myanmar military remains cautious in its dealings with China. Many *Tatmadaw* generals cut their teeth fighting ethnic insurgent groups, some of which enjoy tactical support from China and also, previously, the Burmese Communist Party. Recent efforts at economic liberalization have been driven as much by the desire to reduce dependence on China as by the appeal of foreign investments.

The government of Thailand had been the most active among **ASEAN** (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) states in practicing the Association's policy of **Constructive Engagement**, viewed as more appropriate than one of shunning the Yangon regime. In consequence, a Myanmar delegation was invited by the Thai government to attend as guests at the annual meeting of ASEAN's foreign ministers held in Bangkok in July 1994. Equivalent status was

accorded in July 1995 in Brunei when Myanmar's foreign minister signed ASEAN's **Treaty of Amity and Cooperation** and at the **Bangkok Summit** in December 1995, attended by Prime Minister Than Shwe. Singapore had also been forthcoming with a visit to Yangon by its prime minister, **Goh Chok Tong**, in March 1994. His appearance in the capital marked only the second visit by a head of government since SLORC assumed power. The prime minister of Laos had visited the country in 1992. Despite the release of Aung San Suu Kyi, Western countries continued to treat Myanmar as a political outcast. Myanmar joined the **ASEAN Regional Forum** in August 1996 and ASEAN in July 1997, but its membership gave rise to difficulties between the Association and some of its dialogue partners. For example, the European Union until recently denied visas to senior members of the military junta, and refused to engage in multilateral meetings until a compromise agreement with the EU in August 2000. Through the 1990s and 2000s, Western countries subjected Myanmar to harsh economic sanctions in response to its human rights record against political opponents and ethnic minorities. Outrage over the crackdown on the 2007 protests sparked an expansion of sanctions against the government. Likewise, the government's pedestrian response to the Cyclone Nargis disaster led France and the United States to agitate for the invocation of the right to Protect in order to force the delivery of aid into the country, and a crisis was averted only after the intervention of ASEAN's secretary-general, **Surin Pitsuwan**. In the immediate aftermath of the February 2021 coup, several ASEAN member states as well as the ASEAN chair, Brunei, released statements expressing concern and calling for 'dialogue, reconciliation, and a return to normalcy' in Myanmar, citing the **ASEAN Charter**. While Western governments and the UN were highly critical of the 2008 referendum and the openness of the 2010 elections, by the time an NLD government was elected in 2015, international opinion rallied in support of Myanmar's transition to democracy. Economic sanctions were repealed or reduced, and international leaders flocked to the country to meet Thein Sein, when he was president, and especially Aung San Suu Kyi, who was able to leave



the country for the first time since the late 1980s. However, the handling of the Rohingya situation severely tarnished international opinion of Aung San Suu Kyi and her NLD government, only to be overtaken by the global outcry against the February 2021 coup that overthrew her government. As the US and European governments directed sanctions against leading members of the junta as well as commercial interests linked to the *Tatmadaw*, ASEAN found itself under the spotlight yet again as the regional organization struggled to deal with the familiar scenario of Myanmar's recalcitrance. In an unprecedented move, ASEAN restricted Myanmar to 'non-political representation' at its 2021 Summit, effectively blocking the junta leadership from attending.

For long periods of its post-colonial history, military government in Burma and then Myanmar ruled without consent but retained its position because of a caste-like sense of identity and loyalty among the officer corps and a system of patronage which ensures that rank-and-file troops obey commands to fire on unarmed demonstrators without dissent. Power struggles, however, were not absent. In March 2002, General Ne Win and members of his family were arrested in connection with a supposed coup attempt. Ne Win died under house arrest in December 2002. Two years later, General Khin Nyunt, then prime minister and head of intelligence, was placed under house arrest and his intelligence apparatus dismantled, ostensibly on corruption charges, but most saw it as the culmination of a power

struggle with Senior General Than Shwe. Following the new government's assumption of power in March 2011, the military ostensibly pulled back from a direct public role in politics, although it maintained a strong role behind the scenes through a 25 per cent block of Parliament reserved for military officers, and a constitutional right to assume control of the country in times of threat to national sovereignty, which it exercised in February 2021 for that putative reason.

see also: Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL); ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; ASEAN Charter (Charter of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations); ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) 1994–; Asian–African Conference, Bandung 1955; Aung San; Aung San Suu Kyi; Bangkok Summit (ASEAN) 1995; Buddhism; Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP); Constitution 2008; Constructive Engagement; Goh Chok Tong; Insurgencies, Myanmar; Islam; Kachin; Karen; Khin Nyunt, General; Min Aung Hlaing, Senior General; National League for Democracy; National Unity Government; National Unity Party; Ne Win, General; Roadmap to Democracy; Rohingya; Shan; State Administration Council; State Law and Order Restoration Council; State Peace and Development Council; Surin Pitsuwan; Than Shwe, Senior General; Thein Sein; Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (ASEAN) 1976; U Nu; Union Solidarity and Development Party.

## Philippines, Republic of

The Republic of the Philippines was established as an independent state on 4 July 1946 when sovereignty was transferred by the US colonial administration. The US model of democracy was replaced by authoritarian rule under President **Ferdinand Marcos** from 1972 until 1986. Constitutional democracy was restored by President **Corazón Aquino**, who replaced Marcos in February 1986 after he was ousted from power by the **People Power** Revolution. From Corazón Aquino onwards, the tenure of presidential office was restricted to a single six-year term. President **Benigno Simeon Cojuangco Aquino III**, son of Corazón Aquino, was elected to office in June 2010. He was succeeded by **Rodrigo Duterte**, the maverick former mayor of Davao City, in May 2016.

The Philippines is made up of an archipelago of some 7,000 islands extending for nearly 1,000 miles from north to south, which are located at the eastern periphery of Southeast Asia and to the south of the People's Republic of China. Its land area is 300,000 square kilometres and its population is almost 110 million. Three principal geographic divisions comprise the main northern island of Luzón, on which is located the capital Manila, the central Visayan islands, and the southerly islands of Mindanao and Sulu. The archipelago was given political coherence through Spanish colonial intervention from the late 16th century and was named for the crown prince who became Philip II. The Spanish also left a profound religious legacy, with over 90 per cent of the population adhering to the Catholic faith. The Spanish were responsible also for containing Islamic settlement to the extreme south of the archipelago. **Islam** is the religious faith of about 5 per cent of the population, who have a tradition of resistance and rebellion against the government in Manila.

The United States succeeded Spain as the colonial power through military action at the end of the 19th century. A commitment to self-government produced a promise of

independence in the 1930s which was fulfilled on time despite a cruel and devastating Japanese occupation during the Pacific War. On independence, the Philippines replicated the US constitutional model with an elected presidential system of government constrained in principle by congressional and judicial checks and balances. Two main political organizations, the **Nacionalista Party** and the **Liberal Party**, contended for office and spoils but did not represent fundamental alternatives. In effect, the two parties served as vehicles for advancing and enriching competing provincial-based elite groups whose power rested on a network of local and personal loyalties. Politics involved the alignment and realignment of these fractious elite groups which switched promiscuously from party to party for electoral advantage. That pattern of politics changed in September 1972 when Ferdinand Marcos, elected in November 1965 and re-elected in November 1969, declared martial law in order to overcome the constitutional limitation that prevailed at that time of two presidential terms. He concentrated power at the centre at the expense of provincial elites with the exception of cronies from his home base of Ilocos Norte. Initially, law and order visibly improved and bureaucratic corruption was reduced while land reform measures were begun. But adverse economic factors precipitated by the energy crisis together with a gross abuse of personal power and financial mismanagement precipitated decline and disillusionment as all political and legal institutions were rendered impotent. Martial law was ended formally in January 1981 but without significant political change. Political decay was accelerated after the assassination in August 1983 of President Marcos's principal opponent, **Benigno Aquino**, at Manila airport on his return from exile in the United States. Political change was accelerated by a snap presidential election in February 1986 in which Marcos was challenged by Corazón Aquino, Benigno Aquino's widow. Against a background of charges of electoral

fraud, the defence minister, **Juan Ponce Enrile**, and deputy chief of staff of the Armed forces, **Fidel Ramos**, led a military mutiny. That mutiny inspired a popular demonstration in central Manila against Marcos, known in the lexicon as the People Power Revolution, and in favour of Corazón Aquino. With the refusal of the security forces to act against civilians, the United States intervened to persuade Marcos and his notorious wife, **Imelda Marcos**, to leave the country on 25 February for exile in Hawaii.

Corazón Aquino was declared president and set about restoring a legitimate constitutional structure. The previous US model was reinstated in slightly modified form with a bicameral congress but with provision for a single presidential term of six years. The new constitution was approved with an overwhelming vote in favour in a national referendum in February 1987, while candidates endorsed by Corazón Aquino won a decisive majority in congressional elections in May. Corazón Aquino faced a series of major political challenges during her tenure. First, she was confronted by a series of abortive coups by a group of alienated army officers who felt that as they were responsible for the fall of Marcos, the armed forces should be the political beneficiaries. Her chief of staff and then defence minister, Fidel Ramos, remained loyal and mobilized military support for constitutional government, which also came from the United States. Second, she was opposed by the Communist Party of the Philippines, which had made great strides as a result of Marcos's years of misrule. Its leadership, which miscalculated popular support for a return to constitutional government, also felt cheated by Corazón Aquino's political success and sought to sustain a military challenge in the rural areas where poverty was most acute. Finally, she had to contend with rumbling Muslim rebellion in the southern islands which had been precipitated by the declaration of martial law in 1972. In the event, Corazón Aquino saw out her tenure and was succeeded through the ballot box in May 1992, when Fidel Ramos was elected with only 23.6 per cent of the vote, less than one million votes more than his nearest rival in a contest against five other candidates. Corazón Aquino's presidency was not marked

by the regeneration of the Philippines, which failed to demonstrate the vigorous economic growth exhibited by its regional partners. Moreover, the very qualities of non-worldliness which made her such a potent opponent of Marcos failed to equip her for the responsibilities of high office, while the prominence of her family in the decision-making process further reduced national confidence. Fidel Ramos assumed office in June 1992 without generating the same political expectations and was also not faced with the same challenges that encumbered Corazón Aquino. His political party *Lakas ng EDSA* or EDSA Struggle – recalling the site of the mutiny of February 1986 – was very much a personal following, formed only in 1991 (see **EDSA (Epifanio de los Santos Avenue); Lakas – CMD**). Nonetheless, he was able to work with Congress, in which he commanded a majority only in the House of Representatives, and he also demonstrated early success in overcoming military dissidence. He acted to neutralize the persistent communist challenge through persuading Congress to legalize the party, while Indonesia's good offices, specifically those of Ali Alatas, Indonesian foreign minister and chairman of the Organization of Islamic Conference, began negotiations over regional autonomy with Muslim separatists. Where Aquino had, in 1989, created the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), pursuant to the provisions of the 1987 Constitution, Ramos went further in negotiating Joint Ceasefire Ground Rules in 1994 between the Philippines government and the **Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF)** and, eventually, a Final Peace Agreement in 1996. The former granted concessions (such as the right for MNLF members to bear arms in 13 provinces) in return for peace, while the latter set in motion a two-part process involving the creation of a Special Zone of Peace and Development (SZOPAD), the absorption of MNLF elements into the Philippine National Police (PNP), and the establishment of a Regional Executive Council and Legislative Assembly. Talks with the **Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF)**, a radical faction which broke away from the MNLF following the **Tripoli Agreement of 1976**, were less successful, with a vague Agreement for the General Cessation

of Hostilities signed only in 1997. At the same time, another splinter group was formed by Abdurajik Abubakar Janjalani, a cleric who had fought with the mujahidin in Afghanistan, and members of MNLF who were disappointed by the new arrangements and who wished to resume armed conflict. **Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG)** was established in 1991 and carried out bombings within the Philippines until 1998, when Abdurajik was killed by the Philippines National Police (PNP). His younger brother, Khadaffy Janjalani, subsequently took control, and the group resumed its activities with kidnappings and assaults from 2000, although it subsequently splintered between factions that persisted in these activities and more extremist counterparts that embraced the call to *jihād* associated with international terrorist groups such as Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State of Iraq and as-Sham (ISIS).

Under Fidel Ramos, modest economic improvement was demonstrated with continuing support from multilateral agencies but without transforming the poverty-stricken condition of the majority of the population dependent on remittances from family members working overseas. The elite-driven and fractious nature of Philippine politics served to obstruct economic reform, especially over land tenure. Political realignment within Congress occurred in reaction to proposed tax legislation intended to strengthen the resources of central government. Although the Philippines was afflicted by the regional economic crisis from the middle of 1997, its limited degree of development and restrictions on international borrowing softened its impact. Economic difficulty, however, served to influence the presidential campaign in 1998, which was marked by the breakdown of the ruling coalition. Incumbent vice-president **Joseph Estrada** posed as the populist champion of the poor and secured a landslide victory over Jose de Venecia, the speaker of the lower house and the candidate of the ruling party. Venecia's electoral partner, **Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo**, was elected vice-president. The promise of President Estrada's victory soured by the turn of the new millennium as the managerialism of Fidel Ramos was succeeded by a reversion to traditional patron-client politics. In January 2000,

finance secretary Edgardo Espiritu resigned in a protest against corruption and cronyism. In February, Estrada dismissed his justice secretary, Serafin Cuevas, ostensibly over a decision to pardon a murderer, but in reality, over decisions against the business interests of close associates. Charges of corruption and cronyism and failings of leadership provided the backdrop to Estrada's reversal of a declared policy of amending the constitution. His proposal for removing provisions barring foreigners from owning land and controlling key industries in the interests of economic development had met with strong opposition on grounds that it could serve as a precedent for securing a second term of presidential office. The diminishing popularity of President Estrada was compounded by the failure of his hardline policy against Muslim separatists in the south of the country, who reacted with a campaign of kidnapping and violence. In April 2000, Estrada provocatively declared an 'all-out war' against MILF, nullifying his predecessor's 1997 Ceasefire Agreement which brought some measure of economic development to the region. The MILF called a *jihād* in response to Estrada's offensive later that year and withdrew from all talks under the peace process. In the same month, ASG expanded its operations to Malaysia by seizing 21 tourists from a resort on Sipadan and holding them on Jolo, forcing Estrada to cut short a visit to China and cancel a trip to Europe to deal with the situation. In the subsequent months, despite intensified military offensives, ASG continued to seize both Filipino and foreign hostages, killing several of them along with captured Filipino soldiers and negotiators. The protracted crisis placed the ASG on the international radar, and the group admitted links to Al-Qaeda on 15 October 2001.

In October 2000, allegations of cronyism (Estrada was alleged to have received up to PHP545 million in proceeds from *jueteng*, a form of illegal gambling, as well as PHP130 million in misappropriated taxes, among other charges) were cast Estrada's way by hitherto close friend Governor Luis Singson and Senate minority leader Teofisto Guingona Jr. Several members of the political elite, including former presidents Aquino and Ramos, along with Archbishop

**Jaime Sin**, called for Estrada's resignation, while members of Congress left the ruling party, and several Cabinet ministers, including Vice-President Macapagal-Arroyo, resigned as Estrada's impeachment trial began. On 17 January 2001, following a vote by 11 of the senators on the jury (who came to be known under an acronym of their names as 'Joe's cohorts') not to examine an envelope of key evidence, Senate president Aquilino Pimentel Jr and the 11 prosecutors in the case resigned from their posts and left the proceedings. The developments, televised live, incensed a growing crowd that gathered outside the EDSA shrine (built to commemorate the People Power Revolution of 1986, thus giving this demonstration its name, **EDSA II**), and by 19 January the PNP and Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) withdrew their support for Estrada and joined the protests. The next day, Macapagal-Arroyo was sworn in as president in front of the crowd at EDSA by the chief justice, Hilario Davide Jr, despite doubts over the constitutionality of this move. Estrada's trial continued from April 2001 to September 2007 when he was sentenced to *Reclusion Perpetua* (though his co-accused were acquitted), and he filed an appeal. He was granted exclusive clemency by President Macapagal-Arroyo in October 2007, ending the trial.

Macapagal-Arroyo's presidency was first challenged by Estrada supporters who staged the 'EDSA III' demonstrations upon his arrest in April 2001. Macapagal-Arroyo declared a state of rebellion in response, and the protests were put down by the AFP and PNP. EDSA again became a focal point of revolt on 27 July 2003 when 321 AFP soldiers, known as the 'Bagong Kaputineros', occupied the Oakwood Premier Ayala Centre between EDSA and Makati Avenue in Makati City, Metro Manila. The mutiny, which ended with an agreement that same day, was carried out to demand reform of the AFP. Further challenges emerged during Macapagal-Arroyo's second term from 2004 to 2010. An alleged *coup d'état* was exposed on 24 February 2006, to which she responded with warrantless arrests and the seizure of private institutions in control of public utilities. School was suspended nationwide, leftists were arrested and charged, and the office of the *Daily Tribune*,

which had been critical of the administration, was raided. Another rebellion was staged on 29 November 2007 by several officials detained in the Oakwood mutiny who walked out of their trials and took control of the Peninsula Manila Hotel for six hours. Despite these challenges, the administration garnered considerable praise for its economic management. President Macapagal-Arroyo, formerly an economics lecturer, undertook a reform agenda that contributed to an average growth rate of 4.5 per cent during her tenure, higher than the three preceding administrations. The *peso* also became East Asia's best-performing currency between 2005 and 2007. Macapagal-Arroyo is also credited with granting amnesty to the long-persecuted members of the Communist Party of the Philippines, the **New People's Army**, the **National Democratic Front** (an umbrella communist organization) and other rebel groups. Several controversies dogged Macapagal-Arroyo's presidency. The first was regarding the constitutionality of her terms in office. Macapagal-Arroyo's direct installation in 2001, in the absence of an election, raised legal concerns. Her re-election in 2004, too, was initially seen as unlawful, but upheld on grounds that while the constitution bars a president from re-election, a president who has succeeded the incumbent for not more than four years may be elected. Macapagal-Arroyo was later accused of vote tampering, and this formed the basis of the first of four impeachment complaints in 2005. Several additional allegations, including corruption, extrajudicial killings, torture, and illegal arrests also surfaced. Macapagal-Arroyo's use of emergency powers was called into question as well. The arrests and seizure of private institutions that followed the attempted coup in 2006 were declared illegal by the Supreme Court. The **Maguindanao Massacre** of 57 people in November 2009 prompted her to place the province under martial law, suspending the writ of *habeas corpus* for the first time since 1972. Following the expiration of her presidential term at the May 2010 general elections, Macapagal-Arroyo returned to Congress as representative of the second district of Pangasinana in a landslide victory – only the second president after Jose Laurel to seek lower office

after the presidency. In November 2011, she was arrested while confined in St Luke's Medical Centre on charges of electoral sabotage but was released when charges were dropped. She was rearrested in 2012 for allegedly misusing state funds but was acquitted in July 2016.

Benigno Simeon Cojuangco Aquino III, son of Benigno Aquino Jr and Corazón Aquino and chairman of the Liberal Party, was elected to office in June 2010. Popular support for Benigno Aquino III, also known by the nickname 'Noy' or 'Noy', grew after the death of his mother in August 2009. The former senator and deputy speaker of the House of Representatives, known for several reform bills targeted at the police, the courts, and property valuation, among other areas, replaced Mar Roxas as the Liberal Party's standard bearer and defeated his closest contender, Joseph Estrada, by more than five million votes, becoming the third-youngest elected president of the Philippines. Upon entering office, Aquino initiated education reform, established a Truth Commission to investigate allegations against Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, and reversed unconstitutional midnight appointments by Macapagal-Arroyo before the presidential transition. Within three months of Aquino's inauguration, the **Manila Hostage Crisis**, in which a former PNP officer hijacked a bus with 25 Hong Kong tourists in a bid for reinstatement, took place in front of the Quirino Grandstand where he was sworn in. The crisis was resolved, but not without first claiming eight fatalities. Aquino managed to consolidate his position at the May 2013 mid-term elections which saw his Liberal Party win 9 out of 12 Senate seats, make substantial gains in the lower house of Congress, and retain its control of nearly half of the available gubernatorial seats. That election also saw former president Joseph Estrada return to Philippine politics by winning the mayoral election in Manila.

In May 2016, Aquino was succeeded by the populist septuagenarian former mayor of Davao, **Rodrigo Duterte**, who was elected by a Filipino electorate disillusioned with the prevailing status quo, which privileged the interests of politically connected business groups. Duterte entered office having gained notoriety as a maverick, and he had no intention

of stepping back from that reputation while serving in Malacanang Palace. Throughout his presidency, Duterte constantly courted controversy, including publicly insulting the Pope – complete with the use of expletives – for causing traffic jams in Metro Manila during his visit and undermining a prominent journalist who decried his government's alleged abuse of power. Arguably the most tendentious domestic issue that marked his time in office was his signature war on drugs policy, where he encouraged vigilantism against drug users and advocated extrajudicial killing. The drug war was in fulfilment of his campaign promise to eradicate drug use and prevent the country from becoming a narco-state, but the implementation of the policy was so brutal that a UN report sanctioned by its human rights council and completed in June 2020 found that Philippine police and officials acted 'with impunity' in their conduct of the war on drugs. Despite international outrage, to which Duterte showed cavalier disregard, his domestic popularity ratings increased especially among the marginalized poor, and in May 2019 his allies won a clean sweep at the mid-term Senate elections.

The MILF announced in 2011 – two years after the suspension of military operations by the Macapagal-Arroyo administration in 2009 – that it would no longer seek secession from the Philippines. Prior to that, the Memorandum of Agreement on the Muslim Ancestral Domain, which had been finalized between the government and the MILF and would have given limited autonomy to 700 villages within a newly created Bangsamoro Judicial Entity, was blocked and declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court. Aquino resumed peace talks with the MILF leadership after the announcement, though rogue factions continued to launch sporadic attacks against the AFP, such as the killing of 19 soldiers at al-Barka, Basilan, in October 2011. Finally, a new agreement on limited autonomy was reached with the Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro, signed in October 2012 after extended discussions, and Aquino made a landmark visit to the MILF headquarters in Sultan Kudarat, Mindanao, in February 2013. This subsequently paved the way for a landmark **Comprehensive Agreement on the**

**Bangsamoro (CAB).** Plebiscites held in January and February 2019 approved the Bangsamoro Organic Law, thereby bringing into being the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, which replaced the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. Not all Bangsamoro combatants accepted the agreement, however, and conflict persisted in the form of political violence involving numerous MILF and ASG splinter groups, including elements linked to ISIS. On 23 May 2017, militants overtook Marawi City in the southern province of Lanao del Sur. The **Marawi Siege** lasted five months, ending only when Philippine military forces, after numerous tactical setbacks, managed to retake the city.

On the foreign policy front, the presidency of Fidel Ramos had marked a major discontinuity in relations with the United States, which withdrew its military presence completely in November 1992. After independence, the former colonial power had been accorded sovereign rights over extensive military base facilities through a treaty in 1947. In 1951 the two countries also entered into a mutual **Philippines–US Security Treaty**, which constituted an American guarantee in the context of the Cold War. The US military presence became a controversial factor in domestic politics made acute by Washington's support for Marcos's regime until virtually the last possible moment when he was discarded. Nationalist agitation against the US military presence revived during Corazón Aquino's tenure. Negotiations for an agreement to phase out that presence by the end of the decade failed because the nationalist card was employed by members of the Senate with presidential ambitions. In the event, the reliability of the United States was further questioned by Duterte, whose tenure was marked with frequent opprobrium towards Washington as the Philippine president sought better ties with Beijing while correspondingly threatening to withdraw from the **Visiting Forces Agreement**, a threat that failed to resonate with his defence establishment.

The Republic had been a founder of **ASEAN** (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) in August 1967, but differences with Malaysia over the **Philippines' Claim to Sabah** soured

the relationship and enthusiasm for ASEAN. Less than convincing offers to drop the claim were treated sceptically in Kuala Lumpur until Fidel Ramos announced in September 1992 that it would no longer be pursued. An improvement in relations was marked by Ramos's official visit to Kuala Lumpur in January 1993, the first by a Philippine president since 1968. Nevertheless, while the claim remained dormant, it was never really abandoned by Manila. In 2013, the matter surfaced yet again when militants linked to the self-proclaimed sultan of Sulu, Jamalul Kiram III, launched an audacious raid on **Lahad Datu** in Sabah in an attempt to reclaim the territory for the Sulu sultanate by force. The resulting standoff ended with a massive Malaysian military operation to flush out the militants while the Philippines government issued nervous calls for restraint on both sides. Membership of ASEAN has come to be of increasing importance to the Philippines with its changing relationship with the United States. In December 1987 the ASEAN heads of government persisted in holding a third meeting at their **Manila Summit** in order to demonstrate solidarity with Corazón Aquino, who had nearly been toppled by a coup attempt.

The Philippines has long asserted sovereignty over a number of the Spratly Islands in the **South China Sea** which lie to its west. In July 1992 at a meeting of its foreign ministers in Manila, ASEAN served as a vehicle for a **Declaration on the South China Sea** calling on claimants to jurisdiction to settle disputes by peaceful means. That declaration did not inhibit China from seizing a reef near the Philippines island of Palawan in February 1995; nor Malaysia from seizing two others in 1999. The military weakness of the Philippines in the face of China's maritime assertiveness prompted a reconsideration of relations with its main treaty partner. In May 1999, the Philippines Senate approved a Visiting Forces Agreement with the United States. In February 2000, the first large-scale joint military exercise was conducted with American forces. Notwithstanding President Duterte's stream of invectives against the United States, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo assured the Philippines in March 2019 that

America would come to its defence if it came under attack in the South China Sea.

The Sipadan hostage crisis, when ASG occupied a dive resort and took 21 hostages, became the trigger for Washington's first direct military involvement in the Philippines for counter-terrorism purposes since foreign troops were banned in the 1987 Constitution. The Macapagal-Arroyo administration cited the 1951 Mutual Defence Treaty to provide a legal basis for Exercise Balikatan 02-1, in which an initial deployment of 650 troops arrived in January 2002 for joint operations with the AFP. In addition, the United States extended US\$93 million in military aid to the Philippines and US\$55 million in development aid for Mindanao. On Macapagal-Arroyo's insistence, the US contingent largely served an advisory function: 500 of the troops were support/maintenance personnel while the remaining 150 special forces members took on training and advisory roles, some accompanying AFP units on Basilan. These figures were scaled up in 2003 following the death of a US special forces soldier in a Zamboanga bombing the previous October, reaching a peak of 350 special forces troops, 400 support personnel, 1,000 marines and a 1,300-strong naval force, authorized to play a frontline combat role against the estimated 500 ASG fighters in Jolo.

The Philippines' relations with China fluctuated during this period of closer military collaboration with the United States. In 1996, following the resolution of the Mischief Reef dispute in 1994-5, the two nations agreed to cooperation and consensus regarding disputes and joint developments in the South China Sea, later affirmed by the Joint Statement on the Framework of Cooperation in the Twenty-First Century, signed in 2000. The goodwill continued with the signing of the **Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea** (DOC) in 2002, between China and ASEAN. In 2004, however, the Macapagal-Arroyo administration undertook controversial joint explorations with China in parts of the South China Sea then also contested by Vietnam and China, under the Joint Marine Seismic Undertaking (JMSU). Strong domestic opposition arose, not only because Macapagal-Arroyo was perceived as having reneged on

the terms of the DOC and hence broken ranks with ASEAN, but also because the enterprise was seen as an opportunity for further corruption and resource manipulation on the part of the administration. Relations with China began to sour in 2007 when a bill which defined the Philippines' territorial baselines to include the Spratly Islands passed two readings in the House of Representatives. Other ASEAN nations, including Vietnam and Brunei, subsequently submitted rival claims over various landforms in the South China Sea, and tensions escalated. In April 2012, the Philippine Navy detained and boarded eight Chinese fishing vessels in the South China Sea, in what came to be known as the **Scarborough Shoal Dispute**. Attempts to arrest the fishermen were blocked by Chinese maritime surveillance ships. Heated reactions to the incident included calls to boycott Chinese goods sold in the Philippines, cyberattacks on the websites of the University of the Philippines, the *Philippine Star*, and even the *Official Gazette*, as well as stricter sanctions on Philippine fruit exports to China, and the suspension of Chinese tours to the Philippines. In May 2012, the United States expressed support for the Philippines in the standoff, with several senators describing China's claims as 'illegal' and 'provocative', and US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton using the Philippines' preferred name for the South China Sea: the West Philippine Sea. Disputes over the Spratlys and Scarborough Shoal remain unresolved. Despite popular sensitivities towards foreign troops in the country, escalating tensions in the South China Sea have further prompted Manila to negotiate a larger US presence in order to deter Chinese aggression. In March 2014, Manila officially filed a memorandum with the UN International Tribunal on the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) to pressure China to clarify its claims in the waters of the South China Sea by asking the Tribunal to decide whether China's historical nine-dash line claim has a legal basis under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). The results of the hearings, released on 12 July 2016, ruled overwhelmingly in favour of the Philippines. By then however, the presidency had changed hands, and the incumbent, Rodrigo Duterte, refused to parlay



the result into diplomatic advantage, choosing instead to genuflect in the direction of China.

see *also*: Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG); APEC; Aquino, Benigno; Aquino, Benigno Simeon Cojuangco, III; Aquino, Corazón; ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB); Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (ASEAN) 2002; Declaration on the South China Sea (ASEAN) 1992; Duterte, Rodrigo; EDSA (Epifanio de los Santos Avenue); EDSA II; Enrile, Juan Ponce; Estrada, Joseph

Ejercito; Islam; Lahad Datu Crisis 2013; *Lakas-CMD*; Liberal Party; Macapagal-Arroyo, Gloria; Maguindanao Massacre 2009; Manila Hostage Crisis 2010; Manila Summit 1987; Marawi Siege 2017; Marcos, Ferdinand; Marcos, Imelda; Moro Islamic Liberation Front; Moro National Liberation Front; *Nacionalista* Party; National Democratic Front; New People's Army; People Power; Philippines' Claim to Sabah; Philippines–US Security Treaty 1951; Ramos, Fidel; Scarborough Shoal Dispute; South China Sea; Sin, Cardinal Jaime; Subic Bay Naval Base; Tripoli Agreement 1976; Visiting Forces Agreement 1998.

## Singapore, Republic of

The island-state of Singapore, with a land area of just over 600 square kilometres, is located at the southern tip of peninsular Malaysia. It is separated from Malaysia by the Strait of Johor but is joined to the mainland by a causeway carrying road traffic (and previously, a railway) and a separate road bridge that was opened in 1998. The **Singapore Strait** to the south separates the republic from the Riau Islands of Indonesia. It has a population of more than five million people, of whom over three million are citizens. Three-quarters of the citizen population are ethnic Chinese of migrant origin. Some 15 per cent are ethnic Malay, many with links across the **Strait of Johor** from whose sultan the British pro-consul Sir Stamford Raffles acquired the island in 1819.

Singapore has become an exemplar of post-colonial Asian modernization and achievement, especially under the dynamic leadership of the late **Lee Kuan Yew**, who served as its prime minister from June 1959 until November 1990. The island is a model of urban planning and design, with remarkable accomplishments in public housing and environmental provision as well as in technological achievement. Astounding economic success beyond a traditional role as a regional trading entrepôt has taken place within a stable and centralized political system in which a mandatory democracy to the advantage of the ruling **People's Action Party** (PAP) has made it difficult for effective opposition to emerge. That form of democracy is based on an informal social contract whereby a strong government is accepted in return for material advantages. Recent years, however, have seen growing popular resentment translate into notable gains for the political opposition, principally the **Workers' Party** (WP).

Singapore had been separated from Britain's local colonial domain after the Pacific War partly because of its strategic importance as a military base. It acquired self-governing status in 1959 concurrent with the electoral success of PAP, which has been continuously in power

ever since. The leadership of that party judged then that Singapore did not have any future as an independent entity and persuaded Malaya's prime minister, **Tunku Abdul Rahman**, to include it within a wider federation of Malaysia, which was established in September 1963. Singapore's tenure within Malaysia was stormy and brief because of the attempt by PAP (seen as a Chinese party) to become a part of the federal political establishment. On 9 August 1965, against a background of rising racial tension, Singapore formally separated from Malaysia to become an independent republic. That enforced independence, at a time when Indonesia was still engaged in active **Confrontation** against Malaysia, gave rise to an acute vulnerability which has become part of the political culture of the state. An initial abrasiveness of tone in foreign policy has been succeeded over time by greater moderation based on national accomplishment and a more assured regional place within **ASEAN** (Association of South-east Asian Nations), but an underlying sense of vulnerability pervades the calculations of the political elite. That fear has translated into a recurrent practice of mobilizing the population, who are told that the world does not owe them a living and that the material advantages they now enjoy cannot be taken for granted. Order and stability have in consequence been given a higher priority than political freedoms, justified on the ground that Singapore's prosperity depends much on the confidence reposed in the state by foreign investors whose flow of capital has been responsible for successful economic development based initially on export-led growth, but now increasingly on advanced technological and digital sectors. Initially, PAP had faced a political challenge from a radical left-wing faction which split off in 1961 in opposition to membership of Malaysia. The **Barisan Sosialis** (Socialist Front) then withdrew from parliamentary politics, leaving the field to PAP until the early 1980s. In October 1981, however, a by-election was won by **J. B. Jeyaretnam**

representing WP, which had been a communist front in the late 1950s.

In general elections in 1984, Jeyaretnam retained his seat, while **Chiam See Tong** from the Singapore Democratic Party was also successful at the expense of PAP, which suffered an adverse voting swing of over 12 per cent. Generational change and a resentment of high-handedness by government had led to a growing measure of political alienation. That voting trend against PAP was sustained marginally in elections in September 1988 and again in August 1991, when PAP was led by the prime minister, **Goh Chok Tong**, who had succeeded Lee Kuan Yew in November 1990. An unprecedented four seats were lost to opposition members in 1991. Moreover, in elections for a president with reserve powers in August 1993, the incremental voting trend against PAP continued when an unknown candidate secured more than 40 per cent against **Ong Teng Cheong**, who had resigned from the office of deputy prime minister in order to stand. Tension between President Ong Teng Cheong and members of the Cabinet over the interpretation of his responsibilities and remit led him to stand down at the end of his term. He was succeeded in August 1999 by S. R. Nathan, a former intelligence chief and diplomat, who eventually served two terms unopposed. He, in turn, was succeeded by Tony Tan Keng Yam, a former banker and deputy prime minister who once was identified by Lee Kuan Yew as his preferred successor as prime minister, in 2011, although the fact that he was elected by a narrow margin of less than 1 per cent suggested widespread discontent against the government had not diminished. In 2017, Halimah Yaacob was elected unopposed to the presidency, marking the first time the office was occupied by a female. Yet this watershed accomplishment was overshadowed by the fact that the 2017 presidential election was also the island-state's first 'reserve election' via the Presidential Elections (Amendment) Bill, which legislated that any given presidential election could be limited to candidates of one of the main ethnic groups if no one from that group had been elected president in the preceding five terms. Ostensibly to allow for regular minority representation in the highest office in the land

as well as to raise the qualifying threshold for presidential candidates, the introduction of the bill was nevertheless speculated to have been designed to exclude particular individuals from qualifying. In the event, the passing of the bill meant that the 2017 presidential election was reserved for a member of the Malay community.

The 1997 'Singapore 21' plan seemed to mark a shift towards consultative politics, building on the work of the Feedback Unit – renamed Reaching Everyone for Active Citizenry at Home, or REACH, in 2006 – established by Goh Chok Tong, who was then deputy prime minister, in 1985. Singapore 21 worked to document and synthesize the concerns of 6,000 Singaporeans of various income-groups, across all sectors, and became the basis of a 'Singapore 21 Vision' which the republic adopted as a broad blueprint to tackle anticipated challenges of the 21st century. Its focus on aspects of the Singaporean identity also reflected a growing awareness of Singapore's lack of a coherent national ethos, and Goh's desire to strengthen what he termed the 'heartware' of the nation. In 2002, the 'Remaking Singapore' dialogue chaired by the minister of state for national development, Vivian Balakrishnan, continued this trend, but was seen as a step further in focusing on proposals to relax current government regulations in different areas. In effect, these public outreach initiatives marked the beginning of a trend of having national dialogues as a means of soliciting views from the public on pressing matters that affected them.

Challenges Goh faced in the latter half of his term included the 2001 terrorist plots against foreign embassies in Singapore and the 2003 **Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)** outbreak. The former involved a plan by Al-Qaeda-linked regional terror group **Jemaah Islamiyah (JI)** to bomb the diplomatic missions of the United States, Australia, the United Kingdom, and Israel in Singapore. An Internal Security Division operation in December 2001 foiled the plan, with 15 conspirators detained within the month and another 26 over the subsequent years of investigation. The latter involved the spread of the SARS epidemic to Singapore in March 2003 via three Singaporeans who had contracted it in Hong Kong, to which Goh's

administration responded with a slew of national prevention and control measures such as the closure of schools and public places, and intensive healthcare provision.

By the turn of the century, the question of leadership and political change arose in the domestic political arena as the post-independence generation, or 'post-65ers', had come of age without direct experience of the difficulties faced by their parents and grandparents. Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong left an imprint of political moderation on Singapore, distinguishing himself from Lee Kuan Yew primarily through the projection of a 'softer' stance at home and abroad, rather than by significant policy developments. In the eyes of many, he was largely in the shadow of his illustrious predecessor, who remained in the Cabinet with the rank of senior minister and later assumed the title of Minister Mentor, which he held until his passing on 23 March 2015. Goh was succeeded by Lee's brilliant and dynamic elder son, **Lee Hsien Loong**, in August 2004. Among Lee Hsien Loong's first policy initiatives were the introduction of a five-day work week and a two-month paid maternity leave for mothers of newborn children, both announced at the National Day Rally on the same day as his swearing-in at the Istana. Within the year, Lee also announced proposals for two Integrated Resorts (holiday resorts with casinos) at Marina Bay and Sentosa respectively. This was seen by many as an open endorsement of gambling in the city-state, as well as a prelude to related undesirable activity such as money laundering and organized crime, and several religious and social-welfare groups openly criticized the project. Lee acknowledged these concerns but went forward with the announcement in April 2005 that the government had chosen to approve the proposals, albeit with social safeguards to limit problem gambling, and took full responsibility for the outcome of the decision. Ahead of Lee's first general election in 2006, the government announced a S\$2.6 billion 'Progress Package' that distributed budget surpluses from the preceding years to all Singaporeans, in the form of cash handouts, pension increases, public housing rebates, and educational funds – to be implemented in the same month as the

elections. Lee led PAP to victory in 82 out of 84 seats with an overall vote-share of 66.6 per cent. PAP, however, failed to capture the two single-member constituency opposition strongholds – Hougang, defended by WP secretary-general **Low Thia Khiang**, and Potong Pasir, defended by Chiam See Tong – despite this being a special assignment for Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong. PAP also saw its vote-share dip island-wide and its overall majority fall by over 8 per cent. On the other hand, WP was the best-performing opposition party with an increased vote-share of over 13 per cent.

The onset of the global financial crisis at the end of 2007 provided a stiff challenge for Lee and his ministers, though not quite of the magnitude of that posed by the **Asian Financial Crisis** of 1997 that beset Goh Chok Tong's cabinet. In December 2007, Lee relinquished the important post of minister of finance, which he held concurrently, to Tharman Shanmugaratnam, who had been the chief executive of the Monetary Authority of Singapore prior to entering politics. Though Singapore became the first Asian country to enter a technical recession after growth fell for two successive quarters in 2008, Tharman's adroit handling of the financial situation minimized the duress and ensured a speedy recovery for the republic. He would be appointed chairman of the international monetary and financial committee at the International Monetary Fund in March 2011. At the same time, a series of delays and malfunctions on the Mass Rapid Transit System called into question the capacity and integrity of the public transport system, resulting in a change of transport ministers.

More significant leadership changes were to come after the 2011 general election. Held in May that year, the election took place against a backdrop of increasing popular resentment over rising costs of living, influx of foreign workers, a growing income gap which led to harsh criticism of the high salaries of cabinet ministers during the financial crisis that left the common people reeling, and the perceived practice of pork-barrel politics through overt promises of housing development and amenity enhancement for PAP-held wards. The landmark election result returned an opposition slate in a

Group Representation Constituency (GRC) for the first time, and it saw a 6.46 per cent swing against the PAP to its lowest vote-share since independence, at 60 per cent. While Lee Kuan Yew and Goh Chok Tong retained their parliamentary seats for their respective constituencies, both stepped down from the cabinet. PAP candidates who lost included the minister of foreign affairs, George Yeo Yong Boon, the first sitting PAP cabinet minister to lose an election, and two other junior cabinet ministers. The 2011 election was held amidst the loosening of previous constraints on the opposition, including reducing the number of GRCs, increasing the number of non-constituency and nominated members of Parliament, and legalizing internet campaigning.

Two by-elections were subsequently held in 2012, with PAP losing them both to a WP that was growing in confidence. The progress that the opposition was making appeared to grind to a halt in 2015, when PAP rebounded to win elections that year with almost 70 per cent of the popular vote on its way to securing 83 of 89 parliamentary seats. The 11 September 2015 election was significant for being the first in which all parliamentary seats were contested. But there were two further factors that shaped the outcome of the elections. First, the polls took place in the midst of celebrations of the island-state's 50th year of independence, which provided PAP an opportunity to showcase its past achievements. Second, and arguably most poignant, it took place barely six months after the passing of Lee Kuan Yew, one of the founding fathers of independent Singapore who succumbed to a severe bout of pneumonia on 23 March at the age of 91. For the WP, which saw no movement in its vote-share at the 2015 election, the lacklustre performance precipitated a contest for party leadership in 2016, which saw the incumbent, Low Thia Khiang, prevail. He would, however, later relinquish office in April 2018 on his own terms, but not before assembling a dynamic team in the Central Committee.

As the citizenry mourned the demise of Lee Kuan Yew, simmering differences among his three children came out into the open in an acrimonious spat ostensibly over different views on

their father's wishes with regards to the fate of the family home, when Lee Hsien Loong was accused by his two siblings, Lee Hsien Yang and Lee Wei Ling, of going against the will of their late father. A controversial election was called in 2020 in the midst of the **Covid-19** pandemic, leading many analysts to predict a sizable mandate for PAP on grounds of it being a 'crisis election' which was expected to trigger the 'flight to safety' effect. In the event, PAP managed to retain power with a supermajority of 83 out of 93 parliamentary seats, but its vote-share fell to slightly over 61 per cent, a swing of almost 9 per cent. WP, on the other hand, managed to defend its GRC and win another, on the way to ten parliamentary seats and the best ever election performance by the opposition in Singapore's history. In recognition of the achievement of his adversaries, Lee Hsien Loong formally acknowledged Low's successor as secretary-general of WP, Pritam Singh, as official leader of the opposition, the first time this had occurred in Singapore's history. The election result also cast a harsh light on leadership succession, a matter for which Singapore was hitherto well-known in terms of its meticulous and strategic planning that left nothing to chance. Previous leadership transitions have seen successors identified early in order to afford them sufficient preparation time for high office. While Heng Swee Keat had been identified as the front runner to succeed Lee Hsien Loong following his promotion to deputy prime minister in May 2020, a somewhat unconvincing election result gave pause. On 8 April 2021, Heng took himself out of the equation for political succession.

The pattern of electoral outcomes since 2011 suggests that Singapore has entered a new era where a restive segment of the population, born after 1965 and brought up in prosperity, have no memory of the trials and turbulence that paved Singapore's storied road to independence and success, nor do they feel any obligation to support the new generation of PAP leaders. While becoming an increasingly high-technology biomedical, business, and communications hub, Singapore has also reached the level of a mature economy with a growth rate plateauing at around 2–3 per cent per year, and an ageing

population dependent on immigration to maintain its natural increase.

Internationally, Singapore has enjoyed an influence out of proportion to its minuscule scale and limited population. This has owed much to a reputation for excellence and also to the intellectual calibre of its first prime minister, Lee Kuan Yew, who remains an international statesman *par excellence*. Independence coincided with tense relationships with its closest neighbours, Malaysia and Indonesia. Those relationships have never been easy, especially with Malaysia, with which a structural tension was expressed in periodic open antagonism, most noticeably when both **Mahathir Mohamad** and Lee Kuan Yew served in office on either side of the causeway. Indeed, after a period of relative calm following the retirements of the two elder statesmen, the return of Mahathir to high office in Malaysia in 2018, albeit for an abbreviated period of only two years, was accompanied by the return of familiar points of contention such as over the price of raw water that Singapore purchased from Malaysia, as well as disputes over airspace and the future of the causeway. In the event, those tensions have been contained up to a point through common membership and interest in ASEAN. But Singapore has continually looked beyond the Association, exemplified by its initiative in promoting the **ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF)**, **ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM)**, **Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM)**, and the **East Asia Summit (EAS)**. Singapore's foreign policy has been directed to prevent the dominance regionally of any state that might be able to challenge its independence. To that end, its leaders have been keen to sustain the regional security engagement of the United States. In 1990, it entered into a memorandum of understanding for American use of military facilities on the island. And with its withdrawal from the Philippines in 1992, the US naval logistics command headquarters was relocated to Singapore. In November 1998, an additional memorandum of understanding was concluded under which the United States was offered the use of the new Changi naval base for its aircraft carriers. The relationship was taken further in 2005 with the signing of the Strategic Framework Agreement, and again

in 2015, when an enhanced Defence Cooperation Agreement came into force, accompanying the rotational deployment of littoral vessels and US Navy P-8A Poseidon maritime multimission aircraft.

Singapore was an active diplomatic adversary of Vietnam within ASEAN during the Cambodian conflict, but with the end of the Cold War and the **International Conference on Cambodia** in Paris in October 1991, its policy towards Indochina was transformed, exemplified by its support for Vietnam's membership of ASEAN. However, strong resistance was mounted to Cambodia's early membership after the violent coup in July 1997 in Phnom Penh that displaced the coalition government set up under the Paris agreement. Relations with China have experienced considerable progress since diplomatic relations were established in October 1990 after communism ceased to generate political concerns, although residual reservations remain as to the matter of cultural and commercial channels of influence that China can summon among the Chinese majority community in Singapore. Singapore's enthusiasm for economic cooperation with China has gathered at a steady pace since the first joint venture to set up a township in Suzhou, near Shanghai, and now finds foremost expression in the Singapore-Tianjin Eco-City and the Chongqing Initiative, along with a plethora of other joint initiatives. Deepening economic ties notwithstanding, Singapore's close defence relationship with the United States and longstanding ties with Taiwan remain pain points in bilateral relations. In November 2016, China impounded nine military vehicles belonging to the Singapore armed forces, ostensibly during the course of routine customs inspections in Hong Kong, that were making their way back to the island-state after military drills in Taiwan. Within its own region of Southeast Asia, Singapore is viewed with a mixture of respect and resentment because its remarkable economic accomplishments have been realized by a majority-Chinese population who have succeeded in adapting a traditional entrepôt role to the conditions of modern globalization. Its political culture, however, registers an abiding sense of vulnerability, compensated for by an annual defence budget of

over US\$10 billion and the most technologically advanced armed forces in the region.

From 2000 Singapore's foreign policy became more international after it became a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council, for a two-year term. Following the terrorist attacks on the United States in September 2001, Singapore joined in the American-led war on terror, which acquired a regional dimension against the Southeast Asian-based JI. The JI had planned attacks against Western targets in Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia and bombed night-clubs in Bali and hotels in Jakarta (*see Terrorism in Southeast Asia*). Singapore supported the US-led invasion of Afghanistan in October 2001 and subsequently of Iraq in 2003, with logistical and medical assistance groups. Singapore also joined in anti-piracy patrols of the Gulf of Aden and Somalia with international task forces and UN peacekeeping forces in East Timor when it became independent in 2002. In 2014, Singapore threw its weight behind a multinational coalition in their battle against the Islamic State of Iraq and as-Sham, or ISIS, as the global war on terrorism found a new arena and enemy.

Multilateral cooperation was reinforced with regional organizations such as the ASEAN Plus Three (China, Japan, and South Korea) begun in 1998, ASEAN Plus Six (including India, Australia, and New Zealand), and the East Asia Summit (including Russia and the United States) in 2011. Singapore was at the forefront of efforts to conclude free trade agreements and economic partnerships with all the dialogue partners of ASEAN, as well as advancing the cause of the **Trans-Pacific Partnership**

and later, the **Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership**. Spreading its economic wings, Singapore embarked on joint industrial parks and towns not only in China but in India, Vietnam, and other ASEAN neighbours as well. Enlarging its defence network Singapore extended strategic partnerships to India and China (with its ASEAN partners), while promoting an informal grouping of defence ministers of ASEAN which eventually became the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus. Meanwhile, Singapore's military cooperation with France and Australia continued to expand, while Singapore also sent troops for exercises in ASEAN countries and India.

*see also:* Abdul Rahman, Tunku; ADMM (ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting); APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) 1989–; ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) 1994–; ASEM (Asia–Europe Meeting); Asian Financial Crisis 1997–8; *Barisan Sosialis*; Chiam See Tong; Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership; Confrontation; Covid-19; East Asia Summit 2005–; Goh Chok Tong; International Conference on Cambodia, Paris 1991; *Jemaah Islamiyah*; Jeyaretnam, J. B.; Johor, Strait of; Lee Hsien Loong; Lee Kuan Yew; Low Thia Khiang; Mahathir Mohamad, Tun; Ong Teng Cheong; People's Action Party; Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS); Singapore Strait; Terrorism in Southeast Asia; Trans-Pacific Partnership; Workers' Party.

## Thailand, Kingdom of

The Kingdom of Thailand, once known as Siam, is situated in the centre of the mainland of Southeast Asia with a land area of some 500,000 square kilometres. It is the only regional state not to have been subject to European colonialism. While Thailand is a constitutional monarchy, the reigning King **Maha Vajiralongkorn** has demonstrated a degree of activism that belies the criticisms of his detractors that the eccentric ruler would be a disinterested monarch.

To Thailand's west and north lie Myanmar, Laos is to its north and east, Cambodia is to its east, and it shares a southern border with Malaysia. Thailand does not have a direct frontier with the People's Republic of China but is separated from it by only narrow stretches of territory extending from Myanmar and Laos, which touch to its extreme north. Thailand has a population of almost 70 million, primarily composed of ethnic T'ai whose religion is the Theravada branch of **Buddhism**. In addition to tribal minorities, such as the **Hmong** in northern provinces, there is a significant concentration of Malay-Muslims (*see Islam*) in the southern provinces bordering Malaysia, where armed resistance movements continue to operate. The largest minority is that of ethnic Chinese, who comprise some 10 per cent of the population. A considerable proportion, however, have intermarried into Thai families with a notable degree of cultural assimilation (*see Chinese Communities in Southeast Asia*).

The origins of the Thai state date from the tenth century, when ethnic T'ai migrated from southwest China towards the central plain then under the control of the Cambodian empire based around Angkor. The current Thai state dates from the 18th century when King Rama I sited his capital at Bangkok and founded the Chakri dynasty, which is today represented by its tenth incumbent, Maha Vajiralongkorn. From the mid-19th century, modernizing Chakri monarchs opened the country to commercial contact with the west, with the rice

trade as the staple basis for economic development. Western skills were drawn on to develop the machinery of state, which over time had the effect of creating tensions between the monarchy and an emerging military-bureaucratic class. In 1932 the absolute monarchy was overthrown by a military coup to be replaced by a constitutional monarchy. There have been 19 coups in the country since then. Following the events of 1932, two principal internal conflicts have dominated the political life of the country. One was within the armed forces, including the police, for the dominant position; this appeared resolved in 1957 when Marshal **Sarit Thanarat** seized power on behalf of the army. Nevertheless, the police managed to return to a position of prominence for a brief period during the government of **Thaksin Shinawatra**, himself a former police lieutenant colonel, when he attempted to expand their role in national affairs by assigning them responsibilities that traditionally were the preserve of the military, through instruments such as the 2004 Royal Thai Police Act. A putsch in 2006 removed Thaksin from power and returned the political prerogative to the military. Tension, however, still remains within the military, primarily between the faction aligned with the present monarch and those responsible for the most recent coups in 2006 and 2014. More protracted has been the problem of establishing a political format acceptable to all competing interests, including the palace, the middle class, the rural-based working class, and the military.

The issue of political format has tested the stability of the state on numerous occasions, with recurrent acts of military intervention serving as the vehicle of political change. After the Pacific War, during which Thailand was allied with Japan, constitutional government of a kind alternated with direct military rule. Thai constitutionalism, however, has constantly been subject to the tolerance of the military, which has removed or attempted to remove elected governments on numerous occasions since the end



of the Pacific War. The ability of the military to impose their will was facilitated during the 1960s and into the 1970s by the **Vietnam War**, to which Thailand was a party, as well as by the active insurgent role up to the end of the 1970s played by the Communist Party of Thailand. Moreover, Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia and the ensuing third phase of the **Indochina Wars** during the 1980s also served to maintain the political centrality of the armed forces.

The political pre-eminence of the military began to be challenged from the early 1970s as a consequence of successful economic development, which was accompanied by social change foreshadowed by student activism. In addition, King **Bhumibol Adulyadej**, the revered monarch and father of the throne's current occupant, had acquired considerable popular respect for his commitment to rural development and employed the aura of monarchy in the interest of democratization. Violent military reaction to student protest in October 1973 led to the removal of the military regime and its succession by a raucous democratic interlude which was brought to an end by decisive military intervention in October 1976. The tempestuous politics of the mid-1970s concurrent with the communist victories in Indochina alarmed the king, who lent his weight to a period of more benign military rule in the 1980s under the leadership of the army commander and prime minister, **Prem Tinsulanonda**. Two abortive military coups in 1981 and 1985 failed to arrest the gradual return to constitutionalism concurrent with remarkable economic development by the end of the 1980s.

In 1991, the military successfully removed the elected government of **Chatichai Choonhavan**, but it appointed a civilian caretaker prime minister, **Anand Panyarachun**, under pressure from the king. Massive vote-buying in the rural areas led to a victory by military-affiliated political parties during the elections of March 1992, intended to return the country to full civilian rule. The appointment of former army commander-in-chief General **Suchinda Kra-prayoon** as unelected prime minister provoked violent uproar in Bangkok led by the opposition *Palang Dharma* (Moral Force) Party, which only subsided with royal intervention and

Suchinda's resignation. Anand Panyarachun was reappointed acting prime minister over a technocratic government.

Elections in September 1992 produced a new civilian-based coalition with **Chuan Leekpai**, the leader of the **Democrat Party**, as prime minister. The return to civilian rule marked a notable, if temporary, decline in the prerogative political outlook of the armed forces. Political parties outside of the capital have tended to be fleeting constellations of personal and regional interests bound together in the main by considerations of patronage and not by coherent programmes linked to distinctive constituencies. After the 1991 coup, three new political parties were created. Five disappeared, while others splintered and regrouped. The frustrations of coalition government were exemplified by the experience of the administration headed by Chuan Leekpai, which was thwarted in attempting to secure democratic amendments to the constitution imposed by the military after 1991. His success in January 1995 in securing constitutional amendments in the interest of greater democratization was followed by loss of office through elections in July 1995, which were precipitated by the defection of *Palang Dharma*.

A new seven-party coalition with the **Chart Thai Party** at its core and **Banharn Silpa-archa** as prime minister was formed without any threat of military intervention. That coalition collapsed and then lost power in elections in November 1996, to be succeeded by a six-party counterpart headed by former army commander **Chavalit Yongchaiyuth**, leader of the **New Aspiration Party**. The onset of economic crisis following the dramatic floating of the currency in July 1997 precipitated the fall of his government and the emergence of a new political alignment with the Democrat Party at its core. Chuan Leekpai assumed high office for the second time in November 1997 with royal and military support. Initial success in coping with economic adversity gave way to intra-coalition tensions by the turn of the century. Elections to replace the appointed Senate of soldiers and businessmen were held on 4 March 2000. Seventy-eight of the 200 winning candidates were then rejected by the election commission over

allegations of malpractice. By that juncture, the Democrat Party had lost national standing partly through the decision to decorate Field Marshal **Thanom Kittikachorn**, a disgraced former military dictator. The decline in the political fortunes of the Democrat Party lent significance to the rising electoral challenge of the **Thai Rak Thai Party** (TRT) founded by Thaksin in 1998. Thaksin, a noted businessman and former deputy superintendent in the police, with a staunch following in the northeast of the country, had previously served as foreign minister and deputy prime minister under the Chuan, Banharn, and Chavalit administrations and briefly as leader of *Palang Dharma*. Competing for the first time in the January 2001 elections – the first to be held under the 1997 Constitution – Thaksin's TRT promised universal access to healthcare and extensive rural development and carried 248 of 500 elected seats in the National Assembly. Though TRT required only three more seats to form a government, Thaksin chose to form a coalition with *Chart Thai* (which had won 41 seats) and the New Aspiration Party (36 seats) and merged TRT with the *Seritham* Party (14 seats). He went on to be the first elected prime minister of Thailand to complete a full term in office. It was also during his term that a power struggle was triggered between the traditional middle-class Bangkok-based elite and royalists on the one hand, and the rural masses, Thaksin's support base, on the other.

Thaksin's administration, which consisted of his *Palang Dharma* allies, former student demonstrators from the 1973 protests and academics, received praise for policies which targeted rural poverty, the drug trade, and public health, driven by a strong recovery from the 1997–8 **Asian Financial Crisis** that allowed the country to repay its debts to the IMF two years ahead of schedule. The means which delivered these excellent outcomes, however, were often controversial. For example, Thaksin's legalization of Thailand's underground lottery system, under the Government Lottery Office, allowed lottery sales of up to THB\$70 billion to be used for rural social projects but was seen as a profit-making initiative and the root of social problems in the urban areas. Especially controversial was the 'War on Drugs', initially declared by King

Bhumibol on the eve of his birthday in 2002. Having found measures such as border controls and educational campaigns ineffective, Thaksin launched a national effort in January 2003 to exterminate drug abuse in three months. This involved rewarding and punishing officials based on their ability to meet provincial arrest and seizure targets, and led to the creation of at least 2,800 'death squads' mandated to carry out extrajudicial killings of suspected drug abusers and traders. A total of 2,604 resultant murders were recorded – not all of which could be linked conclusively to drug crimes. While the Narcotics Control Board widely publicized the policy's effectiveness in reducing drug consumption, advocacy groups such as Human Rights Watch held that many were accused on false charges, while serial drug users and traders continued despite the government's best efforts. In addition to these criticisms, the Thaksin government was accused of 'policy corruption', a term used to describe the diversion of state funding to companies linked to the Shinawatra family through infrastructure or liberalization policies. These emerged as central issues following Thaksin's re-election in 2005, which saw the highest voter turnout in Thai history. Soon after TRT won 374 seats, opposition politicians led by **Sondhi Limthongkul** of the **People's Alliance for Democracy** (PAD), also a popular talk-show host, alleged abuses of power by the administration. The sale of the Shinawatra family's stake in Shin Corporation to Temasek Holdings (owned by the Government of Singapore) for THB\$73 billion in January 2006 provided further fodder for his opponents. Protests took place daily outside Government House, compelling Thaksin to dissolve Parliament on 24 February 2006. The ensuing snap elections of April 2006 were widely boycotted, and though TRT again won a technical majority, gaining 462 seats, the Constitutional Court invalidated the results in May 2006. By this time, there had been two impeachment attempts against Thaksin, launched by a group of 28 senators and the Thai university students' network, respectively. Thaksin stepped down as prime minister following an audience with King Bhumibol on 4 April 2006 and appointed Chidchai Wannasathit of TRT as caretaker prime minister in his

stead. Non-parliamentary players soon became involved. After nullifying the results of the April elections, the Court ordered fresh elections to be held in October, and called on the Electoral Commission to resign. Upon the commissioners' refusal, on the grounds of their constitutional independence, the Criminal Courts jailed them and removed them from their posts in July 2006. In the same month, despite earlier assurances in May that the army would not take advantage of the political upheaval, up to 100 army officials close to Thaksin were reassigned by the military high command, and by August tank movements were reported near Bangkok, prompting fears of a coup. President of the Privy Council and former general and prime minister, Prem Tinsulanonda, fanned the flames of speculation further when he suggested in July that the Thai military owed greater allegiance to the king than to the government. Protestors on the streets took sides in what came to be seen as a pro-Thaksin or pro-Monarchy standoff – a view promoted by Sondhi – with divisions exacerbated by claims that Thaksin had insulted the king, and Thaksin's own comments that extra-parliamentary organizations were seeking to overthrow the rule of law.

The Royal Thai Army, led by General **Sonthi Boonyaratglin**, removed Thaksin's government in a swift *coup d'état* on the evening of 19 September 2006, marking Thailand's first non-constitutional change of government in 15 years. By the time Thaksin, who was attending a meeting of the UN General Assembly, announced a state of emergency by telephone from New York and attempted to transfer Sonthi from his post as army commander, both the deputy prime minister, Chidchai Wannasathit, and the defence minister, Thammarak Isaragura na Ayuthaya, had been arrested, and national radio and TV networks taken off air. Approaching midnight, the army-led Council for Democratic Reform (CDR) issued two statements declaring the coup successful and promised to return power to the people. Nevertheless, a third statement in the early hours of 20 September dissolved the cabinet, both houses of Parliament, and the Constitutional Court, and suspended the constitution. Martial law was declared nationwide. As a result

of the coup, elections scheduled for 15 October did not take place. The CDR, representing all branches of the army and police, declared King Bhumibol head of state, granted General Sonthi the powers of a premier, gave itself the role of Parliament, and created a new National Police Commission under a police general, Kowit Wattana. It then ordered 58 prominent civilians, many of whom were academics, to serve as advisors in various capacities, though most denied having been informed of their appointments and subsequently refused their positions. The CDR also released an interim constitution in September 2006, renaming itself the Council of National Security (CNS), and appointed former deputy president of the Supreme Court Nam Yimyaem to lead a committee investigating allegations against the Thaksin administration. In October 2006, General **Surayud Chulanont**, former supreme commander of the army, was appointed to high office. The CNS reserved a powerful executive role.

The 2006 coup deeply polarized Thai society and precipitated a political crisis pitting supporters of Thaksin against royalists, sending convulsions across the country. From January 2007, specific charges by the Financial Institutions Development Fund and the attorney general were brought against Thaksin, who was residing in the United Kingdom, under an Assets Examination Committee selected by the junta. In June, Prime Minister Surayud declared that he would personally guarantee Thaksin's safety if the latter returned to Thailand. Thaksin, who had by this time purchased Manchester City Football Club, eventually arrived in Bangkok in February 2008, and pleaded not guilty to charges of criminal corruption in March. A month-long return to the UK was granted by the courts, but from June 2008 Thaksin's travel requests were denied, and arrest warrants issued when Thaksin subsequently skipped bail to attend the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing. Arrest warrants were also issued for Thaksin's wife Potjaman, who was found guilty of violating stock-trading and land sale laws in July but had left the country with her husband. Thaksin was officially found guilty of abusing his power as prime minister in October

2008, and both Thaksin's and Potjaman's visas were revoked by the UK.

On 19 August 2007, Thai voters approved a newly drafted constitution in a referendum, after the junta banned public criticism and threatened not to relinquish power if the referendum was not passed. The new Constitutional Tribunal then found TRT guilty of bribing two smaller parties to cooperate in the 2006 elections, and dissolved it; party executives, including Thaksin, were banned from politics for five years. TRT reformulated itself as the **People's Power Party** (PPP) to contest the December 2007 elections, the first general election since the coup, under the leadership of **Samak Sundaravej** and managed to win 233 out of 480 parliamentary seats, going on to form the government via the vehicle of an alliance with five smaller parties. PPP's victory precipitated a round of protests by PAD which culminated in the movement seizing Government House. In September, Samak was forced to resign after the Constitutional Court found him guilty of being paid to appear on a cooking programme after he came to power. Samak was replaced as PPP leader by party vice-president, **Somchai Wongsawat**, Thaksin's brother-in-law. Somchai's appointment prompted an escalation of protest and violence leading to PAD's seizure of the government's temporary offices at Don Muang Airport and the closure of Suvarnabhumi Airport. PPP and two coalition partners were subsequently dissolved and its leaders barred from politics for five years after being found guilty of electoral fraud. Power then switched hands to the Democrat Party and party leader **Abhisit Vejjajiva** through a parliamentary vote in December 2008, which was helped by several Thaksin loyalists who were persuaded to change their allegiances. Meanwhile, pro-Thaksin followers of PPP formed the **Pheu Thai Party** in September 2008. Thailand's tumultuous politics persisted under the Democrat government when the **United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship** (UDD) opposed Abhisit's appointment and thrust Thailand into a state of paralysis. Mass protests were mobilized in Bangkok and Pattaya in 2009, the latter the site of an **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** summit and **East Asia Summit** which

Thailand was hosting. These protests proved an embarrassment for the Thai government, which had to postpone the Pattaya meeting and see to the evacuation of delegates who included senior officials and ministers from regional states. A new round of protests in March and April 2010 resulted in heavy UDD casualties, including more than 50 deaths. At the July 2011 elections, the opposition *Pheu Thai* Party won a landslide victory under the leadership of **Yingluck Shinawatra**, youngest sister of Thaksin. This victory and Yingluck's successful defeat of a no-confidence vote in late 2012 enabled Thaksin to continue exercising a measure of influence over Thai politics. Nevertheless, Yingluck was no mere surrogate, and of her own accord laboured to improve relations with the military that were strained considerably during her brother's tenure. Her initiatives included the addition of military officers from Internal Security Operations Command to the Prime Minister's Office.

Parliamentary debate over a proposed bill crafted to provide amnesty for criminal offences committed by both sides of the political divide triggered a new round of protests and violence in October 2013. Anti-Thaksin forces rallied against the bill behind former deputy prime minister, Suthep Thaugsuban, on grounds that its passage would have paved the way for Thaksin's return to Thailand. Anti-Thaksin sentiments soon turned against the Yingluck government, accusing it of corruption, and calling for her resignation and the formation of a nebulous 'People's Council' to lead the government in the interim. In the circumstances, the prime minister responded by dissolving Parliament and calling snap elections, scheduled for 2 February 2014. The run-up to polling day saw some of the bloodiest protests in recent Thai history even as the Election Commission advised a postponement of the polls and the opposition Democrat Party ominously declared its intention to boycott the election. When the Democrat Party last boycotted elections, in 2006, they triggered a chain of events that led to a military coup and a backroom deal that led to its formation of a minority government. The disputed general election went ahead on 2 February despite the less-than-fortuitous circumstances

and attempts by anti-government protestors, who by then had coalesced into the People's Democratic Reform Council, to disrupt polling. Even then, the protestors were able to force polling to be rescheduled in several Bangkok districts as well as in the southern provinces when they succeeded in shutting down numerous polling stations, in so doing complicating an already contentious situation. In the event, the results of the elections were nullified by the Constitutional Court a month later on grounds that 28 of 375 wards were prevented by anti-government protestors from holding a ballot, leaving the country without a functioning government. Equally bizarre was the court order that no force could be used to remove protestors against the government, even in the event that the business of running the government was being obstructed. Meanwhile, the caretaker prime minister, Yingluck Shinawatra, faced charges of negligence and malfeasance for her role in approving a rice-pledging scheme introduced in 2011, when the government purchased rice from farmers at inflated prices in a move to shore up rural incomes. The Constitutional Court subsequently found her guilty of abuse of power for a deceptively routine act of transferring a bureaucrat and forced her resignation on 7 May. She was eventually convicted in 2017 for her role in the rice-pledging scheme, and sentenced in absentia to a five-year jail term as she had managed to escape out of the country by then.

In the early hours of 20 May 2014, army general **Prayuth Chan-ocha** declared martial law in a move to quell escalating unrest. Several days later, while leaders of the former *Pheu Thai* government and the anti-Thaksin People's Democratic Reform Committee were locked in a conclave organized by the military to discuss the political impasse, a coup was launched, the 19th since 1932. Four days later, coup leader Prayuth sought and received royal endorsement in the form of a royal decree announced at a ceremony where King Bhumibol was absent. This was followed by the detention of leading political and public opinion leaders, and the imposition of a public curfew. Assurances were given by coup leaders that political reform and elections would follow, but no timeline was given.

Meanwhile, the junta formed the **National Council for Peace and Order**, or NCPO, charged with forming a government and delivering a new constitution. A veneer of stability was restored through a combination of intimidation, arrests, and populist economic policies targeted at rural communities. Political gatherings involving more than five people were banned. Meanwhile, several drafts of a revised constitution were either rejected or returned for revisions by the junta, which was clearly in no hurry to complete the process of constitutional reform. At any rate, a constitutional referendum held on 7 August 2016 to endorse a revised draft was passed with an unimpressive 61 per cent support, paving the way for the promulgation of Thailand's 20th constitution since 1932 on 6 April 2017. In March 2018, the junta formally registered the **Palang Pracharat Party** or People's State Power Party, as the vehicle through which it would contest elections in the hope of retaining power in civilian guise. Elections eventually took place on 24 March 2019 under the new constitution. The election saw the *Pheu Thai* Party triumph yet again, winning the largest number of constituency seats, 136. However, it failed to win any party-list seats. In comparison, *Palang Pracharat* won 97 constituency seats and was awarded 18 party-list seats, while the **Future Forward Party**, a newly formed party led by a characteristic businessman, **Thanathorn Juangroongruangkit**, won an impressive 30 constituency seats and 50 party-list seats. Although only the second largest party in Parliament, *Palang Pracharat* managed to corral a 19-party coalition to give it a paper-thin four-seat majority in the 500-seat Parliament. This majority, together with a military-controlled Senate, allowed the party to push through their nominee, Prayuth, the former general and junta leader now rebranded as a civilian politician, for the position of prime minister. Dissatisfaction with how the Prayuth government was handling economic challenges and the **Covid-19** pandemic transformed into open opposition as students took to the streets in peaceful protests in June 2020. Apart from demanding the resignation of Prayuth and pressuring for constitutional and political reforms, the protests also called for reform of the monarchy. This was

the first time since 1932 that the institution had been openly challenged.

Until the death of King Bhumibol on 13 October 2016, the monarchy had stood as a pillar of stability in contrast with the mercurial quality of partisan politics in Thailand. Yet even the monarchy was not able to escape the tumultuous tides of political change that engulfed Thailand especially towards his final years, when the king's role as political mediator in the conservative democratic interest diminished along with his physical health. Partly as a consequence of ill health, King Bhumibol's role during the political crisis following the 2006 coup was already noticeably muted, although his part during the coup itself had been the subject of much speculation, with many suggesting that such an event would not have transpired without his knowledge, if not tacit consent. Such suspicions were reinforced when the king appointed interim prime minister Surayud Chulanont and senior member of the CNS Chalit Pukbhasuk to the Privy Council in 2008 and 2011 respectively, and when Queen Sirikit presided over the cremation of a PAD protestor killed during demonstrations in October 2008. When King Bhumibol passed in October 2016, Thais mourned the demise of a popular monarch even as they viewed the future with some degree of trepidation. In the meantime, the eccentric Maha Vajiralongkorn, who spends more time in Germany than he does in Thailand, never gave the impression of sharing his father's sense of duty, nor is he as well regarded by the Thai people even after he ascended the throne on 1 December 2016. Notwithstanding, he quickly asserted himself soon after ascending the throne. Among other things, the new king brought the considerable finances of Crown Property Bureau under his personal control, revised the Sangha Act to empower the monarch to appoint the Supreme Patriarch and members of the Sangha Council, amended the constitution to allow him to rule from Germany without the appointment of a regent, created a Special Services Division of commandos tasked with identifying threats to the monarchy and royal family, promoted officers with close personal ties to him to leadership positions in the military, took control of the 1st and

11th infantry regiments located in and around Bangkok, and dismissed the former Grand Chamberlain and had him jailed for abuse of authority. The appointment of loyalist General Apirat Kongsompong, of the elite First Division (also known as the Wongthewan or 'Divine Progeny' faction) or King's Guards, to the post of Army chief was particularly significant given how it broke the chain of commanders from the Second Infantry Division (popularly known as the 'Eastern Tigers' or Buraphapayak faction) or Queen's Guards who have assumed the role. Apirat was subsequently succeeded by another royalist, General Narongpan Jitkaewthae, in October 2020.

An additional threat to stability in Thailand is an ongoing ethnic Malay insurgency in the southern border provinces of the country. After a decade or so of relative calm, political violence in the south erupted in January 2004 when militants launched an audacious raid on an arms depot in the province of Narathiwat. This signalled a new cycle of insurgent violence that has witnessed more than 5,000 deaths. The southern Thailand Insurgency remains premised on an ethnic Malay struggle against discrimination and injustices, and for minority recognition. It has taken on an increasingly religious colour, however, as the Muslim insurgents make more frequent reference to Islam as a motivating factor (*see Insurgency, Southern Provinces*). While the Thai government has embarked on several dialogue tracks facilitated either by neighbouring states or European NGOs, these have generated little traction, not least because of its evident reluctance to come to terms with consequences of several early policy missteps that resulted in the deaths of locals and further alienation of the Malay community as well as the questionable authority that some of the purported leaders of the insurgency have over rebels on the ground.

Further afield, Thailand's geographic location and historical experience have moulded a foreign policy outlook of signal consistency over time. Thailand was a beneficiary of Anglo-French imperialist competition whereby the two European states found it politic to have an interposing buffer between their respective colonies in Burma and Indochina. Before colonial

intervention in mainland Southeast Asia, Thailand had experienced armed invasion from Burma as well as competition from Vietnam for influence in the trans-Mekong zone. Suspicion of both close and near neighbours survived the end of colonialism, while during the Pacific War Thailand enjoyed Japanese support in prosecuting irredentist claims against Burma, Laos, Cambodia, and Malaya. After the Pacific War, Thailand secured international rehabilitation with US support. Prime international concern came to focus on Indochina, where the restored French colonial position was subject to a strong challenge from the Communist Party of Vietnam, perceived as a more fearsome historical enemy. Independent Burma, subject to ethnic minority rebellion, was a lesser priority. Indeed, Thai military support was provided for **Karen** and **Shan** rebels close to the common border.

Fear of a resurgent communist Vietnam with dominion over Laos and Cambodia was reinforced with the advent of a communist China in 1949. Concurrently, US containment policy served both the domestic and foreign policy interests of the post-war Thai military regime through diplomatic, material, and security support. Thai troops participated in the Korean War under the United Nations flag and its government signed the US-inspired **Manila Pact**, the Southeast Asia Collective Defence Treaty, in September 1954. In February 1955 Thailand contributed further to this attempt to shore up the non-communist position in the region by providing the headquarters of **SEATO (Southeast Asia Treaty Organization)** which served as an institutional base for the Manila Pact until dismantled in 1977. Thailand remained assertively anti-communist until the fall of Indochina in 1975, sending troops to Vietnam and permitting US aircraft to bomb North Vietnam from its airfields. In addition, Thailand cooperated with Malaysia and the Philippines in **ASA (Association of Southeast Asia)**, and more vigorously in ASEAN. With the communist victories following US disengagement, though, diplomatic relations were established with the People's Republic of China and successor governments in Indochina.

Thailand began to exploit growing antagonism between China and Vietnam, and between

Vietnam and Cambodia, to maintain a physical buffer in Indochina and eliminate external patronage for the Communist Party of Thailand. When Vietnam invaded Cambodia in December 1978, Thailand, with its ASEAN partners, mobilized international opinion in its strategic interest and gave territorial asylum to Cambodian resistance insurgents. Particular support was provided for the ousted **Khmer Rouge**, who were supplied with equipment from China. Pressure on Vietnam during the 1980s culminated in a political settlement of the Cambodian conflict at the **International Conference on Cambodia** in Paris in October 1991, facilitated by the end of the Cold War. Thailand progressively repaired relations with Vietnam and endorsed the outcome of elections in Cambodia conducted in May 1993 under United Nations auspices (*see UNTAC*), but its military establishment sustained its links with the Khmer Rouge for reasons of financial advantage and also of geopolitical insurance lest the government in Phnom Penh come under Vietnamese influence. These links disintegrated with the Khmer Rouge, while correct rather than close ties have been maintained with the government in Phnom Penh.

With the end of the Cold War and the Cambodian conflict, the civilian government of Thailand engaged more vigorously in regional multilateral dialogue with ASEAN at its core. It reconciled with Vietnam and welcomed it into the Association. It also sought to modify, albeit without success, ASEAN's rule of non-interference in the domestic affairs of regional partners where domestic circumstances spill over borders with an adverse effect. In that respect, frustration was experienced in trying to promote a working relationship with the military regime in Myanmar through a policy of so-called **Constructive Engagement** intended partly to counter Myanmar's close ties with China. Geography and history have combined also to sustain a traditional strategic perspective towards the trans-Mekong of Indochina required as a buffer if it cannot be dominated. Defence cooperation has been sustained with the United States and with Singapore, in particular, among ASEAN states.

Cambodia emerged as Thailand's most immediate foreign policy concern for a period

as their **Preah Vihear Temple Dispute** erupted into hostilities in 2008. Relations between the two countries soured further during 2009–11 marked by the mutual withdrawal of ambassadors, a move initiated by Bangkok in retaliation for the Cambodian government's appointment of Thaksin as economic advisor. Thai and Cambodian military presences in the disputed area were gradually scaled back as both parties awaited an International Court of Justice clarification of its 1962 ruling which awarded the temple but not the adjoining land to Cambodia. In November 2013, the Court unanimously confirmed Cambodian sovereignty over the entire disputed promontory bearing the Preah Vihear temple and reiterated the 1962 ruling that required all Thai troops in the area to be withdrawn. In the south, Thailand maintains a stable though at times uneasy cooperation with Malaysia, whose role in the management of the insurgency in the southern provinces is critical.

In December 2003, Thailand was accorded 'major non-NATO ally' status by the United States in recognition of its deployment of Thai medical and engineering units to both Afghanistan and Iraq. The 2014 coup posed problems for relations with the Obama administration in the United States. American officials shunned calls from the junta, and the annual Cobra Gold exercises were scaled down to signal American displeasure. Relations turned a corner during the presidency of Donald J. Trump, when Prime Minister Prayuth visited the White House on 2 October 2017, the first visit by a Thai head of government since 2005. Since the 2014 coup, relations with China have improved as the junta faced mounting criticism of human rights abuses from Western governments.

A founding member of ASEAN, Thailand's chairmanship of the regional organization came under heavy scrutiny and criticism in 2008–9 after Bangkok was forced to change the location of the fourth East Asia Summit from Bangkok to Chiang Mai in October 2008 because of political unrest in the capital. After several other

postponements, including the cancellation of the rescheduled April 2009 meeting in Pattaya when protestors seized the premises forcing the emergency evacuation of delegates to the embarrassment of the Thai hosts, the EAS eventually met in October 2009 in Cha-am and Hua Hin. With the rotation of the ASEAN chairmanship, Thailand also hosted the 34th and 35th ASEAN summits, which, among other things, witness the finalization of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific.

see also: Abhisit Vejjajiva; Anand Panyarachun; ASA (Association of Southeast Asia) 1961–7; ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asia Nations) 1967; Asian Financial Crisis 1997–8; Banharn Silpa-archa; Buddhism; Bhumibol Adulyadej, King; Chavalit Yongchaiyuth, General; *Chart Thai* Party; Chatchai Choonhavan, General; Chinese Communities in Southeast Asia; Chuan Leekpai; Constructive Engagement; Covid-19; Democrat Party; East Asia Summit 2005–; Future Forward Party; Hmong; Indochina Wars; Insurgency, Southern Provinces; International Conference on Cambodia, Paris 1991; Islam; Karen; Khmer Rouge; Maha Vajiralongkorn, King; Manila Pact 1954; National Council for Peace and Order; New Aspiration Party; *Palang Pracharat* Party; People's Alliance for Democracy; People's Power Party; *Pheu Thai* Party; Prayuth Chan-ocha, General; Preah Vihear Temple Dispute; Prem Tinsulanonda, General; Samak Sundaravej; Sarit Thanarat, Field Marshal; SEATO (Southeast Asia Treaty Organization) 1955–77; Shan; Somchai Wongsawat; Sondhi Limthongkul; Sonthi Boonyaratglin, General; Suchinda Kraprayoon, General; Surayud Chulanont, General; *Thai Rak Thai* Party; Thaksin Shinawatra; Thanathorn Juangroongruangkit; Thanom Kittikachorn, Field Marshal; Thammasat University Massacre 1976; United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship; UNTAC (United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia); Vietnam War; Yingluck Shinawatra.



## Timor-Leste, Democratic Republic of

The Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, formerly East Timor, is a country in the eastern region of Southeast Asia with a population of 1.3 million, whose capital city Dili is situated on its northern coast. Its geographic territory includes the nearby islands of Autouro and Jaco and the Oecusse district, a coastal enclave in West Timor. Timor-Leste was a Portuguese colony since the early 16th century. Indonesian interest in East Timor was generated by radical political change in Portugal in April 1974, which paved the way for accelerated decolonization in the country's overseas possessions, including East Timor. Within East Timor, political activity and ferment followed which aroused concern in Jakarta at the prospect of sharing a common border with a radical state at the margin of a fissiparous archipelago. That concern was reinforced with the emergence of **Fretilin** (derived from the Portuguese for Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor) demanding early and complete self-rule. Indonesian attempts to sponsor a client political party in favour of integration with the neighbouring republic served to heighten political tension, which culminated in an inept and unsuccessful coup attempt in August 1975. By mid-September, *Fretilin* had established control in the administrative capital, Dili, and had crushed all opposition except along the border with Indonesian West Timor. The outbreak of civil war disrupted Portuguese plans for orderly decolonization and prompted the retreat of its officials to the neighbouring island of Atauro.

Indonesian calculations were made in the context of revolutionary communist success in Indochina in April 1975. Sensitive to the attitude of Western aid donors, Indonesia sought to control East Timor through the vehicle of a collective police action under the aegis of formal Portuguese sovereignty. After the failure of this initiative and the evident consolidation of *Fretilin* control, more direct action was undertaken, employing Indonesian forces in an insurgent role, ostensibly as volunteers on behalf of

its domestic opponents in East Timor. *Fretilin* proclaimed the independence of the Democratic Republic of East Timor on 28 November 1975. The next day, its Indonesian-backed adversaries were mobilized to declare East Timor an integral part of Indonesia. A formal declaration of support followed on 1 December from Indonesia's foreign minister, **Adam Malik**, who announced that the solution to the conflict lay on the battlefield. Decisive military intervention by so-called 'volunteers on behalf of East Timorese brothers' began on 7 December, delayed by the presence in Jakarta of US President Gerald Ford accompanied by Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. The intervention was a less-than-competent military action in the face of vigorous resistance, but the balance of forces and the absence of any external support for *Fretilin* put the incorporation of the eastern half of the island within Indonesia beyond any doubt. The human costs of the brutal annexation were heavy. Out of an original population of some 650,000, an estimated 100,000 inhabitants died as a direct or indirect result of the invasion and consequent pacification operations. The management of political integration was expedited within several months through a spurious process of self-determination, culminating in a formal act of incorporation of East Timor as the 27th province of the Republic of Indonesia on 17 July 1976.

Within East Timor, armed resistance to Indonesian authority continued on a limited scale, encouraged by the refusal of the international community through the United Nations to endorse the annexation. Despite concentrating development efforts in East Timor and transplanting Indonesia's educational system to the territory, political alienation persisted. President **Suharto** declared East Timor an open province at the end of 1988 which was a preliminary to a visit to its predominantly Catholic population by Pope John Paul II in October 1989. That visit was marked by public demonstrations suppressed by security forces, an

episode repeated when the US ambassador, John Monjo, travelled to Dili in January 1990. The failure of Indonesia to integrate East Timor in a national sense was displayed conspicuously on 12 November 1991, when a political protest at a memorial service for two East Timorese killed by the security forces was mercilessly crushed by force with great loss of life. The massacre aroused international outrage which was mitigated by the measures taken by the Indonesian government to inquire into the bloody episode, ostensibly to punish and reprimand those soldiers responsible.

A striking feature of East Timorese resistance to Jakarta's rule was the activism of a younger generation educated in the Indonesian medium for whom the original act of annexation was probably beyond their clear recollection. *Fretilin* suffered a major blow in November 1992 when its military commander, **Jose 'Xanana' Gusmão**, was captured. He was sentenced to life imprisonment, which was subsequently commuted to 20 years. Despite international pressure, President Suharto's government refused to negotiate on the issue of its sovereign jurisdiction. That position was maintained initially following Suharto's resignation in May 1998 against a background of acute economic crisis and the succession of the vice-president, **B. J. Habibie**. On 27 January 1999, partly in response to the prospect of Australia withdrawing recognition of Indonesia's jurisdiction, President Habibie made an astounding offer to the people of East Timor, apparently without consulting his foreign ministry or armed forces. They were offered a choice between extensive autonomy and complete independence. This announcement came as a great shock to the armed forces in particular, which had not only governed East Timor as a private fiefdom but had also incurred heavy casualties in the process. In the event, an agreement was reached in May 1999 between Indonesia, Portugal (as the former colonial power), and the secretary-general of the United Nations, whereby a referendum in East Timor would be supervised by an unarmed UN mission with security the exclusive responsibility of the Indonesian authorities. By that juncture, Indonesia's forces in the territory had begun to set up an armed militia in an attempt

to intimidate the population into voting against independence.

The United Nations Assistance Mission in East Timor (UNAMET) organized the referendum against a background of rising violence. The referendum was held on 30 August 1999 in which 78.5 per cent of registered voters opted for independence. The result was declared in early September and was met with orchestrated violence and a scorched-earth policy on the part of the armed militia, taking the territory into barbarism which seemed beyond the competence of the armed forces leadership in Jakarta to control. Unable to arrest the decline into violence, the UN mission was obliged to withdraw, but a visit by representatives of the Security Council recommended the deployment of an international force to restore law and order. The weight of international opinion, and importantly Indonesia's vulnerability to economic pressure, persuaded President Habibie that a UN-sanctioned force be permitted to enter the territory, formally a province of the republic. That force was authorized by the UN Security Council on 15 September. The International Force East Timor (INTERFET), under Australian command and with the major contribution from Australia, began its initial deployment on 20 September. A firm response to initial encounters with the armed militia coming across the border with Indonesian West Timor soon led to effective pacification. On 19 October 1999, Indonesia's **People's Consultative Assembly** ratified the result of the referendum in East Timor, while Gusmão, who had been released from arrest, returned to Dili on 22 October to a rapturous welcome as the prospective state's political leader. Australia's lead role in the international force had caused tensions with Indonesia and had aroused criticism within **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)**. On 25 October 1999, the United Nations Security Council voted to replace INTERFET with a United Nations Transitional Administration for East Timor (UNTAET), including a military component under a Philippine commander with an Australian deputy (*see United Nations: East Timor 1999–2002*). The transfer of military responsibilities from INTERFET to the United Nations Peacekeeping Force took

place on 23 February 2000. On 11 December 1999, the first meeting of the National Consultative Council of East Timor convened in Dili with the responsibility to make policy recommendations to UNTAET, which was expected to exercise the equivalent of trusteeship over the territory for up to three years before independence was assumed. In mid-December 1999, an international donors' meeting in Tokyo pledged US\$520 million in reconstruction aid for the devastated nascent state whose basic infrastructure had to be rebuilt from scratch. In March 2000, President **Abdurrahman Wahid** visited Dili, during which he apologized for Indonesia's brutal 24-year occupation. By the first anniversary of the referendum, the UN had begun to create basic institutions and had established security, except along the border with West Timor penetrated still by the armed militia. In September 2000, they murdered three UN refugee workers in West Timor. Independence was finally declared on 20 May 2002.

While a hard-fought independence was finally achieved, stability remained elusive as sporadic violence and widespread unrest threatened. In 2006, a conflict within the military polarized by claims of regional discrimination presaged a renewed crisis which culminated in an attempted assassination, a coup, and the eventual resignation of Prime Minister **Mari Alkatiri**. **José Ramos-Horta** succeeded Alkatiri as prime minister (*see Timor-Leste Crisis 2006*). Upon the request of the Timor-Leste government, Australia led an international military force, called 'Operation Astute' and including forces from Malaysia, New Zealand, and Portugal, to help return stability to the country. In August 2006, the United Nations also established an Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) via UN Security Council Resolution 1704 to aid the country to consolidate stability, facilitate national reconciliation, and foster social cohesion. On 11 February 2008, rebel Timorese soldiers led by Alfredo Reinado, former military major of the Timor-Leste Defence Force (F-FDTL) organized an assassination attempt on the lives of the two Nobel laureates, Ramos-Horta and Gusmão. While both leaders survived the attack, rebel leader Alfredo Reinado was killed. Following

the attack, Gusmão instituted a 48-hour state of emergency while Ramos-Horta was flown to Darwin for treatment and recovery. The state of emergency was subsequently extended another three weeks, and upon his recovery Ramos-Horta gave a press conference urging remaining rebels to surrender. In 2007, Timor-Leste held its first general election since independence five years earlier, with a presidential election in April, which Ramos-Horta won after a run-off, and parliamentary elections in June, which ushered in a coalition government headed by Gusmão. Gusmão and his **National Congress for Timorese Reconstruction (CNRT)** repeated the feat five years later, when elections again failed to produce a clear majority thereby requiring a coalition government, which in turn created a massive 57-member cabinet, the largest in Southeast Asia.

Timorese history appeared to turn a page in 2015 when Gusmão, who had also served as the first president of Timor-Leste, retired as prime minister. In his place, Rui Maria de Araújo, an Indonesia-educated doctor by training but also a member of the *Fretilin* Central Committee, was sworn in on 16 February 2015 at the head of a 'Government of National Inclusion' that was also presented as a 'generational handover' in leadership from the ageing independence war veterans to younger professionals. This marked the first time since independence that all parties had representation in Parliament. Former *Fretilin* resistance leader **Francisco 'Lu'Olo' Guterres** was elected president in March 2017, while parliamentary elections held in July saw the emergence of the People's Liberation Party (PLP) of **Taur Matan Ruak**, which positioned itself as a credible alternative to the dominant *Fretilin* and CNRT. In the event, *Fretilin* emerged with the largest vote-share, leading to its leader, Mari Alkatiri, returning to the political scene as prime minister while Gusmão and CNRT assumed the role of opposition, thus bringing an end to the national unity experiment ushered in two years earlier. The *Fretilin*-led coalition government fell apart, however, when an ally, the Khunto Party – the first party in Timor-Leste politics that was not led by former resistance fighters – broke ranks. Subsequent elections ushered into office the *Aliança*

*para Mudança e Progresso* or Alliance for Change and Progress coalition comprising CNRT, PLP, and Khunto, led by Taur Matan Ruak as prime minister and Gusmão as advisor to the prime minister. Nevertheless, tensions between the governing coalition and a *Fretilin* president quickly surfaced over the installation of cabinet ministers and approval of emergency budget measures. In keeping with the deeply fractured nature of post-independence politics, the Alliance for Change and Progress collapsed in early 2020 with the falling out of CNPT and PLP, and a reconfiguration of the dominant coalition to one that saw *Fretilin* replacing CNPT as the preferred partner of Khunto and PLP. The first round of the 2022 presidential election, held on 19 March, ended in a dead heat between the incumbent, Guterres, and Ramos-Horta. The second round was scheduled for 19 April.

Throughout the difficult early years of independence, Timor-Leste continued to maintain good relations with its neighbours, particularly Indonesia, which despite their past turbulent relations became Timor-Leste's largest trading partner. Also critical to Timor-Leste is the relationship with Australia, and which it has signed two treaties crucial to its economic viability as an independent nation-state, the 2002 Timor Sea Treaty and 2018 Maritime Boundary Treaty (see

**Timor Gap**). Timor-Leste continues to push for membership in ASEAN after being accorded observer status in 2002, but its attempts have been obstructed by several members of the organization on the grounds that granting membership to them at this point could further compromise already stuttering efforts at broader regional integration, not to mention the struggle that the newly independent state would have to fulfil the obligations that came with membership and the elusiveness of stability in national governance with coalitions constantly shifting. Concomitantly, a task force headed by Singapore was established for the purpose of preparing Timor-Leste for ASEAN membership. Relations with China have steadily assumed greater importance over the years, in no small part because of Chinese economic assistance especially in infrastructure building.

see also: Alkatiri, Mari; ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations), 1967–; *Fretilin*; Gusmão, José 'Xanana'; Guterres, Francisco 'Lu'Olo'; Habibie, B. J.; Malik, Adam; National Congress for Timorese Reconstruction; People's Consultative Assembly; Ramos-Horta, José; Ruak, Taur Matan; Suharto; Timor Gap; Timor-Leste Crisis 2006; United Nations: East Timor 1999–2002; Wahid, Abdurrahman.

## Vietnam, Socialist Republic of

The Socialist Republic of Vietnam was established on 2 July 1976 through the formal unification of the country, which had been effectively joined through *force majeure* at the end of April 1975. The title of the reunified state registered its political identity subject to the monopoly power of the communist party, which had been formed in 1930 as the Communist Party of Indochina when the country was under French colonial rule. That party in a changing nomenclature had led the nationalist movement in an armed struggle for independence from the end of the Pacific War. A Democratic Republic of Vietnam had been proclaimed in Hanoi by the communist leader, **Ho Chi Minh**, on 2 September 1945 following the **August Revolution** but was displaced by the restoration of French rule. The French were obliged to abdicate their position after July 1954 when an international conference, leading to the **Geneva Agreements on Indochina**, endorsed a ceasefire agreement with a temporary division of the country along the line of the 17th parallel of latitude. That division hardened into a political boundary which endured for over 20 years. The Democratic Republic of Vietnam succeeded to power north of the line of division, while a US-backed State (subsequently Republic) of Vietnam assumed the administration to its south. The challenge of communist insurgency in the south of the country in the early 1960s led to progressive military intervention by the United States, including the aerial bombardment of the north. The failure of the United States to impose a political solution by military means and growing domestic opposition to the loss of blood and treasure led to the **Paris Peace Agreements** in January 1973. US military withdrawal followed soon after, and a military offensive launched by the northern army in March 1975 paved the way to final military victory with the fall of Saigon on 30 April 1975.

Vietnam is located in the mainland of Southeast Asia and comprises an elongated territory of nearly 330,000 square kilometres which

resembles a pole with baskets at either end. It shares its northern border with the People's Republic of China and its western borders with Laos and Cambodia. To its east and south, Vietnam is bounded by the **South China Sea**, whose features and waters have been the subject of contested jurisdiction, especially with China. The Vietnamese people, who number some 97 million, are in the main ethnically homogeneous. There are hill tribe minorities and a sizeable Cambodian community in the south as well as an ethnic Chinese community of migrant origins. An autonomous Vietnamese polity located in southern China and northern Vietnam dates from the third century, and the basis of Vietnamese statehood came to be centred on the Red River delta. Vietnamese history has comprised a dual process. On the one hand, struggle against and resistance to Chinese hegemony, while assuming its cultural and religious traditions, has served to define national identity. Concurrently, a movement southwards through pioneer settlement took place at the expense of weaker kingdoms. That movement, which gave rise to two competing economic centres in the Red River and Mekong River deltas, provided Vietnam with a precarious unity, which after consolidation in the early 19th century was overtaken by French colonial rule which expanded to the whole of Indochina. The French facilitated Vietnamese territorial expansion, while the military struggle from the end of the Pacific War reinforced a geopolitical prerogative on the part of the communist party expressed in the concept of a special relationship with Laos and Cambodia (*see* **Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation, Laos/Vietnam 1977; Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation, Cambodia/Vietnam 1979**). A reunited Vietnam sought to assert that relationship with Cambodia in the context of a revival of antagonism with China from the mid-1970s. An invasion of Cambodia provoked by cross-border military incursions by the **Khmer Rouge** government in Phnom Penh was followed by a punitive

intervention by Chinese forces into northern Vietnam. Vietnam was then confronted by an alignment of China, the United States, Japan, and **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** which, through a division of labour in isolating it diplomatically and imposing sanctions, was able to impose a breaking strain on its government and society. When it became apparent that countervailing support from the Soviet Union was likely to be withdrawn, Vietnam adjusted by changing its domestic and international policies in a radical way.

On unification in 1976, Vietnam had embarked dogmatically on the creation of a socialist state but within a short time was embroiled in conflict over Cambodia. The economic condition of the country became parlous and the position of the ruling communist party was placed in some jeopardy. In December 1986, at its sixth national congress, a policy of **Doi Moi** (economic renovation) was adopted which took the form of a commitment to market-driven economics. A liberal investment law soon followed as well as a more accommodating attitude over Cambodia, with a settlement reached through UN involvement in October 1991. Relations were restored with China and developed with the states of ASEAN, while the United States phased out a longstanding trade and investment embargo which was finally withdrawn in February 1994. Continuing progress in accounting for Americans Missing-In-Action (MIA) during the **Vietnam War** produced an agreement in May 1994 to set up liaison offices in respective capital cities. Diplomatic relations were established in August 1995 and an American ambassador, who was a former prisoner of war in Vietnam, took up residence in May 1996. Over time, memories of war have faded as they have come to be overshadowed by larger strategic imperatives – primarily the growing assertiveness through which China has been pursuing their claims in the South China Sea – which have precipitated an upturn in relations with the United States.

Vietnam made signal economic advances during the 1990s, exemplified in success in controlling inflation and in moving from a rice deficit country to the world's third largest exporter of rice within a period of five years.

Foreign investment was attracted from Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Japan. By the turn of the century, however, and despite an increase in foreign investments especially in construction and heavy industry, the momentum of economic reform slowed as a consequence of bureaucratic impediments and corruption but, above all, because of the failure of the ruling communist party to embrace the spirit of *Doi Moi*. Its narrow interpretation of the maxim that development will follow 'a market-based, but socialism-driven structure of economic development' suggested a loss of nerve on the part of a leadership fearful of social and political change represented euphemistically as 'peaceful evolution'. The result has been a discernible outflow of foreign investment, and economic growth failed to keep pace with a rising population and unemployment. In an attempt to stem the tide, the Vietnamese government concluded a major trade agreement with the United States in July 2000 shortly after relaxing regulations on private enterprise and foreign investment. From 2000 to 2006, however, Vietnam's economy experienced something of a revival as further reforms delivered a steady economic growth rate of around 7 per cent, increasing year on year and outpacing its neighbours. This growth was largely propelled by a strong global appetite for Vietnam's agricultural and commodities exports (total exports amounted to 70 per cent of Vietnam's GDP), with export revenues rising across 2000–12. By 2012, Vietnam was a net exporter for the first time in 20 years, and poverty had also declined such that Vietnam's relative poverty rate fell below that of China and the Philippines. Nevertheless, growth began to slow again in 2012, dragged down by inefficient state owned enterprises (SOE; see **State Owned Enterprise Reform**). Though 500–600 SOEs were initially targeted for privatization by 2015, only a small handful are actually restructured each year, and by 2012, SOEs as a whole continued to account for up to 30 per cent of the nation's GDP. The SOEs also commanded US\$33.3 billion in capital despite accounting for less than 1 per cent of Vietnam's total number of enterprises. Another burgeoning problem was resource management. Despite being the third-largest oil producer in Southeast Asia

and devoting the entirety of its natural gas production to the domestic market, falling production from 2004 and the failure to diversify energy sources led to Vietnam becoming a net oil importer in 2011. These problems were compounded by soaring inflation. Nevertheless, the onset of the Sino-US trade war has serendipitously created opportunities for the Vietnamese economy with the relocation of labour-intensive operations away from China to elsewhere in the region, principally to Vietnam. This upsurge in foreign investments allowed Vietnam to weather the economic storms precipitated by the **Covid-19** pandemic, as it was one of the few economies globally that still managed to register positive growth in 2020 at 2.9 per cent.

Vietnam's commitment to economic reform stands in contradiction to the ruling party's determination not to permit any fundamental change to the political system. The communist party refuses to allow the formation of any other political organization and has exercised tight repressive control over Buddhist and Christian associations. A critical factor in the judgement of the party leadership has been the examples of China and Singapore, where capitalism and economic liberalization have co-existed relatively effectively with strong central rule. Furthermore, the circumstances of the assumption of communist rule and its nature has meant that there is no alternative locus of political activity other than the armed forces, which have been integrated with the party in a classical manner. Traditionally, the communist party has maintained a remarkable measure of internal cohesion despite factional differences. For example, the death of Ho Chi Minh in 1969 did not give rise to a visible power struggle. Also, the party has never experienced Soviet-style purges, nor has it had to cope with the kind of popular protest confronted by its Chinese counterpart in June 1989. More recently, however, a power struggle between the former prime minister, **Nguyen Tan Dung**, and party president, **Truong Tan Sang**, eroded this veneer of unity. The former, a political scion of both conservative and reformist factions of Parliament, assumed his office – ranked third highest in the country – in 2006 and was re-elected in 2011, while the latter, a former party secretary for Ho Chi Minh City,

ascended to both the presidency and chairmanship of Vietnam's Council for National Defence and Security in 2011, becoming the second-highest official after **Nguyen Phu Trong**, general secretary of the Communist Party. In August 2012, banking tycoon Nguyen Duc Kien, co-founder of Vietnam's fourth-biggest lender, the Asia Commercial Bank, known to be close to Dung, was arrested and charged with financial crimes. Two months later, Trong announced a Politburo decision to adopt discipline against one of its members (widely believed to be Dung), while in November, member of Parliament Duong Trung Quoc publicly called on Dung to resign over his handling of the economy – and especially the beleaguered banking sector. Charges of widespread nepotism also surfaced, alongside criticism of Dung's relatives' rapid rise to various public and private sector posts. The Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry reported in 2012 that 50 per cent of businessmen admitted to bribing officials to secure contracts, placing the actual proportion far higher in all likelihood. As these investigations were taking place, the Central Steering Committee for Anti-Corruption was taken from Dung's oversight and placed under Trong, while the fast-rising Nguyen Ba Thanh, party secretary of Danang, was appointed to head a new party mechanism mandated to reduce graft, the Central Internal Affairs Commission. Finally, Dung was widely blamed by social media pundits for perpetuating a widening income gap that undermined the Communist Party's commitment to equality, until dissent was curbed to some degree by the arrests and jail sentences of 14 democracy activists and bloggers, on the grounds of subverting the state, in early 2013. The arrests, however, could barely paper over the fact that civil society activism has been gradually growing in Vietnam. Particularly noteworthy in that regard was the formation of Group 72, comprising intellectuals and former senior officials, including a former minister for justice, which established a Civil Society Forum in September 2013 that called for wide-ranging political reforms and the reduction of the power of the Communist Party of Vietnam.

The mounting pressure on Dung doomed his ambitions to replace Nguyen Phu Trong

as party secretary. At the 12th iteration of the quinquennial Party Congress in January 2016, Dung's challenge was decisively beaten back by conservatives led by Trong, who remained unconvinced of his economic reform agenda and suspicious of his ambitions. In the event, Trong retained his position as party secretary, for which he required a special exemption from the age criteria, while the affable **Nguyen Xuan Phuc** succeeded Dung as prime minister. The sudden death of President Tran Dai Quang in 2018 allowed Trong to further expand his power when he was conferred the presidency by the Politburo and Central Committee. Meanwhile, public dissent, particularly those expressed over online platforms, was curtailed using wide-ranging cybersecurity legislation.

Under Phuc, an advocate of market reforms, the Vietnamese economy continued its slow and steady growth, and the prime minister acquired a reputation for competence. The handling of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 which debilitated the economies of its neighbours was especially impressive, as swift and decisive policy measures kept infection and fatality rates to a minimum. Despite his performance, Phuc was not a favourite to succeed the ailing Trong, who had suffered a stroke in 2019, as general secretary. Trong was rumoured to have preferred his ally, Tran Quoc Vuong, who as chief of the Central Committee and Central Party Inspectorate oversaw the successful anti-corruption campaign which, among other things, weeded out Dung's allies. But with neither Vuong nor Phuc able to command decisive support at an October 2020 Central Committee meeting to identify candidates for senior positions, the 13th Party Congress in February 2021 saw a compromise by way of Trong's election to another five-year term as general secretary, with Phuc assuming the presidency after his confirmation at the National Assembly held later in the year. Both Trong and Phuc were granted exemptions from the mandatory retirement age of 65 (in Trong's case, he was also given an unprecedented exemption on term limit as well).

After Vietnam gave up its revolutionary identity as an outpost of socialism, which was proclaimed with unification in 1976, it had to quickly adjust, of necessity, to an adverse

strategic environment. In armed struggle against France and the United States, it attracted Chinese and Soviet support. That from the former was always problematic, exemplified by Beijing's toleration of the division of Vietnam in 1954. Sino-Vietnamese tensions became open after Sino-US rapprochement in the early 1970s and culminated in a limited punitive invasion in February 1979 in retaliation for Vietnam's invasion and occupation of Cambodia. The Soviet Union sustained Vietnam during the conflict over Cambodia during the first half of the 1980s but became an unreliable partner even before the end of the Cold War. The disintegration of the Soviet Union in December 1991 was a profound political shock to the leadership of a party whose greatest luminary had served part of his political apprenticeship in Moscow. Vietnam was obliged to cope unaided with the transformation in its strategic circumstances by appeasing China over Cambodia, from which it withdrew its forces in 1989. After the **International Conference on Cambodia** in Paris in 1991, a process of Sino-Vietnamese rapprochement was set in train with a meeting of party and state leaders in Beijing in November 1991. A working relationship has been based in part in a common interest in upholding the hegemony of their respective communist parties. Vietnam was able to accede to ASEAN's **Treaty of Amity and Cooperation** in July 1992, which gave it observer status at the annual meetings of the Association's foreign ministers. It was admitted to ASEAN as the first communist member in July 1995 and hosted its first summit meeting in Hanoi in 1998.

A major foreign policy challenge for Vietnam remains a resurgent China, with which it has a testy relationship because of contention over islands and maritime space in the South China Sea. Vietnam is also in contention over some of the Spratly Islands in the South China Sea with ASEAN partners Malaysia and the Philippines. Progress has been made, however, in demarcating the common land border between Vietnam and China. The Land Border Agreement signed in December 1999 concluded negotiations begun in October 1992, and confirmed an unmistakable shift in Vietnam's attitude towards its northern neighbour – a Sino-Vietnamese Joint



Declaration issued earlier that year had already reaffirmed ties of cooperation between the two. This agreement was followed in 2000 by a Joint Statement for Comprehensive Cooperation and the Agreement on Borders in the Gulf of Tonkin, covering both land and maritime rights, which resolved the **Tonkin Gulf Dispute** between the two countries. Nevertheless, the continued assertiveness displayed by China in its fortification of reclaimed features in the South China Sea and the aggressive actions of its Coast Guard against oil exploration undertaken by other claimant states have presented considerable obstacles for bilateral relations. This was demonstrated by the fact that, over three consecutive years from 2017 to 2019, Vietnam was forced to stand down on exploration activities in the vicinity of Vanguard Bank in the face of Chinese pressure. Another area of growing Vietnamese apprehension is in the Mekong, where, as the upper riparian state, China has been able to assert control of the river's flows by way of a series of dams it has built upstream (see **Mekong River Project**). Concern for Chinese assertiveness has pushed Hanoi to deepen further its comprehensive partnership with the United States. Trong made history in July 2015 by being the first leader of the Communist Party of Vietnam to visit the United States. The visit was reciprocated by President Barack Obama in May 2016, where he announced that the United States would end a longstanding embargo on weapons sales to Vietnam. On its part, Vietnam committed to bringing the **Trans-Pacific Partnership** (TPP) into force, in a move that was as much a strategic imperative as an economic one. In the event, the failure of the TPP following the withdrawal of the United States led Vietnam to shift attention to the **Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership** or CPTPP. In May 2017, Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc became the third Asian leader (after Shinzo Abe and Xi Jinping) to visit US president Donald Trump. The visit was reciprocated in November that year, when President Trump called on his Vietnamese counterparts in Hanoi as part of his maiden tour to the region. In March 2018, Danang hosted a port call by a US aircraft carrier to Vietnam, the first since the Vietnam War.

In order to demonstrate Hanoi's further sincerity to enhance relations with the United States, both Trong and Phuc pledged in their meetings with President Trump to expand the import of American products in order to rectify their bilateral trade imbalance.

At the same time, Vietnam has expanded its relations with old ally Russia, albeit in less direct terms. A 'strategic partnership' was announced in March 2001 following the first visit to Vietnam by a Russian head of state, President Vladimir Putin. Vietnamese politicians then visited Russia annually, while Putin visited Vietnam again in November 2006 and President Dmitry Medvedev visited in October 2010. Though fewer bilateral deals materialized, Vietnam has been a strong advocate of a Russian presence in the region. In November 2017, Vietnam hosted the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Heads of State meeting, where a commitment was made to press on with what eventually became the CPTPP. February 2019 saw Hanoi play host to the second Summit between Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, a meeting long on pomp and pageantry but short on substantive outcomes.

Vietnam assumed chairmanship of ASEAN again in 2010, and strengthened the organization's mechanism for defence cooperation by inaugurating the **ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus** in October that year. Under Vietnam's tenure, ASEAN also launched the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) and the ASEAN Children's and Women's Commission (ACWC), besides formally extending permanent membership status in the **East Asia Summit** (EAS) to the United States and Russia. From 2009 to 2012, Vietnam also took over as coordinator for the ASEAN-China 'dialogue relationship' that began in 1991, hosting the 13th ASEAN-China Summit in Hanoi in October 2010. At this summit, a new and wide-ranging Plan of Action for the ASEAN-China partnership, covering policies from 2011 to 2015, was unveiled. Nevertheless, China's increasingly aggressive stance over its territorial claims in the South China Sea cast a long shadow over these efforts. In May 2011, Chinese fishing boats cut the cables of a Vietnamese seismic survey vessel. This occurred again in November 2012,

prompting protests on Vietnamese broadsheets and in the streets of Ho Chi Minh and Hanoi. In June 2012, Vietnam introduced the 'Vietnamese Law of the Sea', which described the Paracel Islands as being within Vietnamese jurisdiction, and established a fishery bureau with the authority to patrol the area and investigate intruding vessels. In response, Hainan Province (under whose territorial waters China had circumscribed the Paracel Islands) reaffirmed China's stand with new regulations on maritime security, and authorized border police to board or seize foreign ships with effect from January 2013. The seventh conference on ASEAN-China People-to-People Friendship Organizations, held in Hanoi in August 2012, did little to quell the friction. Bilateral relations with China reached a new low on 27 May when a Vietnamese fishing boat sank after colliding with a Chinese vessel following a standoff near a controversial oil rig that China had moved to waters near the disputed Paracel Islands claimed by both countries.

Following the customary practice of rotation, Vietnam found itself assuming the chairmanship of ASEAN again in 2020, while also sitting on the UN Security Council as a non-permanent member, on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of its membership of the Association. While 2020 proved a particularly

trying year given the Covid-19 pandemic, the Vietnamese chairmanship was widely regarded as successful owing to Hanoi's swift and effective shepherding of member states towards the creation of a Covid-19 ASEAN Response Fund and the formulation of the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework, while also tackling longer-term issues such as climate change, the digital economy, and territorial disputes.

*See also:* ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations), 1977–; ADMM (ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting) 2006; August Revolution 1945; Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership; Covid-19; *Doi Moi*; Domino Theory; East Asia Summit 2005–; Geneva Agreements on Indochina 1954; Ho Chi Minh; International Conference on Cambodia, Paris 1991; Khmer Rouge; Mekong River Project; Nguyen Phu Trong; Nguyen Tan Dung; Nguyen Xuan Phuc; Paris Peace Agreements 1973; South China Sea; State Owned Enterprise Reform; Tonkin Gulf Dispute; Trans-Pacific Partnership; Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (ASEAN) 1976; Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation (Cambodia/Vietnam) 1979; Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation (Laos/Vietnam) 1977; Truong Tan Sang; Vietnam War.

## 1MDB (Malaysia)

1Malaysia Development Berhad, or 1MDB, was a sovereign fund created by the government of **Najib Tun Razak** in 2009 as part of its **One Malaysia** Economic Transformation Programme. Within six years, however, what began as a vehicle to promote economic development and foreign direct investment opportunities in Malaysia metamorphosed into the largest political scandal in the history of the country as debts, reportedly to the tune of RM42 billion (US\$11.1 billion), were incurred as a result of opaque investments and questionable bond sales. Of this, it was estimated that at least US\$4.5 billion was stolen from the fund between 2009 and 2014.

The unfolding of 1MDB began with a *Wall Street Journal* report alleging malfeasance involving the fund that was published in July 2015. Though vehemently denied by the leadership of 1MDB, the report triggered an investigation by the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission that gradually peeled back layers of apparent corruption and cover-up. The core issue in the 1MDB scandal was the controversial transfer of RM2.6 billion to personal accounts owned by Prime Minister Najib, ostensibly for purposes of supporting **UMNO**'s 2018 general election campaign. The revelations prompted **Muhyiddin Yassin**, then deputy prime minister, to make public calls for an explanation from Najib. In the event, Muhyiddin was removed from office via a cabinet reshuffle on 28 July 2015. As pressure mounted on Najib, the attorney general, Abdul Ghani Patail, was abruptly removed from his position just as he was allegedly building up the case against the prime minister. His successor, Apandi Ali, decided against proceeding with the investigation, instead explaining that the money in Najib's account was a gift from a member of the Saudi royal family. At the height of the 1MDB scandal, investigations were taking place in as many as six countries, including Singapore and Switzerland. On 20

July 2016, the US Department of Justice filed a lawsuit to recover assets worth over US\$1 billion that were allegedly misappropriated from 1MDB and diverted to offshore accounts and shell companies linked to a controversial Malaysian businessman, Low Taek Jho, also known as Jho Low. According to the investigation report, the funds were used to purchase luxury items like yachts, art pieces, real estate, and a private jet, as well as to finance Hollywood films. The lawsuit alluded to the pivotal role of an unnamed high-ranking Malaysian government figure, referred to in the lawsuit as 'Malaysian Official 1', in the misappropriation of the funds. The fact that, as chairman of the 1MD advisory panel, Najib was the sole signatory for all of its investments prompted widespread speculation that he was, indeed, 'Malaysian Official 1'.

Upon winning the 2018 general election, the **Pakatan Harapan** government led by **Mahathir Mohamad** promised to make good on all debts incurred by 1MDB even as an unrelenting effort was made to penalize criminal conduct of individuals linked to the mismanagement of the sovereign fund. On 19 September 2018, Najib was arrested in relation to the 1MDB investigation. He was eventually charged and found guilty on seven charges on 28 July 2020, in the first of five trials related to 1MDB. His wife, Rosmah Mansor, was also charged with several counts of bribery and money laundering. Najib's first appeal of his sentence lodged at the Court of Appeal was unsuccessful when it upheld the conviction on 8 December 2021. His final appeal, filed with the Federal Court the following day, is awaiting decision.

see also: Mahathir Mohamad, Tun; Muhyiddin Yassin, Tan Sri; Najib Tun Razak, Datuk Seri Mohamad; One Malaysia (1Malaysia); *Pakatan Harapan*; UMNO (United Malays National Organization).

**212 Movement** (Indonesia) see Anti-Ahok Protests 2016 (Indonesia)

# A

## **Abangan** (Indonesia)

*Abangan* is the term applied to rural Javanese who acknowledge an adherence to Islam but order their lives according to precepts and practices drawn from animist and Hindu–Buddhist values. The distinguishing feature of *Abangan* culture is its syncretic quality expressed partly in a refusal to define identity with exclusive reference to Islam by contrast with the alternative **Santri** tradition. That refusal assumed political significance prior to the proclamation of Indonesia's independence in August 1945 when an attempt was made to impose a constitutional obligation on all professing Muslims to observe *shari'a* (Islamic) law. That Islamic initiative was frustrated by Indonesia's first president, **Sukarno**, who insisted on religious pluralism expressed through the pre-eminent of five principles, **Pancasila**, which he enunciated and which became the philosophical bases of the post-colonial republic. *Pancasila* served to protect *Abangan* cultural identity and was entrenched in the constitution during the rule of President **Suharto**. The distinction between *Abangan* and *Santri* is nevertheless not rigid, and indeed became blurred from around the seventh decade of the twentieth century with rapid economic development and urbanization, which has provided a social context within which a burgeoning **Islam** has become increasingly assertive.

see also: Islam; *Pancasila*; *Santri*; Suharto; Sukarno.

## **Abdul Rahman, Tunku**

(Malaya/Malaysia)

Tunku Abdul Rahman was the first prime minister of Malaya and then Malaysia. In 1951, after Dato Onn bin Jafar had lost the confidence of **UMNO (United Malays National Organization)** because of his wish to permit access to members of other communities, the Tunku (as he was generally known) became its president. In this role, he forged a viable coalition, the

**Alliance Party**, with Chinese and Indian communal political parties and played the leading part in negotiating the independence of the Federation of Malaya in 1957 and then in promoting the wider Federation of Malaysia which was formed in 1963. He successfully surmounted Indonesia's **Confrontation** of the new Federation but was unable to overcome inter-communal tensions aggravated by Singapore's membership. He took the fateful decision to cast Singapore out of the Federation in August 1965, but communal tensions mounted because the Malays believed that their political birthright was being compromised by the growing economic imbalance with the Chinese. The **May 13 Racial Riots** in the wake of general elections in May 1969, in which UMNO lost ground, made the Tunku's position politically untenable; he stepped down from office in 1970 in favour of his deputy, **Tun Abdul Razak**.

Tunku Abdul Rahman was born in 1903 to a Thai mother as one of 45 children of Sultan Abdul Hamid of the state of Kedah, then part of Thailand. As a student of law in England who took many years to be called to the bar, he claimed a reputation for fast women, fast cars, and not-so-fast horses. His easy-going style was carried over into his political career, but it concealed a steely firmness of mind which he demonstrated in the **Baling Talks** with **Chin Peng**, the leader of the Communist Party of Malaya. After leaving high office, the Tunku served during the 1970s as head of the Islamic Secretariat in Saudi Arabia. In later life, he turned his hand to journalism, acting as the liberal conscience of a country which under the leadership of **Mahathir Mohamad** became increasingly authoritarian in its politics. He died on 6 December 1990 at the age of 87.

see also: Alliance Party; Baling Talks 1955; Chin Peng; Confrontation; Mahathir Mohamad, Tun; May 13 Racial Riots 1969; Razak, Tun Abdul; UMNO (United Malays National Organization).

**Abdul Rahman Yakub, Tun** (Malaysia)

Tun Abdul Rahman Yakub was chief minister of Malaysia's north Bornean state of Sarawak from July 1970 until March 1981. In April 1981 he assumed the office of state governor, which he gave up in 1985 out of frustration with the political constraints of his constitutional role. Tun Yakub was born on 3 January 1928 in Bintulu, Sarawak. He was educated at the University of Southampton in England and went on to qualify as a barrister at Lincoln's Inn in London in 1959. He began his career in the Sarawak government's legal service and played an instrumental role in building Muslim Malay-Melanau political organization on the former British colony's entry into Malaysia. His initial period in politics was at the federal level, and he held the portfolios of land and mines and of education during the 1960s. During his tenure as chief minister, he consolidated the position in Sarawak of the ruling **Barisan Nasional** (National Front) federal coalition, which was formed during the early 1970s. His exit from active political life expressed itself in a quarrel with his nephew, **Abdul Taib Mahmud**, who had succeeded him as chief minister in 1981. After his failure to unseat his nephew in state elections in 1987, Tun Yakub retired from politics. He died in January 2015 at the age of 87.

see also: *Barisan Nasional* (BN); Taib Mahmud, Tun Pehin Sri Abdul.

**Abdullah, Zaini** (Indonesia)

Zaini Abdullah was governor of the special Indonesian province of Aceh from 2012 to 2017. Zaini was born in Pidie, Aceh, on 24 April 1940. A medical doctor by profession, he graduated from the University of North Sumatra in Medan. He was formerly a key member of the **Aceh Independence Movement** (GAM or Gerakan Aceh Merdeka) and was elected alongside former GAM guerrilla commander Muzakir Manaf at the 2012 elections. These were the second democratic elections held in Aceh since the Helsinki Peace Accord between GAM and the Government of the Republic of Indonesia in 2005. Running on a platform focused on anti-corruption and the introduction of *shari'a* law, Zaini managed to secure 56 per cent of the vote

on the way to defeating incumbent **Irwandy Yusuf**, also a former GAM member, and two other candidates. Since 1976, Zaini had held key leadership positions within GAM while in exile in Sweden, including foreign and health minister. Together with GAM president Hasan di Tiro and prime minister Malik Mahmud, Zaini was arrested in June 2004 in Stockholm by Swedish police, under pressure from the Indonesian government, for crimes against the Indonesian state. They were subsequently released on grounds of insufficient evidence. Meanwhile, the Swedish government denied Indonesian requests that the three be extradited to stand trial in Indonesia. Following the August 2005 Helsinki Peace Accord and the disbanding of GAM, Zaini played an instrumental role in the formation of *Partai Aceh* (PA). A split soon occurred within the community of former GAM separatists which saw two prominent leaders, Irwandy Yusuf and Malik Mahmud, contest the gubernatorial elections on different tickets in 2006. Factionalism resurfaced in the build-up to the 2012 elections when Zaini tried to have incumbent Irwandy Yusuf disqualified from running. In retaliation, Irwandy accused Zaini's *Partai Aceh* of using violence and intimidation against his opponents. The rivals crossed swords again at the 2017 Aceh gubernatorial elections as Zaini sought a second term. In the event, he was defeated by Irwandy, who himself was removed from office a year later on charges of corruption, whereupon he was replaced by his deputy, Nova Iriansyah. see also: Aceh Independence Movement; Yusuf, Irwandy.

**Abhisit Vejjajiva** (Thailand)

Abhisit Vejjajiva was Thailand's 27th prime minister. He led a government closely aligned to establishment interests and the military, a stance which was unpopular with a large segment of the population. Mass protests under his rule resulted in a military crackdown and some of the worst civil violence Bangkok has ever seen.

Abhisit was born on 3 August 1964 in New-castle-upon-Tyne, UK, to an elite Bangkok family. He attended school in Bangkok and later at

Eton College in the UK. He went on to earn a bachelor's degree in philosophy, politics, and economics at Oxford University. He was then briefly a lecturer at Chulachomkiao Royal Military Academy in Nakhon Nayok, Thailand. He returned to Oxford University to study for a master's degree in economics and later studied law at Ramkhamhaeng University in Bangkok. He then taught economics at Thammasat University in Bangkok. Abhisit entered politics by joining the **Democrat Party**, and was elected to Parliament for Bangkok in 1992. He would be re-elected in 1995 and 1996. From 1992 to 1994, Abhisit was spokesman for the **Chuan Leekpai** government, and would remain as spokesman for the party during its period in opposition from 1995 to 1997. He was a minister to the Prime Minister's Office during the second Chuan Leekpai government, 1997–2001. Abhisit was elected as a party list candidate for the Democrat Party in 2001, 2005, and 2007. Abhisit became the Democrat Party leader in 2005 following the resignation of Banyat Bantadtan as a result of the massive defeat of the democrats by the **Thai Rak Thai Party** (TRT) in the 2005 general elections. As the Democrat Party was the leading opposition party, Abhisit also became the leader of the opposition in the Parliament from 2005 to 2006 and again in 2008. Abhisit became prime minister of Thailand in 2008 following the dissolution of the **People's Power Party** (PPP). The Democrat Party was defeated by the **Pheu Thai Party** in the July 2011 elections, placing Abhisit again in the role of leader of the opposition.

Abhisit was perceived as young and cosmopolitan, with a reputation for being above the sleaze and corruption that characterizes much of Thai politics thanks to his criticism of corrupt practices and cronyism. Yet his legitimacy has been criticized due to his inability to win either of the general elections during his tenure as party leader from 2005. His selection as prime minister in 2005 was brought about through backroom deals between the army commander, **Anupong Paochinda**, and a renegade faction of the dissolved PPP led by Newin Chidchob. The Democrat Party's decision to lead a boycott together with two smaller parties of the 2006 snap elections called by **Thaksin Shinawatra**

precipitated a constitutional crisis that led to the September 2006 coup. Still, the Democrat Party gained little politically from the coup, remaining in opposition following the election victory of the PPP, a reincarnation of the TRT, in December 2007. Following the Constitutional Court's decision to disqualify PPP leader **Samak Sundaravej** in September 2008, the Democrats were again blocked from forming a government by a parliamentary vote, which chose **Somchai Wongsawat** of the PPP as Samak's replacement. During the same period the democratic credentials of the Democrat Party were questioned due to their seeming support for the six-month protest movement of the **People's Alliance for Democracy** (PAD) against the elected PPP governments. Abhisit and the Democrats achieved power only through a parliamentary vote following a Constitutional Court decision to disqualify and dissolve the PPP in December 2008.

Although he led the opposition to the government of Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, Abhisit publicly opposed the 2006 coup which ousted Thaksin and the TRT. On attaining high office, however, Abhisit's policies largely mirrored the populist policies of his predecessor. Abhisit's term as prime minister was marked by attempts to deal with the global economic crisis and rapidly escalating domestic political pressure. By siding with the elite establishment and backed by the military, Abhisit and the Democrat Party placed themselves in direct opposition to the mass appeal of Thaksin that coalesced around the **United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship** (UDD), the so-called 'red shirts', and the Thaksin-aligned PPP and its successor, the *Pheu Thai* Party. Abhisit's apparent association with the military and the establishment became more overt through the escalation of responses to growing red shirt protests in 2009 and 2010. Abhisit came to rely increasingly on emergency decrees and military force to suppress protests, which led to limited violence in April 2009 and much wider violence in April–May 2010 that resulted in at least 91 deaths on both sides. The protests had a severe economic impact, especially in Bangkok, and polarized the country. The Democrat Party was defeated by the *Pheu Thai* Party in general elections in July 2011, although Abhisit

was re-elected. In December 2012, Abhisit was charged with murder for the death of a taxi driver during the 2010 political violence in which he authorized military suppression of red shirt protestors. The charges were subsequently dismissed by a Supreme Court ruling in August 2017. In 2018, Abhisit was re-elected leader of the Democrat Party. In 2019, Abhisit pledged on the campaign trail that the Democrat Party would not work with **Prayuth Chan-ocha**. In the event, he was compelled to resign from the party leadership after its poor showing at the election, and as a member of Parliament in June when the party entered into an alliance with the **Palang Pracharat Party**.

see also: Anupong Paochinda, General; Chuan Leekpai; Democrat Party; *Palang Pracharat Party*; People's Alliance for Democracy; People's Power Party; *Pheu Thai Party*; Prayuth Chan-ocha; Samak Sundaravej; Somchai Wongsawat; *Thai Rak Thai Party*; Thaksin Shinawatra; United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship.

### ABIM (Malaysia)

ABIM is an acronym drawn from *Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia*, which translates as Islamic Youth Movement of Malaysia. It was set up in 1971 on the campus of the University of Malaya as a vehicle of Islamic revivalism (see **Dakwah**). ABIM represented an expression of political as well as religious dissent against a Malay-Muslim-dominated government, which had allegedly compromised the political birthright of the indigenous Malays to the advantage of non-Malays, especially the Chinese. The leading role in ABIM's early years was played by **Anwar Ibrahim**, then a student of Malay studies, who exercised a truly charismatic influence on his fellow students. In December 1974, he was detained for 22 months for leading a demonstration against peasant poverty in the state of Kedah. ABIM was for a time regarded as the youth wing of the principal Malay opposition **Parti Islam Se-Malaysia** (PAS) and some of its members campaigned for PAS in the 1978 elections. It lost national standing as an agent of Islamic resurgence when Anwar Ibrahim joined **UMNO** (**United Malays National Organization**) shortly before general elections in April

1982. Though Anwar retained his ABIM intellectual links, the party itself toned down its political engagement significantly under new leadership, while resources and energy were refocused to education. ABIM abandoned its quietist disposition at the height of the reform movement that began with Anwar's unceremonious dismissal in September 1998 when the organization joined in the chorus of civil society voices that agitated for political reform in Malaysia. This rediscovery of its activist roots led to the brief detention of several ABIM leaders, including the president, Ahmad Azam Abdul Rahman. During this time, many ABIM members also formally joined opposition political parties, primarily PAS, which already had among its leadership ranks compatriots of Anwar's from his ABIM days, and **Parti Keadilan Rakyat** (PKR). The election of Yusri Mohamad as ABIM president in 2005 marked the introduction of a new era in ABIM's history, as Yusri and his new team of leaders came from a generation that did not idolize Anwar to the extent of their predecessors. Yusri also sought to realign ABIM by moving it away from excessive political activism to focus more on social work and *Dakwah*. The current president, Muhammad Faisal Abdul Aziz, has been a vocal advocate of multiculturalism.

see also: Anwar Ibrahim; *Dakwah*; Islam; *Parti Islam Se-Malaysia*; *Parti Keadilan Rakyat*; UMNO (United Malays National Organization).

### ABRI (Indonesia)

ABRI is an acronym drawn from *Angkatan Bersenjata Indonesia* which translates as armed forces of the Republic of Indonesia. Indonesia's armed forces, which include the army, navy, air force and police, have long enjoyed a central place in the political and business life of the country and served as the powerbase for President **Suharto** during his extended rule. As a serving general, he assumed their leadership during a coup attempt in October 1965 and with military support seized political control in March 1966. Within the armed forces, the army has occupied the dominant position. It draws its tradition from Japanese military culture, inculcated during the Pacific War occupation, and from the experience of national revolution against the Dutch. With the political downfall of President Suharto in May 1998, the

national standing and morale of the armed forces was diminished as its record of human rights abuses was publicized. In an attempt to cleanse its sullied reputation, ABRI changed its name to *Tentara Nasional Indonesia* (Indonesia's National Army), or TNI, in April 1999.

ABRI's origins may be traced back to 5 October 1945 when President **Sukarno** inaugurated the People's Security Army under the initial command of an Indonesian officer from the former Dutch colonial army. That leadership was soon challenged by Indonesians who had been trained in Japanese paramilitary organizations, such as the *Peta*. By mid-November, leadership had passed to Sudirman, a former *Peta* battalion commander, who distinguished himself in directing guerrilla resistance against the Dutch in the closing stages of the revolutionary war, despite being terminally ill with tuberculosis. The formative moment in the development of the political culture of the armed forces occurred in December 1948 when the Dutch occupied the revolutionary capital of Yogyakarta. The civilian government headed by President Sukarno surrendered, while the army opted to continue resistance by irregular warfare. From this juncture, the military took the view that politics was too serious a matter to be left exclusively in the charge of civilians who had abdicated their responsibility at a time of gravest national peril. Moreover, independence was depicted as having been achieved primarily through armed struggle and not the diplomacy of irresolute politicians. The armed forces represented themselves as the legitimate guardians of the state.

After independence, this prerogative view was confirmed for the leadership of the armed forces by the political instability and economic failings of parliamentary democracy during the 1950s. During this period, the army chief of staff, General **Abdul Haris Nasution**, formulated a theory of the 'Middle Way' to justify a political role for the military. Although the armed forces were instrumental in helping President Sukarno to establish the authoritarian political system of **Guided Democracy** in July 1959, they were neutralized by his manipulative skills. In the wake of an abortive coup in October 1965 (see **Gestapu**), the armed forces reasserted themselves and seized power in March

1966 under the leadership of then Lieutenant General Suharto. Indonesia reverted to the form of constitutionalism with parliamentary and presidential elections revived from the early 1970s, but ABRI's right to a prerogative place in political life on account of its **Dwi Fungsi** (or dual role) was embodied in legislation in 1982. The special place of the armed forces was acknowledged also by allocating them 100 seats in the Parliament of 500 members, justified in addition by a denial of their right to vote.

In April 1995, ABRI's parliamentary representation was reduced to 75 seats. This reduction was justified ostensibly with reference to Indonesia's democratic progress. It was interpreted, however, as an indication of a rising tension between the military establishment and President Suharto, which had showed itself first in February 1988 with the premature removal from office of armed forces commander General **L. B. Murdani**. Suharto's determination to rule independently of the armed forces as well as his toleration of the extensive business activities of his family caused a progressive alienation. This alienation was aggravated in December 1990 when the president encouraged the formation of an Association of Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals (ICMI) in apparent emulation of the practice of the late President Sukarno of mobilizing countervailing political support against the armed forces. Up to his resignation in May 1998, Suharto dominated the armed forces by controlling the promotion of its most senior officers with ABRI commanders drawn from the ranks of former personal aides. General Wiranto, his last nominee as ABRI commander, endorsed the transfer of executive authority to Vice-President **B. J. Habibie**. An initial working relationship gave way to political tension, especially from January 1999 after President Habibie had offered the people of East Timor the choice between autonomy within Indonesia or full independence, without reference to the armed forces, which had an emotional stake in the territory because of casualties incurred in counter-insurgency and also because of their guardian role in upholding the integrity of the Republic.

The armed forces were obliged to tolerate a further reduction of their parliamentary representation to 38 seats prior to elections in June



1999. They withheld support for President Habibie's bid to retain high office and did not try to obstruct the election of **Abdurrahman Wahid** as president in the following October. His appointment of Professor Juwono Sudarsono as the first civilian minister of defence for several decades indicated Wahid's determination to reduce the political role of the armed forces. Tension became manifest between the president and General Wiranto, appointed coordinating minister for political and security affairs, especially after President Wahid endorsed the right of a national commission of enquiry into human rights violations in East Timor to hold him and other senior officers accountable. General Wiranto was suspended from cabinet office in February 2000 (resigning formally in May). By then, the concept of *Dwi Fungsi* had lost credibility and the armed forces had lost the cohesive capability to mount a coup, but a significant vestigial influence in politics and business remained. In April 2000, Admiral Widodo announced the armed forces were out of politics and wanted to concentrate on their professional role. The **People's Consultative Assembly** further decreed that year that in order to facilitate this reorientation, the police force would be separated out of the armed forces and would operate independently in the realm of public security and order while the TNI's mandate would be restricted to that of a defence force. The TNI's political role has since been further diminished by legislation that has been passed to end the appointment of military and police personnel in Parliament, to compel it to divest its business interests, and to strengthen civilian control over the budgetary and procurement process. Nevertheless, while democratization has facilitated the passage of legislation such as the 2004 armed forces law that reinforced civilian supremacy and respect for human rights, the latitude that the Indonesian armed forces still enjoys continues to be a bone of contention in the country. This includes a culture of impunity within the armed forces and weak military courts, as well as the continued existence of anachronistic vestiges of the Suharto era such as the controversial territorial command structure, which was previously used to protect the interests of **Golkar**, and is

still given to abuse of political interests and to illegal business. Furthermore, while the military has been forced to sell off some of its businesses, and others have succumbed to business failure, it still retains sizeable profit-generating enterprises, ranging from ownership of buildings and other properties to foundations and cooperatives.

see also: *Dwi Fungsi*; *Gestapu*; *Golkar*; Guided Democracy; Habibie, B. J.; Murdani, General L. B.; Nasution, General Abdul Haris; People's Consultative Assembly; *Peta*; Suharto; Sukarno; *Suparsemar*; Wahid, Abdurrahman.

### **Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) (Philippines)**

Abu Sayyaf, which means 'father of the sword-smith', is a militant Muslim group which seeks a separate Islamic state in the southern Philippines. The Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) was established in 1991 on the island of Basilan by Abdurajik Abubakar Janjalani after he had returned from a period of religious study in Saudi Arabia and Libya sponsored by the **Moro National Liberation Front** (MNLF). His movement is opposed to any accommodation with the Philippines government over Muslim political autonomy and has declared its intention to drive Christian inhabitants from the southern islands of the republic by acts of force, which were first undertaken during 1992. He attracted a constituency of politically discontented and radical younger Muslims, including disaffected members of the MNLF, whose numbers grew from 100 to over 500. Initially engaging in kidnappings, bombings, and grenade attacks, the ASG achieved international notoriety in April 1995 for a daring surprise sea-borne raid by some 200 armed men on the small predominantly Christian town of Ipil on the southwest tip of the island of Mindanao. In the course of the raid, which devastated the commercial district, the town's seven banks were robbed and 53 residents were killed. The raiders then fled into the jungle with hostages, many of whom were hacked to death with knives. The ASG is believed to be stiffened by Filipino Muslims with military experience gained in Afghanistan and to have received financial support from external Islamic sources. It has been linked to the international terrorist network implicated in

the bombing of the World Trade Center in New York in 1993 and in a plot to kill the Pope during his visit to the Philippines in January 1995. In a second raid in April 1995, ASG insurgents attacked the coastal town of Tungawan located about 12 miles southeast of Ipil. At the end of 1998, Abdurajik Janjalani was killed in a gun battle outside of the provincial capital of Isabela. Since his death, and under the leadership of his brother Khaddafi, the ASG has degenerated into a quasi-criminal organization engaging in kidnapping and hostage-taking justified by outlandish political demands, such as the release of Ramzi Yousef, who was convicted of masterminding the 1993 World Trade Center bombing. A group of about 50 Filipino hostages were seized from two schools on the island of Basilan in March 2000, two of whom were beheaded. In late April that year, a group of 21 foreign and local tourists were seized from the Malaysian-held resort island of **Sipadan** and taken by boat to the Philippine island of Jolo. In August, Jeffrey Schilling, an American Muslim convert, was abducted after reportedly visiting the group. Recurrent assaults by units of the armed forces failed to dislodge the insurgents from their jungle redoubt only a 40-minute drive from Jolo town. Hostages were released in batches in return for millions of dollars in ransom. In September, following the seizure of a further three hostages from Malaysia, President Estrada ordered a military operation against the ASG. By April 2001, all hostages except one were released or successfully rescued. Not long after in May, two resorts were raided resulting in two deaths and 20 hostages taken, including three Americans, two of whom later died. In June, ASG gunmen seized a hotel and a church in Lamitan town. Some hostages were killed and others ransomed when the group eventually escaped despite the presence of an army cordon. ASG was also believed to have masterminded a bombing at Davao International Airport in 2003, which killed 21 people, and the sinking of *SuperFerry 14* in February the following year, which killed 116 people (see **Terrorism in Southeast Asia**). In April 2004, one of the group's key leaders, Hamsiraji Sali, was killed in a gun battle with government forces in Basilan. A day later, 50 prisoners including suspected ASG

members managed to escape from a jail in the southern Philippines. ASG has been unrelenting with their high-profile kidnappings because of lucrative ransoms they have managed to secure. Frequent clashes with military units highlight the ability of the ASG to mount attacks despite government claims that counterinsurgency operations are making headway, while several instances of militants managing to escape security cordons indicate incompetence on the part of some Philippine military units. Known for its brazenness and brutality, ASG kidnapped two Canadians, a Norwegian, and a Filipino from a resort on Samal Island in September 2015. One of the Canadian hostages was beheaded.

The militant activities of the ASG were taken to new heights when several of its factions pledged allegiance to the Islamic State of Iraq and as-Sham, or ISIS. A video released in June 2016 identified Isnilon Hapilon (named Abu Abdullah in the video), a leader of an ASG faction based in impoverished Basilan, as the head of pro-ISIS groups operating in Southeast Asia and called for the struggle to be pursued under his leadership. The reasons behind ASG's pledge of allegiance to ISIS have been a subject of debate: while some have argued ideological alignment, others have suggested that allegiance was pledged for tactical purposes of intimidation in order to secure larger ransoms. In the event, ASG joined several other ISIS-linked militant groups to occupy Marawi City in Mindanao in May 2017. Reeling from the loss of men and resources incurred during the **Marawi Siege**, the remaining factions of ASG have continued their longstanding practice of kidnapping for ransom in the Sulu archipelago, targeting Indonesian sailors in particular.

see also: Marawi Siege 2017; Moro National Liberation Front; Sipadan–Ligitan; Terrorism in Southeast Asia.

## Aceh Independence Movement (Indonesia)

The Aceh Independence Movement (*Gerakan Aceh Merdeka* or GAM) was a separatist organization, set up on 4 December 1976 by Hasan di Tiro, an American-educated expatriate businessman who had resided in exile in Sweden

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since 1979. He returned to Indonesia in 2008 and died in 2010.

Aceh is the northernmost province of Sumatra, whose population shares a strong Islamic historical identity going back to a powerful 17th-century sultanate from which di Tiro claimed descent. It was the last part of the Indonesian archipelago to fall to Dutch colonial rule, which was not effectively consolidated until the early years of the twentieth century. Although an active source of resistance to the return of the Dutch after the Pacific War, on Indonesia's independence Aceh became a seat of the Muslim-inspired rebellion known as **Darul Islam**, which challenged the unity of the Republic over the next decade, partly in reaction to the new republic merging Aceh into the province of North Sumatra. The source of political alienation, which formed the context to di Tiro's separatist initiative, was Jakarta's failure to honour a promise of provincial autonomy in 1959 and the meagre returns to Aceh from the exploitation of the rich Arun offshore oil and natural gas fields. The Aceh Independence Movement had only a limited impact until the late 1980s when a government clampdown on marijuana growing by army deserters against a context of economic and religious discontent provoked a surge of local dissent with armed attacks mounted on police posts. The limited rebellion was sufficiently crushed by mid-1991 that the government political party **Golkar** was able to assert its dominance in the province in parliamentary elections in June 1992. By then, however, several hundred young Acehnese had received military training in Libya. The underlying resentment towards Jakarta and demand for independence came to a head again after the political downfall of President **Suharto** in May 1998 and gained momentum after the seeming precedent of a referendum in East Timor in August 1999. It was reinforced by the indiscriminate nature of military repression, which had been responsible for the loss of some 5,000 lives from the early 1990s. Moreover, statements by **Abdurrahman Wahid**, before and even after he became president, that he supported a corresponding vote in Aceh aroused strong political expectations within the disaffected province. He subsequently ruled out independence as an

option in any referendum, partly under pressure from the armed forces (*see* **ABRI**), leading to a political impasse between the government in Jakarta and the separatists in Aceh. The strength of support for independence within Aceh was demonstrated in November 1999 when over 500,000 protestors converged on the province's capital, Banda Aceh, to demand a referendum. The independence movement, led militarily within Aceh by Abdullah Syafie, claimed at its height to have around 1,000 men under arms supplied by sympathizers in Malaysia and Thailand. At the time, the prospect of Indonesia's balkanization alarmed the country's regional partners and major Asia-Pacific powers who lent their support to the government in Jakarta for the continued integrity of the Republic after the independence of East Timor. President Wahid played on the popular desire for peace within the province by offering a range of concessions, including a much greater share of natural-gas revenues and latitude in applying Islamic law as well as countenancing a human rights trial of soldiers charged with murdering students at an Islamic school in July 1999, who were found guilty in mid-May 2000. On 12 May, after several months of secret negotiations, a ceasefire described as a humanitarian pause was signed in Davos, Switzerland, between a representative of the Indonesian government and of the faction loyal to Hasan di Tiro. However, under pressure from its Parliament, Jakarta refused recognition of the insurgents, who maintained their demand for independence. The ceasefire, renewed in August, failed to end recurrent violence in the province. By 2002 Indonesian forces deployed in Aceh were reported to number 30,000. Military operations also intensified, leading to high casualty rates, including considerable numbers of civilians. A second ceasefire was brokered in December 2002 but lasted only a few months. In 2003, the military presence increased to 50,000, and corruption and war profiteering were rampant within military units in Aceh. A third ceasefire was declared unilaterally by GAM two days after **Tsunami 2004** that devastated the province, in order to facilitate humanitarian operations. Both parties eventually signed a peace agreement in February 2005, bringing

an end to a 30-year-old conflict. GAM's military was disbanded by the end of the year. The peace agreement allowed for the establishment of Aceh-based political parties, a major concession from the Indonesian government. In the event, two former GAM members, **Irwandy Yusuf** and **Zaini Abdullah**, went on to win gubernatorial elections in 2006, 2012, and 2017. *see also: Abdullah, Zaini; ABRI; Darul Islam; Golkar; Islam; Suharto; Tsunami 2004 (Indonesia/Malaysia/Thailand); Wahid, Abdurrahman; Yusuf, Irwandy.*

**ADMM (ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting) 2006** (Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/Malaysia/Myanmar/Laos/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand/Vietnam)

Established in 2006, the ADMM is the first region-wide defence forum that brings together the defence ministers of ASEAN member states annually to discuss and exchange views on defence and security challenges in the region. Hitherto, defence cooperation in the region was pursued mostly as bilateral and unilateral initiatives. The ADMM was prompted by concerns over the lack of an effective multilateral response mechanism to deal with a variety of transnational security challenges that beset the region. The ADMM seeks to enhance transparency and promote greater understanding of the different security challenges, culture, norms, and political pressures between ASEAN member states. Moving beyond confidence-building measures, the ADMM places its emphasis on practical areas of cooperation. It produces three-year work programmes which guide cooperation in defence and security issues in the region. These include activities in areas such as promoting defence and security cooperation, conflict prevention and resolution, and norms setting and sharing. The first three-year work programme (2008–10) was adopted at the second ADMM in Singapore in 2007.

Since its inception, intra-ASEAN cooperation in the area of defence has grown, particularly with regards to disaster relief and humanitarian assistance, through the adoption of concept papers such as the Concept Paper on the Use

of ASEAN Military Assets and Capabilities in Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief and the Concept Paper on the Establishment of ASEAN Defence Industry Collaboration. At the sixth ADMM in Phnom Penh in May 2012, the defence ministers signed the Joint Declaration on Enhancing ASEAN Unity for a Harmonized and Secure Community, which highlighted the success of the first Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) table-top exercise hosted by Singapore and Indonesia in 2011, as well as reaffirming their commitment to the ASEAN Political-Security Community by 2015.

In 2010, ASEAN established the ADMM-Plus out of the ADMM process. The ADMM-Plus was formally tabled as a Concept Paper at the second ADMM in Singapore in 2007, with the objective of promoting and strengthening engagement with ASEAN dialogue partners on defence and security issues through triennial meetings and consultations of defence ministers of member states. The dialogue partners in this process are Australia, India, Japan, New Zealand, the People's Republic of China, the Republic of Korea, Russia, and the United States. The inaugural ADMM-Plus was convened in Hanoi, Vietnam, on 12 October 2010. In addition to being a forum for building informal contacts, confidence building, and developing norms of behaviour, there was a specific focus on five areas of immediate cooperation – disaster relief, counterterrorism, peacekeeping, maritime security, and military medicine. The ASEAN Defence Senior Officials' Meeting Plus (ADSOM Plus) and numerous Experts' Working Groups (EWGs) were established to implement the decisions made at the ministerial meetings.

Given perennial regional concerns that Southeast Asia remains susceptible to external power rivalry, the ADMM-Plus serves as a mechanism that entrenches the central role of ASEAN in regional defence and security matters. Yet, despite willingness for dialogue, it is still unclear what the ADMM-Plus can achieve when it comes to longstanding security issues. While it provides platforms for defence ministers to discuss bilateral conflicts or military competition on the sidelines of these meetings, it is unlikely that the ADMM-Plus process would be

able to deal comprehensively with traditional threats and issues such as the **South China Sea** disputes, the Korean Peninsula, or escalating rivalry between China and the United States. At the sixth ADMM in Phnom Penh on 29 May 2012, it was agreed that the interval of the ADMM-Plus meetings would be shortened from every three years to two years from 2013 onwards. In May 2014, ADMM ministers agreed to adopt the Concept Paper on Establishing a Direct Communications Link, which essentially paved the way for the establishment of a hotline for all ASEAN defence ministers. At their Singapore gathering in November 2018, which saw all 18 defence ministers in attendance for the first time, ADMM-Plus agreed to meet annually rather than triennially as originally designed. The Singapore meeting also provided the backdrop for the United States to announce its first ever joint maritime exercise with ASEAN, which took place in 2019.

see *also*: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations), 1967–; South China Sea.

**ADMM-Plus** (Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/Malaysia/Myanmar/Laos/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand/Vietnam) see **ADMM** (ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting) **2006**

**AFTA (Association of Southeast Asian Nations Free Trade Area)**

**1993–** (Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/Laos/Malaysia/Myanmar/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand/Vietnam)

At the fourth meeting of heads of government of **ASEAN** held in Singapore in January 1992, an agreement was reached on establishing a free trade area with effective tariff reductions ranging from 5 to zero per cent during a 15-year period beginning from 1 January 1993. ASEAN had been established with an ostensible prime commitment to economic cooperation, which had not been realized up to that point. Political cooperation had taken pride of place, especially during the course of the Cambodian conflict during the 1980s. With its resolution as an international problem and the attendant

marginalization of ASEAN as a diplomatic community, its members became conscious of the need for corporate renewal. This concern coincided with a collective fear of global trading blocs as well as with a contrasting opportunity of being able to benefit from a potential single market, then of over 300 million people.

The notion of a free trade area had been suggested by Thailand in September 1991 and was approved in principle the next month at a meeting of ASEAN's economic ministers in Malaysia. The initiative to establish an AFTA marked an attempt to repair the Association's failure to raise intramural trade beyond around 15 per cent. The main mechanism chosen was the Common Effective Preferential Tariff (CEPT) Scheme. In January 1992, 15 groups of manufactured goods and processed agricultural products were initially identified for inclusion in the scheme of accelerated tariff reductions. A meeting of economic ministers convened in Manila in October that year, which reached agreement on trying to expedite the process of tariff reduction. A new target of five to eight years was set for lowering tariffs to 20 per cent before realizing the goal of a maximum of 5 per cent by the end of the 15-year implementation period. At issue for ASEAN at the outset was how to overcome the persisting problem of reconciling the conflicting economic interests of member states reflected in their different tariff levels. By October 1993, at a subsequent meeting of economics ministers, it was evident that the CEPT Scheme had stalled. It was agreed to re-launch it, with all members (with the exception of Brunei) beginning tariff cuts from January 1994. In July 1995, despite reservations on the part of Indonesia and the Philippines, ASEAN's foreign ministers supported the reduction of the timeframe for implementing tariff cuts of from 5 to zero per cent to eight years. Vietnam, which joined the Association in that month, was granted a dispensation to defer its obligations under AFTA until 2006.

At the **Bangkok ASEAN Summit** in December 1995, it was agreed to reduce all intramural tariff barriers under the CEPT Scheme by 2003. Despite the impact of regional economic adversity from mid-1997, the **Hanoi ASEAN Summit** in December 1998 sanctioned an advance by

one year to 2002 for tariff reductions to between 5 and zero per cent, with more recent members, including Vietnam, Myanmar, and Laos, which had joined in July 1997, given a dispensation up to 2008 and Cambodia, which joined in April 1999, up to 2010. At an informal summit in Manila in November 1999, the target date for the final elimination of all duties was advanced from 2015 to 2010 for Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand, while the remaining members had their target advanced from 2018 to 2015. Despite general scepticism that has obtained about ASEAN's ability to keep to its declared target dates for tariff reductions, member states have made significant progress in the lowering of intra-regional tariffs. The ASEAN Six, comprising Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Brunei, Thailand, and the Philippines, have managed to bring down more than 99 per cent of the products in the CEPT Inclusion List to the 5 to zero per cent tariff range. Meanwhile, the newer member states have also moved 80 per cent of their products into their CEPT Inclusion List (IL) in line with their respective CPET commitments and 60 per cent of these products have been brought down to the 5 to zero per cent tariff range. By 2012, 64 per cent of the IL products of the ASEAN Six had no tariffs. Consequently, the average tariff for the ASEAN Six under the CEPT Scheme had been reduced from 12.76 per cent to 1.51 per cent from 1993 to 2012. The following are the AFTAs that have been concluded: the ASEAN–Australia–New Zealand FTA was established in February 2009; the ASEAN–China FTA was signed in November 2002 and came into effect in January 2010; the ASEAN–India FTA was signed in October 2003 and the final agreement was reached in August 2009; the agreement establishing the ASEAN–Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership was signed in 2008; and the ASEAN–Korea Free Trade Area came into force in 2010. Notwithstanding the aspirations of AFTA, the reality of the need to accommodate the interest of all members contrived to dilute its implementation. This was evident from the number of sectors in the exclusion list and the different degrees of commitment from member states. Concomitantly, the number of Southeast Asian firms that have made

use of AFTA remains low, while member states have gradually demonstrated a preference for parallel strategies of bilateral agreements with respective trade partners.

see also: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Bangkok Summit (ASEAN) 1995; Hanoi Summit (ASEAN) 1998; Singapore Summit (ASEAN) 1992.

### **Ahmadiyah** (Indonesia)

The *Ahmadiyah* is a movement which was founded in Muslim India in 1889. Its founder, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (d. 1908), is believed to be a divine reformer, the promised messiah and the Imam Mahdi, a prophesied redeemer of Islam. While the *Ahmadiyah* shares many core beliefs with other schools of the Islamic faith, they depart in other critical ways, most notably in their understanding of the nature of the death of Jesus and the finality of the prophethood of Muhammad. As most Ahmadis believe Mirza Ghulam Ahmad to be a revealed prophet who succeeded and yet remains subordinate to Muhammad, many mainstream Muslims do not accept Ahmadis as fellow believers. These also consider Mirza Ghulam Ahmad a heretic.

The roots of the *Ahmadiyah* movement in Indonesia are traceable to the 1920s when three young scholars, Abubakar Ayyub, Ahmad Nuruddin, and Zaini Dahlan, set out to India to further their religious studies. They initially made acquaintance with the Lahore *Ahmadiyah* Movement but subsequently made a trip to Qadian to accept formal tutelage (*bay'ah*) with Mirza Basyiruddin Mahmud Ahmad, the second successor and son of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. In 1925, Mirza Basyiruddin sent a delegate, Maulana Rahmat Ali, to the East Indies to promote *Ahmadiyah* teachings. He visited Aceh, Padang, and Jakarta, where he was warmly received. Though Indonesia's main Muslim organizations **Nahdlatul Ulama** (NU), **Muhammadiyah**, and **Masyumi** decreed *Ahmadiyah* to be deviant, the latter faced little open hostility from mainstream Indonesian Muslims. In fact, the Indonesian government declared *Ahmadiyah* a lawful organization in 1953. As the *Ahmadiyah* evolved in Indonesia, it split into two groups that mirrored the factions of its parent movement in India, with the

half-million-strong *Jama'ah Ahmadiyah Indonesia* (JAI or Muslim *Ahmadiyah* Community) aligned with the *Ahmadiyah* Muslim Community and the more obscure *Ahmadiyah* Lahore aligned with the Lahore *Ahmadiyah* Movement.

Indonesia's tolerance of the *Ahmadiyah* diminished in 1980 when the **Majelis Ulama Indonesia** (MUI or Indonesian Ulama Council), created in 1975 by President **Suharto**, issued a *fatwa* (decree) declaring the *Ahmadiyah* as deviant and outside of Islam. This view was further reinforced by the Blasphemy Law (*Undang-undang Penistaan Agama*) No. 1/PNPS/1965, which prohibits any persons from speaking about, participating in, or supporting interpretations of a religion that deviates from the central teachings of that religion. The Blasphemy Law, which was enacted by President **Sukarno** and implemented by Suharto, is bound by article 156(a) of the criminal code, which subjects perpetrators to a maximum five-year jail term. Prohibitions on the *Ahmadiyah* were further reinforced when it was banned by the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) in December 1985.

The *Ahmadiyah* enjoyed a temporary respite under President **Abdurrahman Wahid**, an advocate of interfaith dialogue and understanding, who invited Mirza Tahir Ahmad, the fourth successor and grandson of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, to visit Jakarta. However, under President **Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono**, the MUI re-issued its *fatwa* declaring the *Ahmadiyah* deviant in 2005. Unlike the fallout from its previous *fatwa*, this time sporadic acts of violence against Ahmadis followed. The situation worsened in 2008, when the minister of religious affairs, the attorney general, and the minister of the interior collectively issued a joint ministerial decree declaring the *Ahmadiyah* to be deviant and in violation of the Blasphemy Law, and decreed that for as long as the Ahmadis considered themselves Muslims they were to discontinue the promulgation of their beliefs or risk persecution to the fullest extent of the law. On 28 January 2011, members of **Front Pembela Islam** (Islamic Defenders Front, FPI) attacked an *Ahmadiyah* mosque in Makassar and forced the congregation to evacuate the premises before destroying their property. While President Yudhoyono had called for a

full investigation of the incident, his failure to repudiate statements which justified the persecution of the *Ahmadiyah* elicited strong criticism by human rights groups worldwide. In February 2011, about 1,500 people disrupted an *Ahmadiyah* service in Banten and viciously attacked and killed three Ahmadis in the presence of police who stood by and watched. The horrific killings were captured on film and circulated through YouTube, leading to further widespread criticism of the Indonesian government. The election of **Joko Widodo** as president held out the prospect of greater tolerance of the *Ahmadiyah*, but that hope was shattered with the continuation of persecution undergirded by the influence of vocal conservative Muslim forces. In 2016, an *Ahmadiyah* community in Bangka Island, off Sumatra, were told to 'convert to Sunni Islam' or risk being expelled from the island, while in May 2018 mobs attacked an *Ahmadiyah* compound in West Nusa Tenggara leading to the displacement of several families. It bears noting that the *Ahmadiyah* communities that were subject to persecution were not engaged in active proselytization of their faith.

For what was deemed as the imposition of severe limitations on religious liberties, the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) has requested that Indonesia amend or revoke laws and regulations that impinge on religious freedom. They argued that these were a violation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights ratified by Indonesia in 2006, and most importantly, contradicted the 1945 Constitution of Indonesia which guarantees religious freedom for all. Meanwhile, Indonesian citizens who follow the *Ahmadiyah* movement continue to be denied identity cards. see also: *Front Pembela Islam; Majelis Ulama Indonesia; Masyumi; Muhammadiyah; Nahdlatul Ulama; Suharto; Sukarno; Wahid, Abdurrahman; Widodo, Joko; Yudhoyono, Susilo Bambang*.

### Aljunied Group Representation Constituency (Singapore)

The Group Representation Constituency (GRC) is a form of electoral division whereby a team of three to six members of Parliament (MP) consisting of at least one representative each

of Indian and Malay ethnicity are voted into Parliament together. The Aljunied Group Representation Constituency (GRC) is the first and only GRC that has been won and controlled by an opposition party in Singapore since the GRC system was introduced at the 1988 general election. At the 2011 general election, the **Workers' Party** (WP) led by secretary-general **Low Thia Khiang** unseated a powerful PAP team in Aljunied GRC after winning 54 per cent of the votes, securing a comfortable margin of more than 9 per cent. This brought an extra five elected seats in Parliament for the WP, in addition to the one that they held for Hougang Single-Member Constituency (SMC). WP's victory in Aljunied GRC also led to the retirement of three senior PAP politicians from office, including the minister of foreign affairs, George Yeo, and Singapore's first female full minister, Lim Hwee Hua, who previously was a minister in the Prime Minister's Office. The WP was re-elected in the GRC at both the 2015 and 2020 general elections. Low Thia Khiang had retired before the 2020 election, handing over leadership of the team – and the party – to Pritam Singh.

The ruling **People's Action Party** (PAP) has continued to maintain that this system is important to ensure that minority groups are adequately represented in Parliament. Nevertheless, the GRC system has attracted criticism for being an obstacle for small opposition parties who wish to chip away at the PAP's stranglehold on power, as well as being a vehicle through which fresh PAP candidates can enter Parliament without having to secure their own mandates, as would be the case in a single-seat system. Nevertheless, at the 2020 election the WP managed to secure victory at another GRC, Sengkang.

see also: Low Thia Khiang; People's Action Party; Workers' Party.

### **Alkatiri, Mari** (Timor-Leste)

Mari Alkatiri was the first prime minister of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste and is currently the secretary-general of the Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor (**Fretilin**). Born in 1949 in then Portuguese Timor, Alkatiri is a descendant of Yemeni settlers as well as a practising Muslim, unlike most

of his counterparts in the *Fretilin* leadership who are Roman Catholic. After receiving primary and high school education in Dili, Alkatiri pursued his university degree in Angola where he graduated as a surveyor from the Angolan School of Geography. Returning to Dili, he started work as a chartered surveyor.

Alkatiri became politically active at the fairly young age of 20. Together with others, he established the Movement for the Liberation of East Timor, an underground resistance movement calling for independence from Portuguese rule. He then moved on to establish a political party, the Timorese Social Democratic Association (ASDT), which later became part of *Fretilin*. Upon the unilateral declaration of independence of the Democratic Republic of East Timor in November 1975, he was appointed minister of state for political affairs on 1 December 1975. Two days later, he left with other *Fretilin* leaders on a trip around Africa to gather international support for their new nation-state. However, on 7 December, Indonesian forces moved into Dili, and this marked the start of a 24-year exile for Alkatiri, who was offered sanctuary by the Mozambique government. While in exile, he pursued another degree in law at the Eduardo Mondlane University in Maputo and went on to work as a lecturer in international law for a decade at the University of Mozambique. In 1977, Alkatiri replaced **José Ramos-Horta** as minister for foreign affairs for the external delegation, appointed by the government-in-exile.

A reserved figure who, unlike his peer **José 'Xanana' Gusmão**, had not experienced Timor-Leste's independence struggle first-hand, Alkatiri returned to Dili and led *Fretilin* to win Timor-Leste's first elections in August 2001. He was sworn in as prime minister in May 2002. As prime minister, Alkatiri's relationship with Gusmão was rocky and the source of much inter-elite friction that threatened to further destabilize the fragile new government. The differences between them go beyond temperament and style and lie in their different ideological leanings and political beliefs about the role of *Fretilin* in the new state, given its past as the beacon of the independence movement. Alkatiri resigned in June 2006 under heavy domestic pressure, accepting his share of responsibility in



a crisis that had led to widespread violence and at least 30 deaths (see **Timor-Leste Crisis 2006**). He had also been accused of complicity in arming fighters to eliminate political opponents of his government, a charge he has denied.

Under Alkatiri's leadership, *Fretilin* won the greatest number of seats at the 2007 parliamentary elections but was denied the responsibility of forming the government after lengthy political talks with the **National Congress for Timorese Reconstruction** (CNRT) failed to yield conclusive results. President Ramos-Horta then announced that Gusmão would be appointed prime minister and would lead a CNRT coalition that excluded *Fretilin*. Alkatiri denounced this as unconstitutional and encouraged *Fretilin*'s supporters to embark on a campaign of civil disobedience. After elections in August 2017, Alkatiri assumed the seat of power again at the head of a minority coalition government after *Fretilin* secured a narrow victory over CNRT. His second term as prime minister was short-lived however, as Parliament was dissolved the following January by President **Francisco 'Lu'Olo' Guterres** after Alkatiri's failure to get a budget passed.

see also: *Fretilin*; Gusmão, José 'Xanana'; Guterres, Francisco 'Lu'Olo'; National Congress for Timorese Reconstruction; Ramos-Horta, José; **Timor-Leste Crisis 2006**.

### **Alliance Party** (Malaya/Malaysia)

The Alliance Party was the name adopted by the governing intercommunal coalition which assumed the administration of Malaya on independence in August 1957. The Alliance remained continuously in power after the formation of the Federation of Malaysia in September 1963 until superseded in June 1974 by a larger intercommunal arrangement, the **Barisan Nasional** (National Front), based on the same political model and of which it has been the core. The Alliance emerged out of a pact between **UMNO (United Malays National Organization)** led by **Tunku Abdul Rahman** and the Malayan (subsequently **Malaysian**) **Chinese Association** (MCA) to contest elections for the municipality of Kuala Lumpur in 1952 in competition with the multicomunal Independence of Malaya Party (IMP). At issue

was the appropriate political format for a communally divided society. The British colonial power had made the grant of independence contingent on a working relationship among the Malay, Chinese, and Indian communities, ideally within the framework of a single political organization. Indeed, during the **Emergency 1948–60**, they had set up a Communities Liaison Committee on an intercommunal basis. The IMP proved to be an abortive attempt to realize the ideal of a truly multiracial party. The electoral success of the pact between UMNO and the MCA demonstrated the prospect of an alternative arrangement, whereby exclusively communal parties through inter-elite bargaining and accommodations about political prerogatives and economic advantage could sustain government on a harmonious basis. When the first federal-wide elections were held in July 1955, the initial pact had evolved into an institutionalized undertaking with the additional participation of the Malayan (subsequently **Malaysian**) **Indian Congress** (MIC). The Alliance went on to win 51 out of the 52 seats, proving itself to be the legitimate representative to negotiate the independence of Malaya from Britain. The Alliance model in which UMNO was the dominant partner was expanded from the early 1970s after elections in May 1969 in which the ruling coalition suffered a major reverse followed by racial violence. Coalition building at the state level in northern Borneo, Penang, and Perak led on to an arrangement at the federal level initially with **Parti Islam Se-Malaysia**, which came into effect in January 1973. *Barisan Nasional* as the successor of the Alliance was registered formally as a political party on 1 June 1974.

see also: Abdul Rahman, Tunku; *Barisan Nasional* (BN); Emergency 1948–60; Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA); Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC); *Parti Islam Se-Malaysia*; UMNO (United Malays National Organization).

### **Al-Ma'unah** (Malaysia)

*Al-Ma'unah* or *Persaudaraan Ilmu Dalam Al-Ma'unah* (Brotherhood of Al-Ma-unah Inner Power) was a fringe Malaysian Islamic martial arts group that engaged in militant activities. At

its height it claimed a membership of over 1,000 followers.

On 2 July 2000, using stolen military uniforms, members of the group managed to break into several Malaysian army reserve camps and made away with weapons and ammunition. They later went into hiding in Bukit Jenalik in Sauk, Perak. During a standoff with security forces after their hideout was discovered, the radical group managed to take two police officers, one soldier, and one civilian hostage. Among the demands made by the militants was the immediate resignation of the prime minister, **Mahathir Mohamad**, the appointment of an Islamic scholar to replace him, and the implementation of stricter Islamic law in Malaysia. After a four-day standoff, the militants surrendered, but not before torturing their hostages and eventually killing two of them. One *Al-Ma'unah* member was also killed during the firefight. While *Al-Ma'unah* gained notoriety for their part in the Sauk siege, the group also sought to inflict damage on the Batu Caves, a site revered by Malaysia's Hindus, and also various breweries, but with little success. The group was eventually charged with treason against the Malaysian king. Its leader, Mohamed Amin Mohamed Razali, and his three deputies were all sentenced to death, while other members received various jail sentences.

see also: Mahathir Mohamad.

### **Ambalat** (Indonesia/Malaysia)

The territory of Ambalat is a sea block in the Celebes Sea, off the coast of Borneo. It is located east of Kalimantan, Indonesia, and south of the eastern tip of Sabah, Malaysia, and is thus claimed by both countries. Measuring around 15,000 square kilometres, sovereignty issues have been complicated by the reported presence of natural gas and oil deposits. It is estimated that the Ambalat blocks could hold as much as 764 million barrels of oil and 1.4 trillion cubic feet of gas. According to the Indonesian government, the territories are referred to as Ambalat and East Ambalat blocks, while the Malaysians refer to them as blocks ND6 and ND7.

The Ambalat dispute is deeply rooted in its history. The ownership of the area itself had been unclear since colonial times, when Britain

administered the Malay Peninsula and North Borneo while the Dutch controlled the Indonesian Archipelago, also known as the Dutch East Indies. Concomitantly, the Celebes Sea became a contested area when the colonial powers left. Jakarta claims that Ambalat is part of the Bulungan sultanate, which became part of Indonesia upon independence in 1945. Malaysia's claim is predicated on the Ordinance Powers law, passed in August 1969, through which it established 12 nautical miles of territorial waters measured from the baseline by drawing a straight baseline according to provisions of the 1958 Sea Law Convention concerning the Territorial Sea and the Contiguous Zone. It was on this basis that Malaysia then produced a new territorial map on 21 December 1979 with the outermost limits of maritime claims extending into the Sulawesi Sea, and which included the seabed area covering Ambalat as a part of Malaysia. They would further seek to augment their case with the 2002 International Court of Justice (ICJ) judgement which awarded the nearby islands of Sipadan and Ligitan to Malaysia. From the 1990s to the mid-2000s, a flurry of oil exploration concessions were awarded to various oil companies, likely as a way for the countries to demonstrate ownership over the region as well as to reap its economic benefits. Indonesia awarded the concession for the Bukat block – also an area between East Kalimantan and Ambalat – to the Italian oil and gas company ENI in 1988, and later in 1999 gave the same company the concession for the Ambalat block. Indonesia also gave the American oil company Unocal an exploration licence for Ambalat in December 2004. The dispute over Ambalat heightened in February 2005 when Malaysia began issuing exploration licenses to its national oil company Petronas in partnership with Royal Dutch Shell Group for two deep-water oil concessions which included ND6 and ND7. This later led to military skirmishes between the two countries and aroused public anger in Indonesia.

At the height of the Ambalat dispute, the Indonesian Directorate General of Sea Transport proceeded to construct a 20-metre lighthouse on Karang Unarang, an atoll located within the Ambalat waters which appears only at low tide. From Jakarta's perspective,

the lighthouse was built on the premise that Karang Unarang was located within its waters. In February 2005, Malaysia proceeded to issue an exploration licence to Royal Dutch Shell Group. That same month also witnessed the Malaysian naval police arrest Indonesians who were working on the construction of the Karang Unarang lighthouse. Indonesia immediately responded with protests and dispatched naval vessels and fighter planes to patrol the disputed zone, threatening to militarize the situation and escalate tension with Malaysia. In retaliation, Malaysia sent gunboats and harassed Indonesians in the area. The events were widely reported in the Indonesian media, leading to protests in front of the Malaysian Embassy in Jakarta. President **Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono** stressed that Indonesia would not compromise its sovereignty and Vice-President **Yusuf Kalla** even threatened to wage war over the claims. Malaysia responded by sending the Royal Malaysian Navy and Marine police vessels to reinforce security in Sabah and Sarawak. Eventually, Hasan Wirajuda and Syed Hamid Albar, then foreign ministers of Indonesia and Malaysia respectively, met to resolve the conflict in Jakarta on 5 March 2005. Following the meeting, both issued statements that committed their governments to restraint and peaceful resolution of the conflict. Under the leadership of President **Joko Widodo** in Indonesia and Prime Minister **Najib Tun Razak** in Malaysia, both governments agreed in February 2015 to appoint special envoys to discuss possibilities for negotiation. Several meetings have since taken place, with little progress made. Meanwhile, Malaysian and Indonesian naval vessels continue to appear in the contested area, prompting diplomatic protests from the other party that have all but settled into a familiar pattern.

see also: Kalla, Yusuf; Najib Tun Razak, Datuk Seri Mohamad; Widodo, Joko; Yudhoyono, Susilo Bambang.

### **Anand Panyarachun** (Thailand)

Anand Panyarachun served with distinction as interim prime minister of Thailand on two occasions during 1991–2. He was born in Bangkok on 9 August 1932 and received his

secondary and higher education in England, graduating in law from Cambridge University in 1955. He then entered the Thai Ministry of Foreign Affairs, serving in later years as ambassador to the United States and then permanent representative to the United Nations. He returned to Thailand in 1976 with a reputation as a skilful diplomat to become permanent secretary (head) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs but fell victim to the political purge by the military following a bloody coup in October 1976. During 1977–8, Anand served as ambassador to West Germany, resigning from the foreign service in 1979 to go into private business. In February 1991 a military coup removed the government of **Chatichai Choonhavan**. In March, Anand was persuaded by King **Bhumibol Adulyadej** to accept the post of interim prime minister until fresh elections were held. His mainly technocratic administration took a number of important and successful economic initiatives and enjoyed considerable popular support, in great part because of Anand's reputation for ability and integrity. He relinquished office with the elections in March 1992 but was asked by the king to resume it again after political violence in May, which was precipitated by the non-elected, retired general **Suchinda Kraprayoon** taking over as prime minister. Anand returned to high office in June 1992 and held it until elections in September produced a coalition government led by **Chuan Leekpai**. During his second and more limited tenure, Anand acted with royal and popular approval to circumscribe the powers and privileges of the military establishment.

In 1996 Anand was elected a member of the Constitution Drafting Assembly and appointed chairman of the drafting committee. He oversaw the drafting of what came to be called the **People's Constitution 1997**. The constitution would later be abrogated following the 2006 military coup supported by Anand. Anand also served from March 2005 as chairman of the National Reconciliation Commission tasked with exploring options for re-establishing peace in the restive southern provinces. Anand had become a fierce critic of the government of **Thaksin Shinawatra** and his handling of the southern unrest, particularly the imposition of

the state of emergency decree. Although critical of Thaksin's handling of the situation, Anand refused to submit the NRC's final report, waiting instead for the results of the 2006 legislative elections. The recommendations were finally submitted on 5 June 2006, but were rejected by **Prem Tinsulanonda**, president of the Privy Council. A liberal monarchist, Anand remained an advocate of decentralization and devolution of power to the provinces, but this view was never popular among the conservative ruling elite. At the height of student protests in 2020, Anand came out to express his sympathies for the movement, suggesting that the government of **Prayuth Chan-ocha** consider constitutional reform and the amendment of the *lèse majesté* law.

see also: Bhumibol Adulyadej, King; Chatichai Choonhavan, General; Chuan Leekpai; People's Constitution 1997; Prayuth Chan-ocha, General; Prem Tinsulanonda, General; Suchinda Kraprayoon, General; Thaksin Shinawatra.

### **Ananda Mahidol, King** (Thailand)

King Ananda Mahidol succeeded to the Thai throne in March 1935 following the abdication and exile of his uncle King Prajadhipok, who had conceded the end of the absolute monarchy in 1932. Born in 1925, he was then nine years old and at school in Lausanne. Apart from a brief visit to Bangkok in 1938, he remained in Switzerland until after the end of the Pacific War, returning to Thailand in December 1945 with his younger brother **Bhumibol Adulyadej**. At the time, Thailand was adjusting to the end of a discredited collaborationist military rule and the introduction of civilian politics with **Pridi Phanomyong**, who had opposed the Japanese, as prime minister. On the morning of 9 June 1946, however, King Ananda was found shot dead in his bed in the Grand Palace in Bangkok. The initial official explanation was that the death had been an accident; the king and his brother had been known to play with guns. Rumours of regicide in order to create a republic prompted Prime Minister Pridi to appoint an official commission into the fatality, but public unrest was unabated, aggravated by

economic problems and corrupt practices. Ultimately, the death of the king served as a pretext for a military coup in November 1947 which restored to power the wartime leader Field Marshal **Phibul Songkram**. With the change of regime, further investigation of the death led to a prolonged trial and then the execution in 1955 of two royal pages and a friend of Pridi, which confirmed public suspicion of a plot. King Ananda was succeeded in June 1946 by his brother Bhumibol; the circumstances of his death have never been satisfactorily explained and have remained a forbidden topic in Thailand.

see also: Bhumibol Adulyadej, King; Phibul Songkram, Field Marshal; Pridi Phanomyong.

### **Angkatan Perpaduan Ummah** (Malaysia)

*Angkatan Perpaduan Ummah*, which translates as Muslim Unity Front, was an electoral coalition which was formed by opposition Malay parties in June 1990 in the wake of the split within **UMNO (United Malays National Organization)** that occurred during 1987 when **Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah** unsuccessfully challenged **Mahathir Mohamad** for the leadership. The coalition comprised **Parti Islam Se-Malaysia (PAS)**, **Semangat '46, Berjasa**, and another minor grouping, *Parti Nasional Muslimin Malaysia*. The Muslim Unity Front contested concurrent federal and state elections in October 1990 but was successful only in the state of Kelantan, where it won all 39 seats in the legislature. It formed the state government but under the effective control of PAS, and this was repeated after elections in April 1995. The Front provided an electoral vehicle of convenience for disparate political interests, but by 1996, tensions between the coalition partners reached a breaking point over the division of political spoils and PAS's policy of Islamization. *Semangat '46* was formally dissolved in October 1996 and its members were admitted *en bloc* into UMNO, which marked the effective end of the Muslim Unity Front.

see also: Mahathir Mohamad, Tun; *Parti Islam Se-Malaysia*; Razaleigh Hamzah, Tengku; *Semangat '46*; UMNO (United Malays National Organization).

### Anglo–Malayan/Malaysian Defence Agreement 1957–71 (Malaya/Malaysia/Singapore)

A commitment by Britain to the external defence of Malaya in return for which it was granted the right to maintain military forces ‘for the fulfilment of Commonwealth and international obligations’ came into effect on 12 October 1957. In April 1959, through an exchange of letters with the government of Malaya, Australia and New Zealand formally associated themselves with those articles in the agreement which provided for the stationing of Commonwealth forces. The terms of the agreement were extended to all the territories of the enlarged Federation of Malaysia in an undertaking in November 1961, which came into effect from 16 September 1963. That extension of commitment was successfully tested during Indonesia’s **Confrontation** of Malaysia during 1963–6. It was expanded to include Singapore, despite the island’s separation from the Federation in August 1965. A meeting in London in April 1971 between representatives of Britain, Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia, and Singapore reached an accord on the termination of the agreement on 1 November 1971. It was succeeded by the **Five Power Defence Arrangements**, in which the explicit commitment to the external defence of the two Southeast Asian states was replaced by a provision for consultation only.

see also: Confrontation; Five Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA) 1971–.

### Anti-Ahok Protests 2016 (Indonesia)

In the course of a working visit to the regency of Thousand Islands on 27 September 2016, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, also known as ‘Ahok’, the popular governor of Jakarta at the time, delivered a speech to the residents in which he cited from the Qur’an. His citation of the Qur’anic verse, al-Maidah verse 51, exploded in controversy, culminating in his being found guilty by a district court in North Sumatra and sentenced. At issue was blasphemy against **Islam** and offence against the Muslim-majority population of Indonesia, which Ahok, an ethnic Chinese Christian, was alleged to have committed when he purportedly cited from the Qur’an to

suggest that Islamic holy scripture was deceiving people to vote against him. The allegations were based on an abbreviated video clip of the speech that had been posted on YouTube.

On 11 October 2016 the **Majelis Ulama Indonesia** issued a *fatwa* condemning Ahok for committing blasphemy in the speech he delivered. The *fatwa* precipitated mass protests, the two most significant of which took place on 4 November and 2 December 2016, when more than a million activists gathered. Known as the 4/11 and 2/12 protests respectively, these mobilizations were orchestrated by a broad-based alliance of Islamic social and political organizations led by Bachtiar Nasir, a popular Saudi-trained ulama, and Rizieq Shihab, leader of **Front Pembela Islam**. They were joined in the endeavour by political parties such as **Gerindra**, **Partai Keadilan Sejahtera**, and **Partai Amanat Nasional**. While the protests were, for the most part, peaceful, tussles did eventually materialize between protestors and the police, especially when the former attempted to breach the security cordon and enter the presidential palace during the protest on 4 November. More disturbing was the narrative that evolved to frame the protests, namely, that those who supported or defended Ahok were, by extension, anti-**Pribumi** and anti-Islam.

By virtue of his close political association with President **Joko Widodo**, through which he enjoyed the president’s endorsement during his time as governor of Jakarta, it was widely believed that political adversaries of President Jokowi had conspired with Islamist groups to contrive Ahok’s removal from office. In order to diffuse the situation, Jokowi met with his chief political opponent, **Prabowo Subianto**, after the 4 November protests, and also the protestors after the 2 December remonstrations. The main intent of the meetings was to head off criticisms of his government’s religious credentials, and to reassure the crowd that the trial of Ahok would proceed. Concern for his religious credentials would later lead Jokowi to select **Ma’aruf Amin** as his running mate for the presidential election.

Despite protestations of his innocence and evidence that the video clip was in fact altered to produce a quote that was taken out of context,

Ahok was found guilty by a five-judge panel comprising four Muslims and one Hindu, who concluded that there was sufficient evidence to charge him for the more serious crime of blasphemy against Islam instead of a lesser charge of insulting Muslims that the defence team had argued for. Ahok was sentenced to two years' imprisonment. In December 2017, a 'reunion' demonstration was mobilized on the occasion of the one-year anniversary of the anti-Ahok protests, driving home the point of the growing popularity of nativist and exclusivist narratives. *see also: Front Pembela Islam; Gerindra; Islam; Ma'aruf Amin; Majelis Ulama Indonesia; Pribumi; Partai Amanat Nasional; Partai Keadilan Sejahtera; Prabowo Subianto; Widodo, Joko.*

### **Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL) (Burma/Myanmar)**

The Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL) was a political organization set up in 1944 by the nationalist leader, **Aung San**. It was intended initially to challenge Japanese occupation in the context of changing military fortunes in the Pacific War but then became the vehicle for nationalist opposition to British plans for post-war Burma. Britain's political accommodation with the AFPFL paved the way for negotiations for independence, which were concluded harmoniously in January 1947. In elections in April 1947, AFPFL won 172 of the non-communal seats and thereby demonstrated its political dominance. It formed the first government after independence in January 1948 with **U Nu** as prime minister, Aung San having been assassinated in July 1947. Over the next decade as the country faced turbulence from ethnic-minority and communist rebellion, AFPFL proceeded to fragment. In April 1958 it split into two factions, with U Nu leading the majority alignment. It was then that the prime minister turned to General **Ne Win** to request that the army assume a caretaker role, which lasted for two years. U Nu's so-called 'clean' faction won elections held in February 1960 but the AFPFL government was removed with the military coup in March 1962 which also made the party illegal.

*see also: Aung San; Ne Win, General; U Nu.*

### **Anupong Paochinda, General**

(Thailand)

A stalwart of the *Burapha Payak* (Tigers of the East or the Queens Guard) faction of the Thai military together with **Prayuth Chan-ocha** and **Prawit Wongsuwan**, General Anupong Paochinda was commander-in-chief of the Royal Thai Army from October 2007 to December 2010 during a period of political turmoil in the country. He was a member of the junta that carried out a coup against the government of **Thaksin Shinawatra** in September 2006 and oversaw security operations during violent political protests in Bangkok in 2009 and 2010.

Anupong was born in Bangkok on 10 October 1949. He completed his primary schooling in Bangkok in 1965 and joined Class 10 of the Armed Forces Academies Preparatory School, graduating in 1967. He attended the Chulachomklao Royal Military Academy, graduating with Class 21 in 1972. Anupong received a degree in political science from Ramkhamhaeng University in 1993 and completed master's degrees at the National Defence College and the Institute of Development Administration in 2004. After rising through the ranks, Anupong eventually commanded the 21st Infantry Battalion, a unit responsible for protection of the royal family. He later commanded the 1st Infantry Division, a key unit based in Bangkok. At the time of the 2006 coup, Anupong was in command of the important Bangkok-based 1st Area Army. He was selected by the junta's Council of Ministers to succeed **Sonthi Boonyaratglin** as army commander on 19 September 2007, and confirmed in the appointment by the king on 1 October 2007. Anupong inherited an army which had been thrust back into politics by the 2006 coup. His forces were criticized during the 2008–10 political turmoil for seemingly supporting the elite establishment. Anupong declined to use force against the **People's Alliance for Democracy** protesting against the pro-Thaksin **People's Power Party** (PPP) governments of **Samak Sundaravej** and **Somchai Wongsawat**. Anupong brokered a **Democrat Party**-led government with military and establishment backing following the dissolution of the PPP. Under Anupong, Thai soldiers suppressed red shirt

protestors in April 2009 and then launched two violent crackdowns on mass protests in Bangkok in April and May 2010. Anupong played an active role in counterinsurgency operations in the restive southern provinces, reducing the levels of violence during his command of the army. A staunch monarchist, Anupong retired from the army on 30 September 2010 and was appointed Privy Councillor. Following the 22 May 2014 coup, Anupong was appointed advisor for security to the **National Council for Peace and Order** government and later, interior minister.

see *also*: Democrat Party; National Council for Peace and Order; People's Alliance for Democracy; People's Power Party; Prawit Wongsuwan, General; Prayuth Chan-ocha; Samak Sundaravej; Somchai Wongsawat; Sonthi Boonyaratglin, General; Thaksin Shinawatra.

### **Anwar Ibrahim** (Malaysia)

An immensely charismatic and ambitious politician with a cerebral persona, Anwar Ibrahim is currently leader of **Parti Keadilan Rakyat** (PKR). He was elected deputy president of **UMNO** in November 1993, appointed deputy prime minister of Malaysia a month later, and served in those positions until September 1998, when he was dismissed against a context of economic adversity and political differences with Prime Minister **Mahathir Mohamad**.

Anwar Ibrahim was born on 10 August 1947 in Bukit Mertajam and was educated at the University of Malaya in the late 1960s where he read Malay studies. He became the charismatic leader of **ABIM**, the Islamic Youth movement, which he founded in 1971 and which posed a radical challenge to the UMNO-dominated government. In 1974, Anwar was detained for leading a protest in support of rice farmers in the state of Kedah. It came as a great surprise, therefore, when he announced that he was joining UMNO to stand as a parliamentary candidate in general elections in April 1982. His Islamic credentials and close association with Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad were judged to have been important factors in helping to fend off the electoral challenge of the opposition **Parti Islam Se-Malaysia** (PAS). With electoral

success, he was appointed a junior minister in the Prime Minister's Office. In September 1982, Anwar was elected a vice-president of UMNO and head of the party's youth wing. He then rose steadily in government, assuming in succession the youth, culture, and sport; agriculture; and education portfolios. During the power struggle within UMNO in 1987 in which Mahathir was challenged by **Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah**, Anwar remained fiercely loyal to the prime minister, who triumphed over his political adversary. In March 1991, after the resignation of the incumbent **Daim Zainuddin**, he was appointed minister of finance. Although he entered politics from an Islamic base, Anwar Ibrahim advocated religious pluralism in a Malaysian society divided along racial and religious lines. Prior to the onset of economic adversity in the late 1990s, Anwar Ibrahim was widely regarded as Mahathir's chosen successor. However, his perceived challenge to Mahathir at a time of economic difficulty prompted the prime minister to act to destroy politically his younger protégé in order to try to salvage his own historical reputation.

After mounting a campaign for political reform, Anwar was detained under the now-defunct Internal Security Act and assaulted in custody, which provoked anti-government protests and international criticism. He was then charged with corruption and sexual misconduct. Anwar pleaded not guilty, claiming that he was the victim of a political conspiracy, while his cause was taken up by his wife Wan Azizah Ismail who founded the *Parti Keadilan Nasional* (National Justice Party) – which later became *Parti Keadilan Rakyat* (People's Justice Party or PKR) – in his support. In April 1999, Anwar was found guilty of four charges of corruption (abuse of power) and sentenced to six years' imprisonment, which precipitated public disorder in Kuala Lumpur. Anwar was also found guilty of sodomy in August 2000 and sentenced to nine years in prison, but the conviction was overturned by the Federal Court in 2004 and Anwar was released. As he was banned from joining politics for five years following his release, he took on teaching positions in Oxford, Johns Hopkins, and Georgetown universities. Anwar returned to politics when his ban from

public office expired in April 2008, just one month after Malaysia's 12th general elections. In August that year he was returned to Parliament after a landslide victory at a by-election for the seat of Permatang Pauh. His return to politics was not short of controversy: in 2008, Anwar was again facing sodomy charges. A two-year trial began in 2010 and ended with an acquittal.

Since his dismissal from government, Anwar has played an instrumental role in opposition politics. In 1999, his cause was taken up by a reinvigorated opposition movement leading to significant gains against the incumbent **Barisan Nasional** (National Front, BN) in federal elections that year. In 2008, Anwar was the linchpin for an opposition alliance featuring the **Democratic Action Party (DAP)**, PAS, and PKR that managed to deny the BN a two-thirds parliamentary majority for the first time in Malaysian history. In 2013, Anwar led the three parties, which had by then formally coalesced into the PR coalition, to an unprecedented 51 per cent of the popular vote and 89 parliamentary seats. That coalition fell apart in 2012 when a conservative faction in PAS led by Abdul Hadi Awang broke ranks.

Anwar's successful 2004 appeal against his sodomy conviction was overturned in March 2014 and he was subsequently sentenced to five years' imprisonment. This move was viewed in many quarters as a politically motivated gambit on the part of the UMNO-led government in response to rumours in early 2014 that Anwar would contest a state by-election in Selangor so as to eventually assume the post of chief minister of the opposition-held state, Malaysia's richest and most industrialized, from where he would have access not only to state coffers but also to the Conference of Rulers comprising Malaysia's nine sultans and four governors. In the event, Anwar was pardoned after the historic election in May 2018 when the new **Pakatan Harapan** coalition managed to unseat the *Barisan Nasional*. His release paved the way for yet another political comeback, which began when he easily won a by-election in Part Dickson in October 2018. Nevertheless, the mercurial Anwar would find himself embroiled in another murky controversy, this time over a

purported gentlemen's agreement with Mahathir Mohamad that the latter would vacate high office, which he assumed for the second time after the May 2018 election, for Anwar after two years. For fear that Mahathir might renege on the promise after 138 members of Parliament reportedly signed a statutory declaration in February 2020 urging Mahathir to serve out a full five-year term, Anwar attempted to force the issue and hold the prime minister to the purported agreed succession timeframe. This triggered a series of events, known in Malaysian political parlance as the **Sheraton Move**, that led to the overthrow of the *Pakatan Harapan* government, the resignation of Mahathir, and a massive setback for Anwar. Notwithstanding this, Anwar did not give up on his ambition, and in an attempted power grab publicly claimed in September 2020 to command the backing of a majority of parliamentarians. Nothing materialized from that claim.

*see also:* ABIM; *Barisan Nasional* (BN); Daim Zainuddin, Tun; Democratic Action Party (DAP); Mahathir Mohamad, Tun; *Pakatan Harapan*; *Pakatan Rakyat*; *Parti Islam Se-Malaysia*; *Parti Keadilan Rakyat*; Razaleigh Hamzah, Tengku; Sheraton Move 2020; UMNO (United Malays National Organization).

### APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) 1989–(Brunei/Indonesia/Malaysia/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand/Vietnam)

APEC is an organization of 21 member economies set up in November 1989 as a result of an Australian initiative with the object of promoting freer multilateral trade and investment within Asia-Pacific. That initiative was prompted by concern over lack of progress in the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the prospect of exclusive trade blocs developing in North America and Europe. For that reason, all members of **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** joined APEC at the outset, but with mixed feelings over the extent to which the Association might have its separate regional identity diluted as a consequence. Indeed, it



was in January 1992, not long after APEC's formation, that ASEAN's heads of governments decided to establish a free trade area, known as AFTA, for members of the Association. Although APEC was represented initially as a loose consultative body, its members agreed in September 1992 to set up a small permanent secretariat in Singapore. That sign of institutionalization may well have prompted Malaysia's prime minister, **Mahathir Mohamad**, to propose an alternative East Asian Economic Grouping at the end of the year, subsequently modified to an East Asian Economic Caucus (EAEC).

The character of APEC changed as a result of an initiative by US President Bill Clinton in July 1993 to hold a meeting of APEC's political leaders following a scheduled ministerial meeting in Seattle in November. His grandiose scheme to use APEC as the prime vehicle for creating a so-called 'New Pacific Community' was greeted without enthusiasm by ASEAN governments, while Mahathir took particular offence and boycotted the meeting. In the event, the summit passed off without incident but failed to rise above declaratory commitments on trade liberalization. However, it did mark a qualitative change in the structure and intended role of APEC because President **Suharto** agreed to host a second summit in Indonesia in the following year, which has set an annual pattern. In Bogor in November 1994, the members of APEC agreed on a two-step approach to free and open trade and investment in the region by 2020. Much of the impetus for an accord on general principles came from the host government of President Suharto, which saw the occasion as an opportunity to demonstrate the international standing of Indonesia while chair of the Non-Aligned Movement. Once again, the only openly discordant note was struck by Prime Minister Mahathir, who attended the meeting but issued reservations to the effect that his government would commit itself to trade liberalization on a unilateral basis only at a pace and capacity commensurate with Malaysia's level of development. Private reservations about the pace of trade liberalization are more widely shared within ASEAN because of concerns about the vulnerability of national markets

to seemingly unfair competition. At Osaka in November 1995, the Bogor Action Agenda was reaffirmed but also qualified by provision for flexibility 'in the liberalization and facilitation process' to take account of the different levels of development and diverse circumstances in APEC economies. The meeting in Vancouver in November 1997 was dominated by the **Asian Financial Crisis** and revealed the limitations of APEC, whose leaders acknowledged the central role of the International Monetary Fund. Plans were made for liberalizing trade in nine sectors, but there was an impasse at the meeting in Kuala Lumpur in November 1998 over fast-track liberalization. The meeting in 1997 had admitted Peru, Russia, and Vietnam to membership but also imposed a ten-year moratorium on new entries. By the end of the century, in addition to the seven ASEAN states, the members of APEC were Australia, Canada, Chile, China, Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea, Mexico, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Russia, Taiwan, and the United States.

The 2001 meeting in China was dominated by discussions on the war on terror, and commitments were made to enhance counterterrorism cooperation. This was significant, as it was the first time APEC explicitly dealt with a non-economic issue. Furthermore, the Shanghai Accord which clarified APEC's roadmap towards achieving free trade and investment goals was adopted. Representation of Taiwan in APEC has remained an issue, as Beijing rejected Taiwan's choice of former vice-president Li Yuan-zu, and in response, the government of Taiwan refused to select another representative and boycotted the 2001 meeting. Following 2001, meetings in subsequent years focused on achieving sustainable and equitable growth so as to reduce economic disparities by meeting the Bogor Goals of trade and investment liberalization, enhancement of human security, and promoting good governance and a knowledge-based society. At the 2004 Santiago meeting, the Santiago Initiative for Expanded Trade in APEC was launched, and it had the aim of capacity building of all member state economies so as to implement trade liberalization. In the 2006 Hanoi meeting, support for the Doha Development Round

remained a top priority. The 2001 target which aimed to achieve a 5 per cent reduction in trade transaction costs by 2006 was reached, and therefore the next Trade Facilitation Action Plan (TFAP II) was endorsed, which targeted a further 5 per cent reduction of trade transaction costs in the APEC region by 2010. The 2007 meeting stressed the need for a successful conclusion of the WTO Doha Round, and to address the challenges of climate change through the adoption of the Declaration on Climate Change, Energy Security and Clean Development, which set an APEC-wide target for reducing energy intensity by at least 25 per cent by 2030. Discussions on prospects for a Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific were inconclusive. The 2008 meeting concentrated mainly on the global financial crisis at the time. APEC diplomacy came under some strain with the assumption of power by Donald Trump in the United States. The 2017 APEC leaders' meeting in Da Nang, the first attended by Trump, took place against the backdrop of escalating trade tensions between the United States and China. In veiled reference to US concerns over Chinese trade practices, the consequent Da Nang Declaration saw the introduction at the insistence of the US delegation of sharper language such as 'non-discriminatory, reciprocal and mutually advantageous trade and investment framework' and the need to 'address unfair trade practices' as well as 'the removal of market-distorting subsidies and other types of support by governments and related entities'. Sino-US rivalry carried over into the 2018 meeting in Port Moresby, resulting in APEC not being able to release a joint statement for the first time in its history. With the 2019 iteration scheduled for Chile cancelled because of domestic unrest, tensions abated somewhat in November 2020, when the 21 leaders met virtually and agreed on the Putrajaya Vision 2040 that outlined the path to an open, dynamic, resilient, and peaceful regional Asia-Pacific community by 2040 in response to pushback against globalization, epitomized by the fact that President Trump was the only leader who chose not to use the APEC backdrop for the virtual meeting. In any event, it was arguably the expression of interest by China at that meeting to consider joining

the **Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership** that was of greater significance. In August 2021, US vice-president Kamala Harris conveyed an offer by President Joe Biden to host APEC in 2023.

APEC's experience has also revealed some of the weaknesses of voluntary cooperation among countries with diverse economies and at various developmental levels, not to mention the adverse effects of superpower antagonism. While cooperation has brought down barriers to trade and investment, there remains a lack of liberalization of 'sensitive sectors' such as agriculture. Furthermore, the role of APEC is increasingly being challenged due to the proliferation of bilateral Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) and sub-regional forms of economic cooperation in response to the impasse at the WTO rounds. There are several countries seeking membership in APEC, such as India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Macau, Mongolia, Laos, Cambodia, Costa Rica, Colombia, Panama, and Ecuador.

*see also:* AFTA (Association of Southeast Nations Free Trade Area) 1993–; ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Asian Financial Crisis 1997–8; Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership; Mahathir Mohamad, Tun; Suharto.

### **Aquino, Benigno** (Philippines)

Benigno (popularly known as Ninoy) Aquino was the most prominent and effective opposition leader during the first decade of President **Ferdinand Marcos's** authoritarian rule. He was imprisoned on the introduction of martial law in September 1972 and remained in detention until the end of the decade, when he was allowed to travel to the United States for heart surgery. After recovery, he remained in the United States as a rallying point for political dissent. He returned to the Philippines in August 1983, driven by a concern to sustain his political appeal and encouraged by evidence that Marcos was mortally ill. Aquino arrived at Manila airport on 21 August and was taken off the plane by armed members of the Aviation Security Command, one of whom shot him in the head as he was being led down stairs from the exit to the runway and a waiting car (*see Ver, General Fabian*). His blatant murder served to

transform the political condition of the Philippines by arousing great popular anger against President Marcos and his regime. The assassination marked a political turning point which led directly to the collapse of Marcos's rule following fraudulent elections in February 1986.

Benigno Aquino was born on 27 November 1932 into an elite landowning family from Tarlac Province, north of Manila. His father had been a member of the pre-war Senate and controversially the speaker of the Legislative Assembly set up under the Japanese occupation. Aquino first made his mark as a journalist for the *Manila Times* at the age of 17 when he covered the Korean War. Then, after qualifying as a lawyer, he married Corazón Cojuangco, a member of an immensely wealthy Sino-Philippine family (see **Aquino, Corazón**). He entered politics in 1955 and secured election as mayor of Tarlac but was then disqualified for being below the minimum age of 23. Two years later, he successfully contested the office of vice-governor of the province and became governor at the age of 27 when the incumbent joined the national cabinet. Over the next five years, Aquino acquired a national reputation as a capable administrator. In 1967 he stood successfully for the Senate but was obliged to win a court case to hold on to his seat because he had reached the minimum age of 35 only on taking the oath of office after the elections had taken place. In the Senate, Aquino became a vigorous opponent of Marcos, who had been president for two years. He was returned to the Senate for a second term in 1971 and was regarded as the politician most likely to succeed Marcos, who was permitted to serve only two terms under the constitution. In September 1972 Marcos declared martial law in an attempt to retain power. Aquino was then arrested and charged with murder and the illegal possession of firearms; he was ultimately sentenced to death by a military tribunal. In the event, he was executed in cold blood because his return to the Philippines in 1983 constituted a direct political threat to the decaying Marcos regime. Ironically, that execution served only to accelerate that decay.

see *also*: **Aquino, Corazón**; **Marcos, Ferdinand**; **Ver, General Fabian**.

### **Aquino, Benigno Simeon Cojuangco, III (Philippines)**

Benigno Simeon Cojuangco Aquino III was the 15th president of the Republic of the Philippines. He was the son of the late political activist and senator **Benigno Aquino** and former president **Corazón Aquino**. Aquino came from a long line of politicians. His great-grandfather served in the Malolos Congress while his grandfather served in the Philippine Congress. His father was elected senator in 1967 and became a vocal critic of the administration of **Ferdinand Marcos**.

Aquino graduated from the Ateneo de Manila University with a bachelor's degree in economics. After graduation, he joined his family in exile in the United States. When his father was assassinated in 1983, Aquino returned to the Philippines. He was later elected as congressman for Tarlac Province. Aquino was re-elected several times, and in 2007 won a seat in the Senate. Amidst popular dissatisfaction with the administration of **Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo**, Aquino ran for presidency in 2010 on a **Liberal Party** ticket, announcing his candidature a month after his mother's death. He capitalized on this popular dissatisfaction by reviving memories of the first **EDSA** revolution that overthrew Marcos and was swept into power in the May election by a landslide. At the onset of his administration, Aquino announced that anti-corruption would be a policy priority for his presidency. To that end, he stood firm in his anti-corruption advocacy, deriding his predecessor and declaring that her policies had not only increased corruption in the country, but also aggravated the poverty and hardship which Filipinos were experiencing. Beyond the rhetoric, however, results from his first years in office were not entirely convincing. After conveying Aquino into power, popular sentiment started to gravitate away from the president as a result of growing frustration at his inability to implement more substantive policies to address challenges inherited from the previous government. Such was the extent of popular disillusionment that the epithet 'Noynoying' – in reference to Aquino's nickname 'Noynoy' – was coined by the media to describe the Aquino

administration's foot-dragging. On the other hand, he was credited with introducing macro-economic policies that brought about a steady rate of growth during his term. The early months of Aquino's tenure also saw him confronted with the **Manila Hostage Crisis**, which resulted in the death of eight tourists from Hong Kong. Controversially, while he took responsibility for the incident and expressed regret that it happened, he has maintained that the Philippines did not need to apologize for it. He was also held responsible for the botched military effort to capture a foreign terrorist in Maguindanao in January 2015 which led to the death of 44 soldiers. With the **Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF)**, Aquino pushed for the signing of a major peace deal, for which a framework peace agreement was eventually agreed in October 2012. Aquino followed this up with a secret meeting with the MILF leader, Murad Ebrahim, in Tokyo in August 2011 and a landmark visit to the MILF stronghold in Sultan Kudarat, the first Philippine president to make a peaceful visit to a MILF camp, in February 2013.

On the foreign policy front, a major challenge for Aquino was the escalation of tensions with China over competing claims in the **South China Sea**. Tensions became particularly acute when both parties claimed territorial jurisdiction over **Scarborough Shoal**. Under pressure from domestic constituencies and intent on portraying an image of strength, Aquino firmly expressed that the Shoal was part of Philippine territory and called on the United States and the international community to support its claim. China reacted to this escalation by curtailing the import of bananas from the Philippines as well as reducing the number of Chinese tourists headed to the archipelago. As a consequence of these pressures, Aquino was forced to soften his administration's stance on the issue and focus on behind-the-scenes negotiations both bilaterally and as part of the **ASEAN** effort to achieve a Code of Conduct on the South China Sea in accordance with the aspiration of the **Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC)**. In part out of frustration at the lack of strong support from ASEAN, Aquino initiated a legal case against Chinese

claims that resulted in the **Arbitral Tribunal Award 2016** that favoured the Philippines. He was succeeded in office by **Rodrigo Duterte** on 1 July 2016. Aquino passed away on 24 June 2021 at the age of 61. Despite his shortcomings, Aquino will be remembered for his singular focus on efforts to battle endemic corruption in the country.

see also: Aquino, Benigno; Aquino, Corazón; Arbitral Tribunal Award 2016; ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (ASEAN) 2002; Duterte, Rodrigo; EDSA (Epifanio de los Santos Avenue); Liberal Party; Macapagal-Arroyo, Gloria; Manila Hostage Crisis; Marcos, Ferdinand; Moro Islamic Liberation Front; Scarborough Shoal Dispute; South China Sea.

### **Aquino, Corazón** (Philippines)

Corazón Aquino was president of the Philippines from February 1986 until June 1992, when she gave up office without seeking re-election. She was born on 25 January 1933 into the extremely wealthy landowning Cojuangco family from Tarlac Province. She entered politics as a result of personal tragedy: her husband **Benigno Aquino** – whom she married in 1954 and with whom she had four children – had been murdered at Manila airport in August 1983 on his return from exile in the United States. As an aggrieved widow, she became politically active in challenging President **Ferdinand Marcos**, whom she held personally responsible for her husband's fate. When Marcos announced a snap election in late 1985, Corazón Aquino was persuaded to stand against him. That election was fraudulently conducted and provoked a military rebellion. The rebellion was on the point of being crushed when Church leaders mobilized massive popular support in Manila in Corazón Aquino's name (see **EDSA [Epifanio de los Santos Avenue]**; **Sin, Cardinal Jaime**). This display of so-called 'People Power' together with US encouragement persuaded Marcos to go into exile. Corazón Aquino succeeded him as the first female president of the republic.

As a political leader, Corazón Aquino suffered from the defects of her qualities. As the saintly widow of Benigno Aquino, she represented moral virtue. Indeed, the very lack of political experience and taint seemed to qualify her for high office. But in office, moral strength was translated into political weakness and indecisiveness. Corazón Aquino's prime achievement was in restoring constitutional democracy, but she was never able to capitalize on her national standing to contain the political contention which followed, and which obstructed any attempt to address deep-seated economic and social problems. Buffeted from both right and left, Corazón Aquino sought to lead through conciliation, which exposed her to charges of weakness and encouraged military challenges. The most serious of these took place in December 1989, when she was saved from political overthrow only by US military intervention. By that juncture, the high promise of her assumption of office had gone sour as she became identified with vacillation and drift. Moreover, her personal credibility had been tainted by the financial malpractices of members of her family. She salvaged some of her initial reputation, however, when she kept her word in not seeking a second term of presidential office through exploiting the letter of the constitution. Moreover, she was able to play an important role in determining the identity of her successor through public support for **Fidel Ramos**, who as chief of staff of the armed forces and then minister of defence had acted loyally to obstruct military coups against her. Out of office, Aquino avoided political activity with the important exception of defending her democratic legacy against attempts by presidents Fidel Ramos and **Joseph Estrada** to change the constitution for possible personal advantage.

In 2000 Corazón Aquino lent her voice to growing calls for the resignation of the president, Joseph Estrada, because of allegations of corruption. Attempts to impeach President Estrada were unsuccessful, but he was eventually ousted by popular revolt in January 2001, in a reprise of the 1986 EDSA revolution that removed Ferdinand Marcos. Aquino initially supported the ascendancy of **Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo** to the presidency, but later led massive

demonstrations against her for rigging the 2004 presidential elections. In the 2007 senatorial elections, Corazón Aquino actively campaigned for her son, **Benigno Aquino III**. In December 2008, Aquino publicly expressed regret for her role in ousting Joseph Estrada and apologized to the former president. She was diagnosed with colon cancer that year, and died on 1 August 2009. Her son was elected president of the Philippines almost a year later, sworn into office in June 2010.

see also: Aquino, Benigno; Aquino, Benigno Simeon Cojuangco, III; EDSA (Epifanio de los Santos Avenue); Estrada, Joseph Ejercito; Macapagal-Arroyo, Gloria; Marcos, Ferdinand; People Power; Ramos, Fidel; Sin, Cardinal Jaime.

### **Arbitral Tribunal Award 2016** (Philippines)

In response to China's growing assertiveness in the Spratly Islands of the **South China Sea**, the government of **Benigno Aquino III** brought an arbitration case against the People's Republic of China to the United Nations in January 2013. The case sought legal clarification on the validity of the People's Republic's extensive nine-dash line claims in the South China Sea which it officially communicated via *notes verbales* to the UN in 2009. An Arbitral Tribunal was constituted under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) to adjudicate the case. UNCLOS provides for the adjudication of disputes concerning the interpretation and application of the Convention, and it was pursuant to this that the Philippines submitted its case against China on grounds that Chinese activities were in violation of the sovereign rights and jurisdiction of the Philippines under the Convention. While China is itself party to UNCLOS by way of being a signatory in 1986, it took the position that the principal matters in dispute were political and hence fell outside the jurisdiction and competence of the tribunal assembled to hear the case. China subsequently declined to participate in the establishment of the five-member Arbitral Tribunal assembled by the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague and refused to appear before it when

it became clear that the Court saw no merit in their protests.

In total, the Philippines made 15 submissions to the tribunal. The results, which were officially released on 12 July 2016, ruled overwhelmingly in favour of the Philippines. In the main, the ruling dismissed the historical basis of China's nine-dash line claims made in the South China Sea on grounds that UNCLOS superseded all previous rights and conventions pertaining to maritime zones that were established before the Convention came into being. It also determined that the disputed features it was called to adjudicate on in the Spratly Islands were incapable of generating exclusive economic zones (EEZs) or continental shelves. While the Arbitral Tribunal avoided adjudicating sovereignty claims themselves, the implication of the ruling, if it was followed, was that the extent of China's maritime claims are significantly smaller than what was represented with the nine-dash line. Although binding, the result was rejected by China, and its activities in the South China Sea has continued apace since then.

When the South China Sea awards were announced, all eyes were on **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** to see if the regional organization, whose unity has been persistently tested over the South China Sea disputes, would release a statement on the findings. Seven of the ten ASEAN member states eventually released national statements, but ASEAN itself remained muted. Although a legal victory for the Philippines, President **Rodrigo Duterte**, who was sworn into office barely two weeks earlier, chose to play down the result in the hope of improving economic ties with China. On 26 May 2020, Indonesia cited the July 2016 ruling in its *notes verbale* submitted to the UN in opposition to China's own submissions to the UN. This was the first time an ASEAN state formally cited the Arbitral Tribunal Award in its legal case. While there was no explicit mention of the July 2016 ruling, the Chairman's Statement at the close of the **Hanoi Summit** in June 2020 made reference to the rule of law and UNCLOS in relation to stability in the South China Sea.

see also: Aquino, Benigno Simeon Cojuangco, III; ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian

Nations) 1967–; Duterte, Rodrigo; Hanoi Summit (ASEAN) June 2020; South China Sea.

### Archipelago Declaration 1957 (Indonesia)

On 13 December 1957 Indonesia's government unilaterally extended the breadth of its territorial waters from 3 to 12 nautical miles. Concurrently, it asserted the right to establish a system of linked straight baselines around the archipelago connecting the outermost points of its outermost islands. This claim to the same quality of jurisdiction over waters surrounding and intersecting the island constituents of the republic as applied to its territory was pressed by Professor Mochtar Kusumaatmadja at successive UN Conferences on the Law of the Sea from 1958. Indonesia's claim was conceded at the conclusion of the Third Conference in November 1982 and incorporated in the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea in return for rights of maritime passage through the archipelago also incorporated in the convention. In October 1999, in an indication of a renewed interest in protecting Indonesia's archipelagic interests, President **Abdurrahman Wahid** appointed a minister with special responsibility for maritime exploration, in addition to a minister of communications, to his cabinet. Indonesia's archipelagic identity was later reinforced in the concept of the **Global Maritime Fulcrum** which was articulated as a signature strategic concept of the presidency of **Joko Widodo**.

see also: Global Maritime Fulcrum; Wahid, Abdurrahman; Widodo, Joko.

### Article 11 Coalition (Malaysia)

The Article 11 Coalition brings together 13 Malaysian civil society groups which seek to defend the rights of non-Muslims especially on issues related to religious freedom and conversion (see **Lina Joy Issue**). Although Malaysia has both secular and *shari'a* legal systems that run in parallel, the legal process is nevertheless viewed as biased against non-Muslims on religious matters. Cases such as that of Moorthy Abdullah in 2005 exemplified the concerns of the coalition: Moorthy was an army corporal

who allegedly converted to Islam and later passed away. His wife, Sharmala, however, maintained that he was still a Hindu and hence should have a Hindu funeral. Her claim was rejected by the *Shari'a* Court which then proceeded with a Muslim burial without Moorthy's wife's consent. The civil court refused to intervene on the grounds that it could not overrule decisions made by the *Shari'a* Court. At the same time, because the *Shari'a* Court had no jurisdiction to hear non-Muslim cases, Sharmala was effectively left with no legal recourse. Named after Article 11 in the federal constitution which guarantees the freedom of religion, the coalition aims to promote awareness and advocate respect for constitutional guarantees of equal protection for every person in a multicultural Malaysia. Activities which the coalition has engaged in mostly take the form of public forums, public education, and legal advice and assistance. Predictably, the activities of the coalition have drawn the ire of Muslim civil society groups and organizations that see them as a threat to the position of Islam in the country, several of which have rallied to form groups such as an Anti-Article 11 Coalition and **Pembela**.

*see also*: Lina Joy Issue; *Pembela*.

### **ASA (Association of Southeast Asia) 1961–7** (Malaya/Malaysia/Philippines/Thailand)

The Association of Southeast Asia (ASA) was a short-lived experiment in regional cooperation established on 31 July 1961 in Bangkok between the governments of Malaya, the Philippines, and Thailand. It was intended to offer an alternative approach to security to that provided by military alliances and especially by the ill-regarded **SEATO (Southeast Asia Treaty Organization)**. Its underlying rationale was that economic progress provided the foundation for political stability and the best guarantee for political independence. ASA foundered within two years without significant practical achievement, primarily because of a territorial dispute between the Philippines and Malaya over the **Philippines' Claim to Sabah**, a northern Borneo territory. The dispute was aggravated at

ASA's expense because of the concurrent challenge of **Confrontation** by Indonesia, supported by the Philippines, to the legitimacy of Malaya's constitutional successor Malaysia. ASA was revived temporarily in March 1966 as Confrontation waned but was superseded in the following year, in a concession to Indonesia, by the new **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)**. ASEAN adopted the institutional structure and also the approach to security pioneered without success by ASA.

*see also*: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Confrontation; Philippines' Claim to Sabah; SEATO (Southeast Asia Treaty Organization) 1955–77.

### **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–** (Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/Laos/Malaysia/Myanmar/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand/Vietnam)

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was established on 8 August 1967 at a meeting in Bangkok of the foreign ministers of Indonesia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand and the deputy prime minister of Malaysia. Brunei joined in January 1984, Vietnam was admitted in July 1995, while Myanmar and Laos entered in July 1997. Cambodia's membership was delayed until April 1999. Although bound by common Cold War concerns, the initial objective of the founding members was to locate regional reconciliation (in the wake of Indonesia's **Confrontation** of Malaysia) within an institutionalized structure of relations. Under the terms of the **Bangkok Declaration 1967**, ASEAN's prime formal purpose was to promote economic and social cooperation, but its underlying undeclared goal was political cooperation. That cooperation has expressed itself in an intramural practice of conflict avoidance and management and in a role as a diplomatic community on regional issues. The founding Declaration also indicated a prerogative aspiration to manage regional order, which was registered in a declaratory commitment by its foreign ministers in Kuala Lumpur in November 1971 to make Southeast Asia a **ZOPFAN (Zone of Peace, Freedom and**

**Neutrality**). That aspiration has not been realized, in important part because of the absence of a shared strategic perspective among member governments.

A meagre performance in economic cooperation, an aversion to formal defence cooperation, and only limited political cooperation made up the sum of ASEAN's record until the success of revolutionary communism in Indochina during 1975. Moreover, the viability of the Association had been tested in the late 1960s by the revival of the **Philippines' Claim to Sabah**, a part of Malaysia. Its members responded to political change in Indochina by closing ranks and convening the first meeting of heads of government at the **Bali Summit** in February 1976. A formal commitment to political cooperation was expressed in a **Declaration of ASEAN Concord**, while provision for a norms-based regional order and for dispute settlement was contained in a **Treaty of Amity and Cooperation**. Defence cooperation under ASEAN's aegis was ruled out but sanctioned on a primarily bilateral basis outside of the walls of the Association. A second **Kuala Lumpur Summit** in August 1977 failed to generate an anticipated economic cooperation but attracted the presence of the prime ministers of Australia, New Zealand, and Japan who began a practice of ASEAN Post-Ministerial Conferences with dialogue partners, which has become institutionalized. Political cooperation among member governments was effectively displayed in the wake of Vietnam's invasion of Kampuchea (Cambodia) in December 1978. By employing their regional credentials and highlighting the sanctity of national sovereignty, the ASEAN states were able to deny legitimacy to the government conveyed into Phnom Penh by Vietnam's occupying army. During the 1980s, they attracted strong voting support in the General Assembly of the United Nations for an annual resolution calling for Vietnam's military withdrawal from Cambodia, which materialized from September 1989.

With the end of the Cold War and the attendant resolution of the Cambodian conflict as an international problem, ASEAN was faced with a new and uncertain strategic environment distinguished by a change in the pattern of

international alignments that had sustained its collective diplomacy against Vietnam. To meet this challenge, a meeting of ASEAN's foreign ministers together with those from the United States, China, Russia and other regional states in Singapore in July 1993 agreed to inaugurate the **ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF)** as a wider vehicle for addressing security issues. It held its first working session in Bangkok in July 1994. ASEAN's successful ARF initiative demonstrated the political standing of the Association in the wake of the Cambodian conflict, but it also indicated an abdication from a prerogative attitude to managing regional order based on excluding major powers from a superintending role. The Singapore Summit also saw a commitment to establishing an **AFTA** (ASEAN Free Trade Area) as well as an agreement to hold formal meetings of heads of government every three years.

Although ASEAN's foreign ministers were able to issue a **Declaration on the South China Sea** in Manila in July 1992, which called for peaceful resolution of jurisdictional disputes, the end of the Cold War and the attendant enlargement of the Association generated intramural discord as well as problems in external relations. Vietnam's entry in July 1995 was regarded as an historic reconciliation and uncontroversial. However, the entry of Myanmar in July 1997 attracted strong criticism from Western states because of Myanmar's deplorable human rights record with, for example, a disruption of dialogue with the states of the European Union. Additional controversy arose over the membership of Cambodia, which had also been expected to join in July 1997, close to the 30th anniversary of ASEAN's foundation. A bloody coup in Phnom Penh to the political advantage of the second prime minister, **Hun Sen**, just days before entry led the foreign ministers to defer Cambodia's membership. That issue proved to be contentious at the sixth **Hanoi Summit** in December 1998 and served to exemplify the greater difficulty in managing consensus within the enlarged Association. In the event, Cambodia was admitted to ASEAN in April 1999. The **Asian Financial Crisis** further compounded the disarray in the Association when it led to the overthrow of Indonesian



president **Suharto**, leaving ASEAN without a natural political leader. Indeed, Indonesia's contribution to ASEAN had been a conspicuous rejection of past hegemonic ambitions and a willingness to defer to the strategic priorities of other members, exemplified in the case of Thailand during the Cambodian conflict, in the interests of regional harmony. Notwithstanding, it has also assumed the role of *primus inter pares*, particularly through its engagement in shuttle diplomacy and, occasionally, mediation. In 2011, then foreign minister Marty Natalegawa played an instrumental role facilitating discussions between Cambodia and Thailand during the **Preah Vihear Temple Dispute**. It was also the shuttle diplomacy of Natalegawa that eventually rebuilt consensus among ASEAN members following the failure of the Association to agree on a joint communique after the foreign minister's meeting in 2012. In March 2021, foreign minister Retno Marsudi conducted shuttle diplomacy in the hope of pulling together an ASEAN consensus in response to the crisis in Myanmar. In an unprecedented move, ASEAN took the decision to restrict Myanmar's participation at the 2021 Summit to 'non-political representation', in effect denying the junta a seat at the table.

ASEAN is an intergovernmental body without aspirations to political integration of the kind associated with the European Union. A permanent secretariat was set up in Jakarta in June 1976 with limited service functions. The title of its principal administrative officer was secretary-general of the ASEAN Secretariat, *not* of ASEAN, for over a decade and a half until redesignated secretary-general of ASEAN at the **Singapore Summit** in January 1992. Until 2000, ASEAN's principal organ had been an annual meeting of foreign ministers serviced by a prior meeting of senior officials. At the fourth summit in Singapore in 1992, the Association agreed to regularize summit meetings every three years. In 1995, they decided to add an informal summit in each of the two years between summits. At the fourth informal summit in 2002, ASEAN leaders agreed to meet annually and to do away with the distinction between formal and informal summits. Concurrent with this evolution was the gradual increase in frequency and number of summits with non-ASEAN leaders

through arrangements such as ASEAN Plus One, ASEAN Plus Three (APT), and more recently, the **East Asia Summit**. To better structure and govern interactions with external parties, the Guidelines for ASEAN's External Relations was prepared in 2014. The Guidelines enumerated three categories of external relationships: dialogue partners, sectoral dialogue partners, development partners, special observers, and guests, along with rules and procedures for the involvement of external parties in ASEAN meetings and activities and guidelines for the coordination of external relations. A self-imposed moratorium on new dialogue partnerships in 1999 has prevented the Association from being overwhelmed by external engagements. Nevertheless, as a collection of ten member states, the Association has endeavoured to be outward-looking and has pursued closer relations with major regional powers. To that end, a highwater mark was achieved with the United States when then-president Barack Obama invited ASEAN leaders to a retreat in Sunnylands, California, in February 2016; while in 2018, the Association signed the China-ASEAN Strategic Partnership Vision 2030. In October 2018, China and ASEAN held their first-ever joint military exercise. This was followed in September 2019 by the first ever US-ASEAN joint military exercise. Both were naval exercises taking place amid simmering tensions in the **South China Sea**. In 2019, however, relations with the United States hit a low point when the Trump administration dispatched his national security advisor, Robert O'Brien, to represent him at the US-ASEAN summit. This was the first time a country sent a representative lower than the rank of foreign minister to the summit. In an obvious registration of disappointment, the meeting with the national security advisor was attended by only three ASEAN heads of government.

During the ASEAN Summit in 2000, the ASEAN heads of state launched the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) with the objectives of Narrowing the Development Gap (NDG) and accelerating the economic integration of the relatively new members of ASEAN, namely Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, and Myanmar. With four ASEAN members involved in the South China Sea territorial and maritime disputes

with China, ASEAN has played an active role in encouraging a common approach to peacefully resolve the disputes in accordance with international law. In November 2002, the foreign ministers of the ten ASEAN member countries and China signed the **Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC)**, pledging to find a peaceful and durable solution for disputes among them in the South China Sea. Hopes for effective implementation of the DOC diminished as China and some Southeast Asian claimant states pressed their claims incrementally through a combination of juridical manoeuvring, militarization, and nationalistic posturing. Given the circumstances, regional diplomacy was handicapped, culminating in the impasse of 2012, when the Association embarrassingly failed to reach a consensus for a joint statement for the first time in its history at the July ministerial meeting in Phnom Penh. Much in the same vein, aspirations to complete a Code of Conduct have been hampered by divergence of views among ASEAN states over the scope of such a code as well as its binding nature, as well as the persistent incursions of Chinese vessels into the South China Sea. Further complicating relations with China is the dominant position it now assumes in the Mekong region (see **Lancang-Mekong Cooperation**).

At the ninth ASEAN summit in October 2003, the ASEAN leaders signed the **Declaration of ASEAN Concord II** (or Bali Concord II) expressing their commitment to establish an **ASEAN Community**. Envisaged for implementation in 2020, the ASEAN Community is to be founded on three mutually reinforcing pillars: (1) an ASEAN Security Community for political and security cooperation, (2) an ASEAN Economic Community for economic integration, and (3) an ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community for socio-cultural cooperation. In 2004, the ASEAN **Vientiane Action Plan (VAP)** was established at the tenth ASEAN summit; it focused on deepening regional integration and narrowing the development gap between the ten member countries. The VAP was later replaced by the Roadmap for an ASEAN Community. During the 12th ASEAN summit, ASEAN leaders decided to accelerate the establishment of the ASEAN Community, bringing

the deadline forward from 2020 to 2015 and signing the Cebu Declaration on the Acceleration of the Establishment of an ASEAN Community by 2015. As part of the initiative of an ASEAN Economic Community, ASEAN has established a raft of bilateral free trade agreements with key dialogue partners.

The rise of regional giants China and India prompted the Association to aspire to greater cohesion. In the event, the **ASEAN Charter** was tabled in 2005 and entered into force in 2008, conferring on the Association a legal personality. The ASEAN Charter codifies ASEAN principles, norms, and rules, and it provides the legal and institutional framework for achieving the goal of an ASEAN community. While the previous role of the secretary-general was to merely serve as a coordinating office devoid of substantive powers, the enactment of the Charter provided for the expansion of the secretariat's administrative mandate and of the role of the secretary-general who could now speak on behalf of ASEAN. The Charter further changed the schedule for the annual ASEAN chairmanship to run for the calendar year rather than the previous practice of starting at mid-year for 12 months. This change however necessitated that the Thai government hold its position as the chair for an unprecedented period of 18 months from mid-2008 to the end of 2009 in order to synchronize the schedule. In 2006, the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (**ADMM**) was inaugurated as part of the aspiration for the creation of an ASEAN Security Community. In 2010, an ADMM-Plus process was initiated to allow the ADMM to engage with ASEAN dialogue partners on defence issues.

With the participation of major external parties *sans* the United States, the Association completed the **Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership** at the **Bangkok Summit** in November 2019, which ushered in the largest trade deal in the world. In response to developments that threatened to undermine ASEAN regionalism, leaders met for two special summits in the last two years. On 14 April 2020, leaders met virtually as an expression of solidarity and intent in the face of the **Covid-19** pandemic. They met again on 24 April 2021 to discuss the coup in Myanmar, the first in-person meeting of the ASEAN leaders during the pandemic, which

led to a five-point consensus. Nevertheless, the fact that Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos advocated acceptance of the coup meant that a stronger position was impossible. In this regard, the fact that a sixth point which called for the immediate release of political prisoners was omitted was telling.

see also: ADMM (ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting) 2006; ADMM-Plus; AFTA (Association of Southeast Nations Free Trade Area) 1993–; ASEAN Charter (Charter of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations); ASEAN Community; ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) 1994–; Asian Financial Crisis 1997–8; Bali Summit 1976; Bangkok Declaration (ASEAN) 1967; Bangkok Summit (ASEAN) November 2019; Confrontation; Covid-19; Declaration of ASEAN Concord 1976; Declaration of ASEAN Concord II 2003; Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (ASEAN) 2002; Declaration on the South China Sea (ASEAN) 1992; East Asia Summit 2005–; Hanoi Summit (ASEAN) 1998; Hun Sen; Kuala Lumpur Summit (ASEAN) 1977; Lancang-Mekong Cooperation; Philippines' Claim to Sabah; Preah Vihear Temple Dispute; Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership; Singapore Summit (ASEAN) 1992; South China Sea; Suharto; Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (ASEAN) 1976; Vientiane Action Plan (ASEAN) 2004; ZOPFAN (Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality) 1971.

### **ASEAN Charter (Charter of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** (Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/Laos/Malaysia/Myanmar/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand/Vietnam)

The ASEAN Charter is a legally binding agreement signed by the ten ASEAN member states that codifies ASEAN principles, norms, and rules, and provides the legal and institutional framework for achieving the goal of an ASEAN community.

The proposal for the Charter was formally tabled at the **Kuala Lumpur Summit** of ASEAN (the 11th ASEAN summit) in December 2005. The decision was taken in Kuala Lumpur to

establish an Eminent Persons Group (EPG) consisting of distinguished and respected statesmen, with the mandate of making recommendations for the Charter. They would do so through meetings and consultation with various stakeholders such as the business community, members of Parliament, academics, and civil society. The EPG submitted their recommendations to the ASEAN leaders at the **Cebu Summit** (12th ASEAN summit). A High-Level Task Force (HLTF) set up at the summit and consisting of senior government officials, was tasked to draft the Charter. A much watered-down version from that proposed by the EPG was subsequently signed by ASEAN leaders in November 2007 at the 13th ASEAN summit. Within a year, all ten members ratified the agreement and the Charter entered into force on 15 December 2008.

A major issue that provided the impetus for the Charter was the matter of member states' non-compliance with rules, decisions, and agreements. The prioritization of self-interest over regional collective interests and, therefore, ASEAN's history of members not honouring agreements has meant that economic integration has been slow despite the numerous agreements that have been signed and ratified. Given the strong aversion towards the development of any supranational enforcement mechanism, ASEAN agreements have often been characterized by the use of vague terms such as 'promoting' or 'encouraging' that fail to define clearly practical rules on matters of cooperation. They have also been declarations of intent rather than cooperation on implementation on such agreements. The Charter was seen as a mechanism to address the ineffectiveness of a consensual approach and hence the EPG's recommendation to abolish it in favour of decision by majority rule; this provision was later dropped, however, in a compromise in exchange for having a human rights body instead, due to strong opposition from newer member states such as Vietnam and Cambodia.

There is no gainsaying that the ASEAN Charter reflected the Association's lofty aspirations. Under the Charter, ASEAN would acquire a legal personality distinct from that of its member states. People would be at the centre in the

community-building process. There would be increased commitment to democratic accountability and the protection of human rights, which includes the establishment of an ASEAN human rights body. A greater role would also be given to foreign ministers who would form an ASEAN Coordinating Council (ACC) charged with preparation for meetings and implementation of decisions. All that said, the Charter tells us only the intentions laid out by its signatories. In practical terms, what has actually been achieved or can be achieved remains bound by the principles of consensus and consultation that continue to characterize decision-making within ASEAN. In particular, the inclusion of the goal of promoting sovereignty-transcending norms of democracy and protecting human rights appears to run directly counter to ASEAN's much-cherished norm of non-interference and state sovereignty. ASEAN had been under considerable internal and international pressure to take a proactive approach in promoting democracy, good governance, and human rights. But this new agenda of democracy, driven largely by the Philippines and Indonesia, is not shared by all members. In fact, pursuing this lofty objective could potentially undermine regional unity, which has hitherto been predicated on the mutual respect for sovereignty and non-interference in each other's internal affairs. Equally surprising was the proposal to establish an ASEAN human rights body given that the many ASEAN members possess a long-standing aversion to the notion of universal human rights, deeming it to be a Western idea that is incompatible with 'Asian values'. Paradoxically, the decision to go ahead with the signing of the Charter despite the Myanmar junta's bloody repression of demonstrations led by Buddhist monks two months before the signing of the Charter in September 2007 (see **Saffron Revolution 2007**), dealt a huge blow to ASEAN credibility, and in particular to their professed objectives to strengthen democracy, enhance good governance and the rule of law, and promote human rights and fundamental freedoms. While as a collective they issued a strong statement condemning the violent clampdown, the acquiescence to Myanmar's

protest over a scheduled briefing by Ibrahim Gambari, UN envoy to Myanmar, betrayed the persistence of the longstanding ASEAN norms of non-interference.

see also: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Cebu Summit (ASEAN) 2006; Kuala Lumpur Summit (ASEAN) 2005; Saffron Revolution 2007.

### **ASEAN Community** (Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/Laos/Malaysia/Myanmar/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand/Vietnam)

At the **Bali Summit** in Indonesia on 7 October 2003, the leaders of the ten **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** member countries signed the **Declaration of ASEAN Concord II** (or Bali Concord II), expressing their intention to establish an ASEAN Community.

As a collection of small and medium-sized states, ASEAN member countries have felt increasingly threatened by the intrusive economic and political assertiveness of extra-regional powers. In response, ASEAN leaders have registered the need to act collectively to gain better bargaining power on economic and political issues. In addition to external pressures, intra-regional issues which involve the security of the region, such as cross-border tensions, terrorism, and illegal migration, have also prompted leaders to seek further consolidation and enhancement of cooperation between them in order to ensure economic and social stability in the region, as well as peaceful and progressive national development. The leaders acknowledged that sustainable economic development required a secure political environment based on a strong foundation of mutual interests generated by economic cooperation and political solidarity.

The ASEAN Community, declared to have come into being in 2020, is to be founded on three pillars: (1) an ASEAN Security Community or ASC for political and security cooperation, (2) an ASEAN Economic Community or AEC for economic integration, and (3) an ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community or ASCC for socio-cultural cooperation. These three pillars are envisaged to be closely intertwined and

mutually reinforcing to ensure durable peace, stability, and prosperity in the region.

The framework to achieve an ASEAN Community has been drawn up to address each individual pillar. The ASC is envisaged to ensure peaceful processes are employed in the settlement of intra-regional differences. The ASC is also expected to address transboundary maritime issues and concerns in a holistic, integrated, and comprehensive manner. On the other hand, the AEC seeks to create a stable and highly competitive ASEAN economic region with free flow of goods, services, investment, and capital; equitable economic development; and reduced poverty and socio-economic disparities. The AEC also plans to establish ASEAN as a single market and production base, increasing ASEAN's strength in the global supply chain. Last but not least, the ASCC aims to foster cooperation in social development targeted at raising the standard of living of disadvantaged groups and rural populations. The ASCC will also address issues in the work force, public health, promotion of ASEAN's diverse cultural heritage and fostering regional identity, population growth, unemployment, environmental degradation, and transboundary pollution.

Understanding that establishment of an ASEAN Community will reinforce ASEAN's centrality and strength in charting the regional architecture, ASEAN leaders decided at the 12th ASEAN summit to accelerate such establishment, moving up the deadline from 2020 to 2015. Concomitantly, the Roadmap for an ASEAN Community (2009–15) consisting of the ASEAN Political-Security Community Blueprint, the ASEAN Economic Community Blueprint, the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Blueprint, and the IAI Work Plan 2 (2009–15), was drafted to replace the **Vientiane Action Plan**. The ASEAN Community was declared at the end of the 2015 during the **Kuala Lumpur Summit** in November 2015, with the ASEAN Economic Community as its centrepiece.

see also: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Bali Summit (ASEAN) 2003; Declaration of ASEAN Concord II 2003; Kuala Lumpur Summit (ASEAN) November 2015; Vientiane Action Plan (ASEAN) 2004.

### ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) 1994– (Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/Laos/ Malaysia/Myanmar/Philippines/ Singapore/Thailand/Timor-Leste/ Vietnam)

The ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) is an institution for multilateral security dialogue with the participation of 27 states which was established at the initiative of ASEAN (**Association of Southeast Asian Nations**) during the annual meeting of its foreign ministers held in Singapore in July 1993. Its prime function is confidence-building and not conventional defence cooperation. At its **Singapore Summit** in January 1992, ASEAN's heads of government had agreed that security dialogue beyond conventional regional bounds could be undertaken through the vehicle of the Post-Ministerial Conference (PMC). This conference, which convenes immediately after the meeting of foreign ministers, then involved seven dialogue partners: Australia, Canada, the European Union, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea, and the United States. At Singapore's initiative and with backing from its regional partners, an unprecedented meeting of senior officials from ASEAN states and their dialogue partners was convened on the island in May 1993. It was agreed to invite the foreign ministers of China, Russia, Vietnam, Laos, and Papua New Guinea (the latter three as signatories of ASEAN's **Treaty of Amity and Cooperation**) to a special meeting in Singapore in July 1993 concurrent with that of ASEAN's foreign ministers and their dialogue partners. The declared purpose was 'for ASEAN and its dialogue partners to work with other regional states to evolve a predictable and constructive pattern of relationships in Asia-Pacific'. However, the more practical purposes were to encourage the post-Cold War regional security commitment of the United States and the international good citizenship of an irredentist China.

At the inaugural dinner meeting in July, it was decided that the ARF would convene formally in Bangkok in July 1994, to be preceded by a meeting of senior officials. At the first working session, only three hours were allocated for substantive discussion, but it was

agreed to reconvene the Forum on an annual basis and to endorse the purposes and principles of ASEAN's Treaty of Amity and Cooperation as a code of conduct for regional relations. At the second session in Brunei in August 1995, a 'Concept Paper' was endorsed in the Chairman's Statement, which affirmed that the ARF should adopt an evolutionary approach at a pace comfortable to all participants moving in stages from the promotion of confidence-building, development of preventive diplomacy, and elaboration of approaches to conflict; the latter a concession to China's objection to conflict resolution. Apart from its annual meetings of senior officials and foreign ministers, the ARF works through inter-sessional meetings, the most important of which is the Inter-Sessional Support Group on Confidence Building which reports to the annual working meeting. At its annual meeting in Kuala Lumpur in July 1997, the ARF agreed to address preventive diplomacy where it overlapped with confidence-building; but the outcome has been a cosmetic exercise, while confidence-building measures have not progressed significantly.

Nonetheless, the ARF has maintained a cordial tone, which until 2016 had been reflective of an underlying accommodation between the United States and China. Over the years, several recurrent traditional and non-traditional security issues have tended to dominate the ARF agenda. These include the **South China Sea** and tensions in the Korean Peninsula, as well as terrorism, piracy, cybersecurity, maritime security, illegal migration, and natural disaster relief. Notwithstanding the importance of these issues, discussions never concluded in any major breakthrough agreement and in fact was frequently obstructed by the lack of consensus. While its meetings have mostly been routine diplomatic outings, there has been the occasional controversy. At the 2010 Hanoi iteration, then Chinese foreign minister Yang Jiechi pointedly reminded ASEAN counterparts – while reportedly training his eyes at the foreign minister from Singapore – that China was a big country whereas they were small countries. That same year, Yang and the US secretary of state, Hillary Clinton, also crossed swords over the nature of the South China Sea being a matter

of 'core interest' to China and 'national interest' to the United States. At the **Naypyidaw** meeting in 2014, Yang's successor, Wang Yi, and Clinton's successor, John Kerry, exchanged harsh words about the militarization of features in the South China Sea by China.

The title of the security dialogue is indicative of the diplomatic centrality of ASEAN, which has been concerned to uphold its international standing with the establishment of a structure of relations involving all the major powers. In June 2004, ASEAN established the ARF Unit at the ASEAN Secretariat so as to enhance the role of the ARF chair as well as function as a depository and registry by providing administrative support to the ARF. The annual sessions of the ARF are held in the capital where ASEAN's annual meeting of foreign ministers convenes and are chaired by the appropriate incumbent, while all inter-sessional meetings are co-chaired by an ASEAN member. In addition to all ASEAN states, the participants in the ARF comprise: Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, China, European Union, India, Japan, Mongolia, New Zealand, North Korea, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea (observer), Russia, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Timor-Leste, and the United States. Nevertheless, with the proliferation of security dialogue mechanisms, its inability to make substantive progress in resolving pressing security issues that beset the region, and its own institutional shortcomings, the relevance of the ARF to regional security has gradually eroded over time.

*see also:* ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Naypyidaw; Singapore Summit; South China Sea; Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (ASEAN) 1976.

### **ASEM (Asia–Europe Meeting) 1996–** (Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/Laos/ Malaysia/Myanmar/Philippines/ Singapore/Thailand/Vietnam)

The Asia–Europe Meeting was established at a meeting of heads of government in Bangkok in March 1996, where it was agreed to continue the inter-governmental dialogue on a biannual basis. The initiative came from Singapore's prime minister, **Goh Chok Tong**, who

was conscious of the lack of a third structure of global dialogue to that between the United States and Europe and the United States and Asia. He was also keen to encourage greater European investment and a greater political interest in the region to counter the influence of China and the United States. He received ready support from ASEAN partners, especially Malaysia whose prime minister, **Mahathir Mohamad**, recognized a correspondence between the Asian composition of the dialogue, including China, Japan, and South Korea as well as **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** states, and his proposal for an East Asian Economic Caucus. In that respect, the distinguishing feature of ASEM was the absence of the United States, which had staked a claim to the leadership of **APEC** at a meeting of heads of government on Blake Island in 1993. At its first working session, the buoyancy of the Asian economic situation provided a nexus for dialogue, but in London in 1998 economic adversity interposed to weaken it. ASEAN membership was initially limited with a line drawn after the admission of Vietnam, partly to avoid controversy over Myanmar.

Four defining features of ASEM are informality, multidimensionality (i.e. equal weight is accorded to political, economic, and socio-cultural dimensions), emphasis on equal partnership, and dual focus on high-level and people-to-people exchange. ASEM has three main pillars: the political pillar; the economic pillar; and the social, cultural, and educational pillar. Under the political pillar, key issues discussed include counterterrorism, environmental issues, migration, and more sensitive issues like human rights. At the third ASEM foreign ministers meeting held in China in 2001, it was decided that an informal, ad hoc consultative mechanism enabling ASEM officials to exchange views on significant international events should be held before sessions of the UN General Assembly. Under the economic pillar, issues discussed include trade facilitation and trade security, investment issues, information and communication technology, and regionalism and multilateralism. As a result, certain initiatives have been adopted, such as: the Trade Facilitation Action Plan (TFAP), aimed at the

reduction and removal of non-tariff barriers to trade between the two regions; the Investment Promotion Action Plan (IPAP), to promote two-way investment flows between Europe and Asia; the ASEM Trade Pledge, expressing the common resolve of all ASEM partners to resist any protectionist pressures; the ASEM Trust Fund, which provides technical advice and training to assist with policy reform in both the financial and social sectors in countries affected by financial crises; and the Asia–Europe Business Forum (AEBF), which provides the opportunity for the private sector to review issues related to trade and provide input to the official dialogue. Under the social, cultural, and educational pillar, the Asia–Europe Foundation (ASEF) was founded, and it is the sole ASEM institution in existence. Its mandate is to promote cultural, intellectual, and people-to-people exchanges between Europe and Asia.

ASEM saw its first significant expansion during the fifth ASEM summit held in 2004 in Vietnam, where ten new EU members (Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia) and three new ASEAN countries (Cambodia, Laos, and Myanmar) became official members of ASEM. The second round of enlargement occurred in 2007 where Bulgaria, India, Mongolia, Pakistan, Romania, and the ASEAN Secretariat joined. In October 2010 three more members (Australia, New Zealand, and Russia) joined, and two years later in Vientiane, Laos, Bangladesh, Norway, and Switzerland joined, thereby increasing the total ASEM membership to 51 partners and two organizations, the ASEAN Secretariat and the European Commission.

see also: APEC; ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Goh Chok Tong; Mahathir Mohamad, Tun.

### **Asian–African Conference, Bandung 1955 (Indonesia)**

An unprecedented conference of representatives from 29 Asian and African states took place on 18–24 April 1955 in the Indonesian city of Bandung. The initiative for calling the meeting rested with Indonesia's prime minister, Ali Sastroamijoyo, who raised the idea

at a gathering of five Asian prime ministers in Colombo in April 1954 at a time of growing international concern about the prospect of US military intervention in Indochina. A key factor in convening the conference was the opportunity seen by India's prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, of using the occasion to welcome the People's Republic of China into the comity of Asian and African states. In the event, Sino-Indian tensions were exposed by the conference but the occasion was significant for being the first time that post-colonial states had come together to register their own international agenda. Colonialism in all its manifestations was denounced as an evil. The Bandung Conference gave its name to a new spirit of international conciliation in the context of the Cold War and to that extent was a stage in the emergence of the Non-Aligned Movement. The initiative failed to assume institutionalized form. Moreover, the participation of China excluded the Asian-African undertaking from the mainstream of non-alignment, while an attempt to convene a second meeting in Algeria in June 1965 with a greater African participation had to be called off because of the military coup which brought Colonel Boumedienne to power. The so-called Afro-Asian Movement was accordingly discredited, while President **Sukarno** of Indonesia was more interested in convening a conference of what he termed 'New Emerging Forces'. Nonetheless, the Bandung Conference enjoys an honoured place in Indonesia's history, and in 1985 President **Suharto** convened a 30th anniversary meeting as a way of registering his country's restored international standing.

see also: Suharto; Sukarno.

### **Asian Financial Crisis 1997–8** (Indonesia/Malaysia/Thailand)

Originating in Thailand but spreading to regional countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, South Korea, and the Philippines through the contagion effect, the Asian Financial Crisis of 1997–8 was one of the most severe economic crises to affect the developing world since the 1982 debt crisis. The crisis can be attributed to a number of causes, including the

mismanagement of banks and financial institutions in the region, corruption and crony capitalism, policy missteps by governments at the onset of the crisis, financial panic and political uncertainty, and poorly designed international rescue programmes.

Prior to the crisis, East and Southeast Asian economies had been experiencing a decade of unprecedented economic growth, which led pundits to proclaim that an 'Asian economic miracle' was shaping the post-Cold War order in the region. This growth was undergirded by a boom in international lending and large-scale foreign capital inflows into regional financial systems in response to high interest rates. Underlying this economic growth, however, were structural deficiencies that were compounded by corruption and nepotism, and which resulted in capital inflows being short-term. As a consequence, once the Thai economy started wavering, foreign funds were quickly withdrawn first from Thailand, and then increasingly from several other key Southeast Asian economies. While the crisis reflected existing underlying problems in the Asian economies at the macro-economic and micro-economic levels in the financial sector, the severity of the crisis is attributed to speculation and panic which led to large capital outflows.

The swift outflow of capital led to a massive reduction in productivity and a slowdown of economic activity. This in turn resulted in the implosion of local stock and currency markets, and the increase of state debt in the affected countries. In fact, it was estimated at the time that several regional stock markets lost over 70 per cent of their value, and their currency depreciated against the US dollar by the same amount. In response to the rapid devaluation of their currencies, Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia each floated their respective currencies on the international market and imposed capital controls to decrease the outflow of speculative money. Yet the initial implementation of monetary policy reform was tepid, and it was only with further devaluation that implementation of more serious monetary tightening measures escalated.

Indonesia was the hardest hit by the crisis and sought large-scale financial assistance



from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). However, the Indonesian government failed to enforce these IMF programmes, as a corrupt and authoritarian regime overlooked most of its commitments until the severe deterioration of economic conditions led to a full-fledged collapse of the rupiah. Thailand tried to discourage capital outflows with the introduction of limited capital controls and also requested IMF financial assistance. It carried out further major restructuring in response to conditions set by the fund. However assistance from the IMF had a deleterious effect. In effect, the IMF's contractionary measures – such as imposed fiscal restraint through higher taxes, lower public spending, and privatization – all but signalled to creditors an impending crisis, thereby accelerating the outflow of foreign investments. On the other hand, Malaysia refused help from the IMF and responded to the crisis by adopting a strong capital control policy and a fixed exchange rate regime in order to stabilize the exchange rate and boost the financial sector. As a result of long and difficult negotiations with the IMF and the relative ineffectiveness of IMF programmes in alleviating the economic conditions, a regional response was sought. Members of ASEAN Plus Three agreed to set up a mainly bilateral currency swap scheme, known as the **Chiang Mai Initiative**, in 2000 in order to be able to handle more effectively and with greater preparedness any future financial crisis. Other initiatives launched in response to the crisis included a regional economic surveillance mechanism, a regional liquidity support arrangement, and an Asian bond markets initiative.

Apart from severe economic and financial dislocation, the crisis also had severe social and political consequences in affected countries. These consequences were most profound in Indonesia, where the financial crisis precipitated a political crisis that culminated in a series of bloody riots in May 1998 and, ultimately, the resignation of President **Suharto** after more than three decades of authoritarian rule. Thailand, too, suffered a change in government, while in Malaysia, Prime Minister **Mahathir Mohamad** faced the sternest test to his legitimacy when the crisis catalysed a

domestic reform movement that rallied around the sacked deputy prime minister, **Anwar Ibrahim**. The Asian financial crisis also exposed institutional weaknesses of **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)**. In the early months of the crisis, ASEAN dismissed the initial signs as simply a domestic problem and played no role in devising a regional response to provide assistance to the affected member states, thereby failing to provide effective regional leadership.

see also: Anwar Ibrahim; ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Chiang Mai Initiative; Mahathir Mohamad, Tun; Suharto.

### **August Revolution 1945 (Vietnam)**

The August Revolution describes the seizure of power in Hanoi on 19 August 1945 by armed units of the communist-led **Viet Minh** in the wake of Japan's surrender four days before. Although short-lived, this seizure of power marked the beginning of a national revolution which was not fully realized until April 1975. Japan's military occupation of Indochina from 1940 did not displace French colonial administration, which remained subject to the nominal authority of the government in Vichy. The reversal of its military fortunes prompted the Japanese to remove the French administration by force on 9 March 1945 and to sponsor independence in Indochina, in the case of Vietnam under the leadership of Emperor **Bao Dai**.

Japan's surrender to the Allies on 15 August created a political vacuum which the Viet Minh filled. On 25 August they secured Bao Dai's abdication and his acceptance of the post of supreme political advisor in a provisional government established on 28 August. The communist leader **Ho Chi Minh** reached Hanoi on 30 August and proclaimed the independence of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam on 2 September. His statement included extracts from the US Declaration of Independence in an abortive attempt to attract international recognition, while the French set about trying to restore their colonial position. Viet Minh rule was displaced from 9 September as Chinese troops began occupying Vietnam down to the

16th parallel of latitude under an agreement among the Allies to take the surrender of Japanese forces. On 28 February 1946 a Sino-French treaty provided for the return of French troops. Britain had assumed responsibility for the surrender of Japanese troops south of the 16th parallel. Its local commander, General Gracey, faced with the Viet Minh challenge, armed French prisoners of war and thus enabled it to be contained. French troops returned to the south in October 1945. Negotiations between the Viet Minh and the French broke down at the end of 1946 and armed conflict ensued in two stages until the unification of Vietnam in April 1975.

see also: Bao Dai, Emperor; Ho Chi Minh; Viet Minh.

### **Aung San** (Burma/Myanmar)

Aung San is the acknowledged father of Burmese nationalism whose life was cut short by assassination in July 1947 before independence was obtained from Britain. He was born in 1915 in Magwe district and rose to prominence as a radical nationalist student leader in Rangoon during the 1930s. In 1939 he founded the Communist Party of Burma and the next year left the country by ship with the intention of making contact with the Communist Party of China. He arrived in Japanese-occupied Amoy from where he was sent to Tokyo to enjoy the patronage of the military government. In 1941 Aung San returned secretly to Burma to recruit contemporaries for military training in Japan. Aung San led 28 comrades out of an initial 30 back to Burma with the Japanese army when it invaded the country from Thailand in December 1941. Aung San proceeded to establish the Burma Independence Army, which fought alongside the Japanese. Political tensions arose, however, when it became evident to the Burmese nationalists that the independence granted by the Japanese in August 1943 was spurious. Links were then established with the Allies and in March 1945 the reorganized Burma National Army under Aung San declared war against the Japanese, attracting recognition from the Supreme Allied Commander in Southeast Asia, Lord Louis Mountbatten (see **Southeast Asia Command 1943–6**).

After the end of hostilities, Aung San led the **Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL)** in the political struggle for independence stiffened by a paramilitary force. In this role, he came to enjoy the support of Mountbatten, who used his influential position to urge the British government to make concessions to the young nationalist leader. On 27 January 1947 Aung San signed an agreement in London with the prime minister, Clement Attlee, which promised full independence within a year. Despite acute factional divisions within the Burmese nationalist movement as well as the competing interests of apprehensive ethnic minorities, Aung San appeared to enjoy sufficient confidence to set up a viable Union of Burma with a federal constitution. On the morning of 19 July 1947, however, while the provisional cabinet was in session, a group of armed men burst into the room and sprayed it with machine-gun bullets. Aung San, then only 32, was killed together with six of his ministerial colleagues. He had been murdered on the instructions of a political rival, U Saw, who was subsequently tried, convicted, and hanged. Aung San was succeeded by his deputy U Nu, who negotiated the eventual independence of Burma on 4 January 1948. Aung San has since been revered as the outstanding figure in the pantheon of Burmese nationalism, a status which has helped his daughter, **Aung San Suu Kyi**, in her political resistance against the ruling military government.

see also: Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL); Aung San Suu Kyi; Southeast Asia Command 1943–6; U Nu.

### **Aung San Suu Kyi** (Myanmar)

Aung San Suu Kyi is the general secretary of the **National League for Democracy (NLD)** and the most credible opposition leader to challenge military rule in Myanmar (Burma) since its establishment in 1962. Aung San Suu Kyi is the daughter of the legendary leader and martyr of Burma's independence movement, **Aung San**. He was assassinated in July 1947 when she was only two years old, having been born on 19 June 1945. She left Burma at the age of 15 to study abroad and eventually married a British citizen and settled in Oxford. Aung San Suu Kyi

returned to Burma in April 1988 to nurse her ailing mother. By then, popular unrest against the military regime established by General **Ne Win** had gained strong momentum. She quickly assumed a leading role in political challenge, attracting support because of her lineage and personal qualities. After a bloody confrontation on the streets in August and September 1988, the military reasserted control but also promised free elections. Aung San Suu Kyi and supporters then formed NLD, which became the foremost opposition party attracting widespread popular backing. She became its main asset, able to mobilize tens of thousands in rallies against the martial law regime. On 19 July 1989, the anniversary of her father's death, celebrated as Martyr's Day, she cancelled marches and a rally because of the prospect of another bloodletting. The next day, Aung San Suu Kyi was placed under house arrest for 'endangering the state' and thousands of her party members were arrested. She then embarked on a hunger strike which raised the political temperature for a time. NLD achieved an overwhelming victory in elections called by the military regime in May 1990 while Aung San Suu Kyi remained incarcerated. The ruling **State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC)** set up in September 1988 refused to accept the outcome of the elections and agreed to release her only if she gave up her political beliefs and left the country, which she refused to do. In September 1991 Aung San Suu Kyi was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for her non-violent struggle for democracy and human rights. She was allowed limited family visits and in February 1994 was permitted to receive a visit from US Congressman William Richardson. But the effective head of Burma's military junta, Lieutenant General **Khin Nyunt**, refused to provide an indication of her likely release after describing Aung San Suu Kyi's attitude as negative and counter-productive. Richardson was refused a second visit in May 1995.

Therefore, it was with some surprise that Aung San Suu Kyi was released from detention on 10 July 1995. No conditions were imposed formally on her release. However, her English husband Michael Aris, terminally ill with cancer, was refused a visa to visit her in Yangon in

early 1999. He died in March that year. In July 1999, she was denounced in the official press as a traitor who should be driven out of the country. In April 2000, in a videotape delivered to the United Nations Human Rights Commission, she maintained that government oppression had worsened. She was subsequently detained and returned to house arrest in Yangon in September after attempting to leave the capital to visit NLD party workers.

Aung San Suu Kyi was released from house arrest in 2002 and embarked on a hugely popular tour of upper Myanmar, where she attracted large crowds of supporters. On 3 May 2003 her convoy was attacked by a mob believed to be instigated by the military rulers in the north-western town of Depayin, Sagaing division. She was able to escape but was arrested by the military, initially imprisoned in Yangon's Insein prison, and later moved to house arrest in September 2003. During this time, Aung San Suu Kyi was allowed what proved to be a futile meeting with NLD members in 2007. During the same year Aung San Suu Kyi made an appearance at the gate of her house to accept the blessings of monks during the **Saffron Revolution**. In 2009, Aung San Suu Kyi was sentenced to three years at hard labour for allegedly violating the terms of her house arrest by harbouring an American man who swam across Inya Lake in Yangon to her house uninvited and was arrested leaving three days later. Commuted to 18 months of continued house arrest, the sentence effectively barred her from participating in elections scheduled for November 2010.

On 13 November 2010, six days after national elections, Aung San Suu Kyi was released after spending a total of 15 years under house arrest. Following her release there was unprecedented cooperation between herself and her party with the newly elected government including several discussions with then president, **Thein Sein**. In November 2011, Aung San Suu Kyi and NLD announced their intention to re-register the party and participate in by-elections scheduled for April 2012. Over this period she met with a series of international leaders, including US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in December 2011 and British Prime Minister David Cameron in April 2012. After the by-election of

1 April 2012, Aung San Suu Kyi was elected as a member of Parliament from Kawhmu township in Yangon Division along with 43 other NLD candidates who had won seats out of the 45 contested. Initially protesting a required oath of loyalty to the **2008 Constitution** as a prerequisite to sitting in Parliament, Aung San Suu Kyi and other elected members of her party eventually reversed their decision and were sworn into office on 2 May, making NLD the largest opposition party in Parliament. In June 2012, Aung San Suu Kyi made her first trip outside the country in 21 years and finally received her Nobel Peace Prize in Norway on 16 June 2012. In September 2012, she travelled to the United States, where she met President Barack Obama and other political leaders from both parties. She also toured the country to meet with Myanmar exile communities.

In the first openly contested election for a quarter of a century held in 2015, Aung San Suu Kyi led NLD to a landslide victory, but constitutional provisions prevented from ascending to high office. In the event, she would assume the powerful role of state councillor, an office created specifically for her, as well as foreign minister. During her time in office, she would prove to be a firm leader who brooked no dissent within the party. With the military, which continued to hold key levers of power, she had to display deftness and assume a more obliging demeanour. In part because of the exigencies of the need to accommodate the interests of the military but also because of her personal beliefs on the issue, she assumed an unyielding stance in the face of violence against the Muslim **Rohingya** minority that inflicted upon them a grave humanitarian crisis in the western portion of the country. Her defiance on the issue was at the cost of her international standing and image, as international public opinion turned against her and even called for her Nobel Peace Prize to be rescinded.

While her reputation was damaged internationally, it was augmented domestically, as she led NLD to another landslide election victory in 2020. This time, the victory was met with howls of protest by the military, who alleged electoral fraud. The NLD government's reluctance to countenance demands from the military for

further investigation combined with suspicions that Aung San Suu Kyi might use the new mandate to push for constitutional reforms to further curb the military's influence in Parliament prompted Senior General **Min Aung Hlaing**, commander of the *Tatmadaw*, to stage a coup on 1 February whereupon she was arrested and later charged with and convicted of a host of offences including illegal importation and possession of walkie-talkie radios, violation of coronavirus protocols under a disaster management law, breaches of the Official Secrets Act, and corruption. Under the 2008 Constitution, the military retains a 25 per cent bloc in the Parliament which could forestall attempts at constitutional revision. Despite being detained by the junta, Aung San Suu Kyi was named State Counsellor in the **National Unity Government**, the Myanmar government in exile.

see also: Aung San; Constitution 2008; Khin Nyunt, General; Min Aung Hlaing, Senior General; National League for Democracy; National Unity Government; Ne Win, General; Rohingya; Saffron Revolution 2007; State Law and Order Restoration Council; Thein Sein.

### **Azahari, A. M.** (Brunei)

A. M. Azahari was the leader of the **People's Party** (*Partai Rakyat*) of Brunei, which has been banned in the sultanate since it mounted a revolt in December 1962. He was born on the island of Labuan in 1928 of Arab-Malay parents. During the Japanese occupation, he was sent to study veterinary science in Indonesia. He participated in the national revolution against the Dutch, returning to Brunei in 1952. He then became involved in a series of unsuccessful business ventures before turning to politics in 1956. He founded the People's Party, which was modelled on a radical Malayan equivalent and attracted considerable support from among Brunei Malays. In April 1962, as a nominated member of the **Legislative Council**, he failed to secure passage of a motion seeking to restore Brunei's sovereignty over northern Borneo. He then went into exile to Johor Bahru in Malaya where he campaigned against Brunei's membership of the proposed Federation of Malaysia. He was in the Philippines in December 1962 at

the time of the Brunei Revolt and took refuge in the Indonesian Embassy after its failure. He was not allocated any public role during Indonesia's **Confrontation** of Malaysia. He is believed to have resided in the Indonesian town of Bogor, constrained by the government of Jakarta from engaging in political activity, especially after

Brunei became independent and a member of **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** in January 1984.

see *also*: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Brunei Revolt 1962; Confrontation; Legislative Council; People's Party.

## B

### **Ba'asyir, Abu Bakar** (Indonesia)

Abu Bakar Ba'asyir is a Muslim cleric who was born in Jombang, East Java, on 17 August 1938 and educated at Al-Irsyad University in Solo, Central Java. His early days as an activist began with the Islamic Students Association in Solo, the Al-Irsyad Youth Organization, the Indonesian Islamic Youth Movement, and the Student Da'wah Organization. He was also the leader of the **Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia**, an umbrella organization for Indonesian Islamist groups. In 1972 he co-founded the Al-Mukmin Islamist boarding school in Ngruki, Central Java. The school has since gained notoriety for producing considerable numbers of Islamic extremists, to the extent that the International Crisis Group has described it as the 'Ivy League' for recruits for the notorious terrorist organization **Jemaah Islamiyah** (JI).

Ba'asyir actively supported the **Darul Islam** revolt in the early 1960s for the establishment of an Islamic state in Indonesia. He was imprisoned without trial from 1978 to 1982 and exiled from Indonesia in 1993 by the **Suharto** government for agitating for the implementation of **shari'a law** and non-recognition of the Indonesian national ideology, **Pancasila**. Ba'asyir fled to Malaysia, where he took refuge for 17 years before returning after the demise of the New Order in 1998 to renew his call for *shari'a*. During his exile in Malaysia, he is alleged to have co-founded JI. Ba'asyir is widely believed to be the spiritual leader and ideological godfather of JI and to have links with Al-Qaeda. However there has been no public evidence implicating him in terrorist attacks undertaken by JI, and Ba'asyir himself has denied the existence of the organization, dubiously contending instead that the 2002 Bali bombings were the work of American and Israeli intelligence. Nevertheless, Ba'asyir remains on the United Nations' list of international terrorists. In 2003 he was acquitted of terrorism charges linked to a series of church bombings in December 2000 in Java and Sumatra, but convicted on immigration violations

and sentenced to three years' imprisonment, which was later reduced to 20 months. In October 2004 he was again arrested and charged with involvement in the 2003 Marriott Hotel bomb attacks and sentenced to two and a half years of imprisonment. In 2008, Ba'asyir announced his intention to establish a new Islamic group in Indonesia, *Jemaah Ansharut Tauhid*. The group has since 2012 been labelled a foreign terrorist organization by the US government.

In 2010, Ba'asyir was charged with involvement in the plotting of terrorist attacks and military training in Aceh. He denied the charges levelled against him of inciting others to commit terrorism. In June 2011 Ba'asyir was convicted of coordinating, financing and supporting a *jihadi* training camp and was sentenced to 15 years in prison. Though this was later reduced to nine years upon appeal, the Supreme Court rejected the appeal, annulled the reduced sentence, and reinstated the original 15-year sentence of imprisonment. He was however allowed to preach and speak from prison with impunity, which in turn spoke to the larger issue of radicalization that was taking place in Indonesia's prison system where extremist clerics and convicted terrorists were incarcerated together with the general population of the prison. In an effort to appeal to the vocal conservative Islamist ground, during his 2019 re-election campaign, President **Joko Widodo** controversially suggested that Ba'asyir could be released on medical grounds, although that never materialized because the cleric refused to pledge allegiance to the state ideology of *Pancasila*. Ba'asyir was released on 8 January 2021 after completing two-thirds of his jail term.

see also: *Darul Islam*; *Jemaah Islamiyah*; *Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia*; *Pancasila*; *Shari'a Law*; *Suharto*; *Widodo*, *Joko*.

### **Badawi, Tun Abdullah Ahmad**

(Malaysia)

Abdullah Ahmad Badawi was appointed prime minister of Malaysia on 31 October 2003 and

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served in that office until 1 April 2009 when he was unceremoniously forced to resign. 'Pak Lah', as Badawi is affectionately known, was born in Penang on 26 November 1939 and was educated at the University of Malaya. His grandfather was instrumental in the formation of **Parti Islam Se-Malaysia**, while his father was a major figure in **UMNO (United Malays National Organization)**. Badawi was first elected to Parliament in 1974 and was appointed a minister in the prime minister's department in 1982. He served subsequently as minister of education and of defence but was dismissed from the cabinet in 1987 because of his identification with a dissident wing within UMNO led by former minister of trade and industry, **Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah**. Badawi did not sever his formal affiliation to UMNO and was a successful parliamentary candidate in its interest in October 1990. Moreover, he demonstrated his personal standing within UMNO by securing election to one of the three senior posts of party vice-president but behind his main rival **Anwar Ibrahim**, who was promoted from education to finance on Badawi's return to the cabinet as foreign minister in March 1991. Following the dismissal of Anwar Ibrahim, Badawi was elevated unopposed to the position of deputy president of UMNO and deputy prime minister in May 2000. In a move that surprised some, Prime Minister **Mahathir Mohamad** appointed Badawi as his successor, purportedly for his conservatism rather than dynamism.

As prime minister, Badawi sought to differentiate his administration from that of his predecessors by projecting a softer image and a reformist agenda predicated on Islamic principles, which he described as *Islam Hadhari* (Civilizational Islam), and by having a retinue of young, dynamic policy advisors, led by his son-in-law Khairy Jamaluddin, known as the 'fourth floor boys'. He won a resounding mandate at the 2004 general election, which consisted of a successful campaign to wrest back the state of Terengganu from opposition hands and make significant inroads into the opposition stronghold of Kelantan. Badawi's softer, more engaging approach, however, had the deleterious effect of raising expectations,

ultimately to levels that Badawi himself could not meet. Despite starting with some relatively high-profile cases, his anti-corruption campaign soon came under heavy criticism for lack of transparency. Similarly, his propensity for consensus building translated into policy inertia as frustration at the slow pace of reform mounted. Even more calamitous for Badawi was the swift deterioration of his relationship with his erstwhile benefactor, Mahathir Mohamad, which was triggered by his attempts to bring to an end major business and infrastructure projects he inherited from his predecessor. Mahathir launched a series of online missives against Badawi (Mahathir had accused Badawi of curtailing press freedom by obstructing publication of his commentaries on Badawi's policies), followed by unrelenting public statements expressing his disappointment at Badawi's decisions.

Already facing an opposition rejuvenated by Anwar Ibrahim, Mahathir's unyielding attacks cast a dark shadow over Badawi's leadership of **Barisan Nasional** (National Front, BN) into national polls in March 2008. In the event, the elections proved a major setback for the ruling coalition, which lost control of four state legislatures and their customary two-thirds parliamentary majority. For Mahathir, the poor performance at the polls occasioned a call for Badawi's resignation that was echoed in several quarters within UMNO, including by Mahathir's son, Mukhriz Mahathir. Matters escalated with Mahathir going to the extreme of resigning from UMNO, and declaring that he would rejoin the party only after Badawi resigned. Meanwhile, parliamentarians from a BN component party, the Sabah Progressive Party, attempted to table a no-confidence vote in June 2008 against the besieged prime minister. Despite public proclamations of support from his deputy prime minister **Najib Tun Razak**, Badawi was heavily criticized and forced under pressure to take responsibility for the results of the March 2008 elections by resigning from the presidency of UMNO and as prime minister of Malaysia. Since departing office, he has kept a low profile and stayed out of the public eye. Abdullah Badawi's first wife, Endon Mahmood, passed away in October 2005. He remarried in June

2007. Badawi's son-in-law, Khairy Jamaluddin, was previously leader of the youth movement of UMNO and a minister in both the **Perikatan Nasional** and subsequent BN cabinets. He is often touted as a future leader of UMNO and prime minister.

see also: Anwar Ibrahim; *Barisan Nasional* (BN); Mahathir Mohamad, Tun; Najib Tun Razak, Datuk Seri Mohamad; *Parti Islam Se-Malaysia*; *Perikatan Nasional*; Razaleigh Hamzah, Tengku; UMNO (United Malays National Organization).

### **Bali Summit (ASEAN) 1976** (Indonesia/Malaysia/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand)

The first meeting of heads of government of **ASEAN** (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) took place on the island of Bali in February 1976. It was significant as a display of solidarity and collective nerve in the close wake of the success of revolutionary communism in Indochina and also because it registered a political role for ASEAN after nearly a decade of unconvincing claims of interest in only economic and social cooperation. That role was defined in the Declaration of ASEAN Concord 1976, whose objectives and principles were designed to promote political stability within member states and also within Southeast Asia. The declaration reaffirmed a commitment to a regional **ZOPFAN (Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality)**. In addition, the member governments concluded a **Treaty of Amity and Cooperation** which included machinery for regional dispute settlement and made provision for accession to it by non-members. To that extent, the treaty represented a political opening to the revolutionary states of Indochina and an attempt to interest them in a common code of conduct as a basis for regional order. The initial response was negative, and it was only after the end of the Cold War and the formal settlement of the Cambodian conflict that Vietnam and Laos indicated a willingness to adhere to the treaty, which occurred at an ASEAN ministerial meeting in Manila in July 1992. The Bali Summit was significant also for an agreement to establish a

secretariat to be based in Jakarta as well as for excluding defence cooperation from within the Association.

see also: ASEAN (Association of South-east Asian Nations) 1967–; Declaration of ASEAN Concord 1976; Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (ASEAN) 1976; ZOPFAN (Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality) 1971.

### **Bali Summit (ASEAN) 2003** (Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/Laos/Malaysia/Myanmar/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand/Vietnam)

The ninth meeting of the heads of government of **ASEAN** (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) convened in Bali, Indonesia, on 7–8 October 2003. The most significant outcome of the summit was the adoption of the **Declaration of ASEAN Concord II** (or Bali Concord II) in which ASEAN leaders agreed to establish an **ASEAN Community** by the year 2020. The ASEAN Community would rest on three pillars: an ASEAN Security Community (ASC), an ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), and an ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community. The ASC concept, proposed by Indonesia at the summit, was not designed to be a framework for military cooperation or alliance, nor was it a departure from ASEAN's existing security arrangements. Rather, it was a reaffirmation of the principles of non-interference and consensual decision-making in a new international environment defined by the rise of China and India as well as the emergence of non-traditional security threats such as pandemics and terrorism.

The venue of the summit was also symbolic for two reasons. First, Bali was the site of a large-scale terrorist bombing in October 2002. ASEAN leaders as well as the leaders of China, India, Japan, and South Korea had gathered amidst tight security as an expression of faith and confidence in Indonesia's counterterrorism efforts. Second, Bali was also the venue of the first ASEAN Summit (**Bali Summit 1976**), where the **Treaty of Amity and Cooperation** (TAC) was codified, thereby establishing the norms of non-interference and peaceful resolution of disputes that have anchored ASEAN diplomacy since. China and India, two of



ASEAN's major dialogue partners, acceded to the TAC on the sidelines of the 2003 summit.

see also: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Bali Summit (ASEAN) 1976; Declaration of ASEAN Concord II 2003; Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (ASEAN) 1976.

**Bali Summit (ASEAN) 2011** (Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/Laos/Malaysia/Myanmar/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand/Vietnam)

The 19th meeting of heads of government of ASEAN convened in Bali, Indonesia from 14 to 19 November 2011. The main focus of the meeting was to inject greater impetus into ASEAN's community-building process. It was also intended to be a showcase of ASEAN solidarity amidst growing signs of discord and a widening economic gap in the region. To that end, ASEAN leaders adopted the **Declaration of ASEAN Concord III** (or Bali Concord III), which aims to develop a common ASEAN position on global issues so that a more coordinated approach will allow ASEAN to better respond to new challenges the region will face in the future. Also notable at the summit was the decision to accede to Myanmar's request to hold the chairmanship of ASEAN in 2014, as ASEAN leaders were persuaded by the positive steps that Myanmar had hitherto taken in terms of political reform. The **East Asia Summit** (EAS) that followed witnessed formal American and Russian participation for the first time. In the build-up to the EAS, US President Barack Obama had hinted that Washington would like to see the **South China Sea** disputes raised at the summit for discussion. However, this was firmly rejected by the Chinese premier, Wen Jiabao, prior to the summit, insisting that the dispute should be addressed through bilateral consultations and warning against foreign involvement.

see also: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Declaration of ASEAN Concord III 2011; East Asia Summit 2005–; South China Sea.

**Baling Talks 1955** (Malaya/Malaysia)

A meeting was held in December 1955 in the Malayan town of Baling close to the Thai border at the initiative of **Chin Peng**, the leader of the Communist Party of Malaya, which had mounted an armed insurrection from 1948. He had offered to negotiate with **Tunku Abdul Rahman**, chief minister of Malaya, and **David Marshall**, chief minister of Singapore, both of whom owed their positions to general elections. Tunku Abdul Rahman had declared an amnesty for all insurgents, but the talks failed because Chin Peng's demand that the Communist Party be made legal was rejected. His initiative reflected the international communist reorientation to peaceful coexistence as well as the slackening momentum of the insurgency. The **Emergency**, as it was generally known, continued officially until 1960, even though Malaya became fully independent in 1957 and Singapore self-governing in 1959. The insurgency continued in sporadic form beyond 1960, but the Baling Talks marked a turning point after which the communist challenge lost its initial force.

see also: Chin Peng; Emergency 1948–60; Marshall, David; Rahman, Tunku Abdul.

**Bandar Seri Begawan Summit (ASEAN) April 2013** (Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/Laos/Malaysia/Myanmar/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand/Vietnam)

The 22nd ASEAN summit was held in Brunei Darussalam on 24–25 April 2013. Cognizant of the controversy surrounding competing **South China Sea** claims and the deleterious effect they had on ASEAN meetings the previous year (see **Phnom Penh Summit [ASEAN] November 2012**), as ASEAN chair Brunei sought to prioritize the demonstration of ASEAN unity above all else at this summit. To that end, much stress was given to the need to deepen cooperation in political, security, economic and socio-cultural areas, as captured in the summit theme of 'Our People, Our Future Together'. One notable absentee at the meeting was Malaysian prime minister **Najib Tun Razak**, who was preparing

for a major general election. He was replaced by the president of the Malaysian Senate, Tan Sri Abu Zahar Ujang, who assumed the role of the prime minister's special representative. Much effort was made to ensure that all member states reaffirmed the collective commitments under the **Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC)**, which they did. ASEAN leaders also expressed support for continued engagement with China in implementing the DOC in a full and effective manner. While the South China Sea dominated proceedings, ASEAN leaders also discussed denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and reaffirmed commitments to preserve Southeast Asia as a nuclear weapons-free zone.

see *also*: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (ASEAN) 2002; Najib Tun Razak, Datuk Seri Mohamad; Phnom Penh Summit (ASEAN) November 2012; South China Sea.

**Bandar Seri Begawan Summit (ASEAN) October 2013** (Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/Laos/Malaysia/Myanmar/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand/Vietnam)

The 23rd ASEAN summit was held in Brunei Darussalam on 9–10 October 2013 with discussions on progress towards the 2015 objective of establishing an ASEAN Community set as the meeting's priority. Nevertheless, the **South China Sea** disputes predictably dominated the agenda. The commencement of formal consultations between ASEAN and China on the development of the Code of Conduct (COC) in the South China Sea were welcomed during the summit. These had taken the form of the ASEAN–China Senior Officials Meeting on the Implementation of the DOC (**Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea**) and the 9th ASEAN–China Joint Working Group on the Implementation of the DOC, which were held in China on 14–15 September 2013. The summit was notable for the absence of the American president, Barack Obama, due to the crisis in Washington following the US

government's shutdown. President Obama was represented by his secretary of state, John Kerry.

The 23rd ASEAN summit also saw the ASEAN Chair transferred to Myanmar, which assumed leadership of ASEAN for the first time on 1 January 2014. Myanmar joined ASEAN in 1997 and was to have assumed the chair in 2006 but was blocked from doing so by strong international pressure against its poor human rights record.

see *also*: Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (ASEAN) 2002; South China Sea.

**Bandung Conference 1955** (Indonesia)

see **Asian–African Conference, Bandung 1955**

**Bangkok Declaration (ASEAN) 1967**

(Indonesia/Malaysia/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand)

The founding document of ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) was promulgated in the Thai capital on 8 August 1967. The Bangkok Declaration's prime formal commitment was to accelerate economic growth, social progress, and cultural development in the region. However, a proprietary aspiration in the preamble affirmed:

that the countries of Southeast Asia share a primary responsibility for strengthening the economic and social stability of the region and ensuring their peaceful progressive national development, and that they are determined to ensure their stability and security from external interference in any form or manifestation in order to preserve their national identities in accordance with the ideals and aspirations of their peoples.

That proprietary aspiration with security in mind was given formal content in a declaration by ASEAN's foreign ministers in November 1971 to secure the recognition and respect for Southeast Asia as a **ZOPFAN** – a Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality. The commitment to a ZOPFAN was reaffirmed in the Declaration of

## 120 **Bangkok Summit (ASEAN) 1995**

ASEAN Concord at its first summit (**Bali Summit 1976**) but the goal has never been realized in practical terms.

see *also*: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Bali Summit 1976; Declaration of ASEAN Concord 1976; ZOPFAN (Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality) 1971.

### **Bangkok Summit (ASEAN) 1995**

(Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/Laos/Malaysia/Myanmar/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand/Vietnam)

The fifth meeting of ASEAN's heads of government convened in the Thai capital in mid-December 1995. The meeting was notable for the attendance of the prime minister of Vietnam as the representative of the first communist member following his country's entry in the previous July. Present also were the heads of government of Cambodia and Laos, with observer status, and that of Myanmar as a guest, making it the first occasion at which all ten Southeast Asian governments had been so represented. A corresponding commitment was made to enlarge the Association to include all the states of Southeast Asia by the year 2000. An accord was reached on removing all tariff barriers within the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) by 2003 and a treaty was concluded with the object of establishing a Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone, also known as SEANWFZ. see *also*: AFTA (Association of Southeast Nations Free Trade Area) 1993–; ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–.

### **Bangkok Summit (ASEAN) June**

**2019** (Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/Laos/Malaysia/Myanmar/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand/Vietnam)

Despite concerns that ongoing domestic political instability might jeopardize proceedings, the 34th ASEAN Summit was successfully organized in Bangkok from 20 to 23 June 2019. As ASEAN chair, Thailand proposed the theme of 'Advancing Partnership for Sustainability' for the regional organization against the backdrop

of trade friction and growing superpower competition between China and the United States.

The highlight of the summit was the endorsement by regional leaders of the ASEAN Leaders' Vision Statement on Partnership for Sustainability, which committed regional governments to achieve sustainability in areas ranging from security to economic development. After initial disagreements as to its content, another major milestone was the adoption of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) in response to the growing traction that the Indo-Pacific was gaining as an emerging geostrategic concept. Misgivings towards the prospect of being bypassed prompted ASEAN to respond with its own interpretation of the concept, a process which was initiated by Indonesia at the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Retreat in January 2018. By recognizing Southeast Asia's strategic location astride the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean, the AOIP was significant as an effort on the part of ASEAN to influence the emergent narrative and defend the notion of ASEAN centrality that defines its core position on regionalism, while at the same time accommodating the views of its members: Indonesia wanted coverage of maritime cooperation, Thailand called for an emphasis on connectivity and sustainability, Brunei included mention of an open economic system, and Singapore stressed the ASEAN Smart Cities Network. The summit also saw the launch of two ASEAN centres in Bangkok: an ASEAN Centre for Military Medicine, and a Disaster Emergency Logistics System for ASEAN (DELSA) Satellite Warehouse.

Discussions on the Code of Conduct for the **South China Sea**, a routine fixture on the agendas of ASEAN summits in recent years, took place against the backdrop of a collision between Philippine and Chinese vessels on 9 June. Nevertheless, ASEAN states declared their intent to complete the first reading of the Single Draft of the Code of Conduct negotiating text, agreed at the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting in Singapore in 2018, by the end of the Thai chairmanship year. Another issue that cast a shadow over the summit was the **Rohingya** crisis in Myanmar. In the event, ASEAN skirted explicit mention of it, making reference instead to 'voluntary return of displaced persons in a

safe, secure and dignified manner'. On the sidelines of the summit, however, the prime minister of Malaysia, **Mahathir Mohamad**, called for the repatriation of Rohingya back to Myanmar to be conducted in a manner that took into consideration the concerns of the refugees themselves, including the intractable matter of citizenship.

Aside from ASEAN leaders, the summit also hosted US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, who were in attendance for the **ASEAN Regional Forum** meeting that took place on the sidelines. Mindful of the crisis that beset the **Hua Hin Summit** of February 2009, the last time Thailand served as ASEAN chair, the Thai government went to great lengths to ensure there would be no repeat of a spill-over of domestic crises into the summit. A security force of 10,000 was mobilized to ensure that protests related to the recently concluded general election in Thailand did not imperil the smooth conduct of the summit meetings.

see also: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) 1994–; Hua Hin Summit (ASEAN) February 2009; Mahathir Mohamad, Tun; Rohingya; South China Sea.

### **Bangkok Summit (ASEAN) November 2019** (Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/Laos/Malaysia/Myanmar/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand/Vietnam)

The 35th ASEAN Summit and its accompanying leaders' meetings was hosted in Bangkok during 2–4 November 2019. The regional leaders met against a backdrop of a gathering storm in Sino–US relations.

Not surprisingly, the **South China Sea** dominated as a major point of discussion, with Vietnam hoping for stronger pushback against Chinese assertiveness by ASEAN. At the summit, ASEAN acknowledged the 'progress of substantive negotiations' with China on the Code of Conduct. The South China Sea featured prominently during the accompanying 14th **East Asia Summit** as well, where the resulting Chairman's Statement noted how 'some leaders

underscored the importance of the COC to be consistent with international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)', and also emphasized the importance of non-militarization and self-restraint in the conduct of all activities by claimants and all other states, including those mentioned in the DOC (**Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea**) that could further complicate the situation and escalate tensions in the South China Sea. Trade issues were discussed at length as well, with leaders jointly expressing deep concern over rising trade tensions between the United States and China. The summit saw the completion of negotiations for the **Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership** after intense deliberations that stretched into the early hours of morning, setting the stage for the signing of the document scheduled for 2020. Its completion was not without controversy or difficulty, however. Desperate attempts to salvage Indian participation in the trade deal failed, and India eventually withdrew on grounds of concern for the potential flood of imports into its domestic market.

The United States further downgraded its representation at the attendant ASEAN–US Summit when President Donald Trump dispatched his national security advisor, Robert O'Brien, as his representative. Concomitantly, by dint of protocol, only three ASEAN heads of government – Thailand, Laos, and Vietnam – were represented. In accordance with diplomatic protocol, the other seven chose their foreign ministers to attend. Differences also emerged between ASEAN and the United States over the matter of cooperation or confrontation with China.

Security was a concern in the lead-up to the summit, given several small bomb blasts in Bangkok during the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting in August. Nevertheless, the successful conclusion of the summit, and Thailand's chairmanship of ASEAN, worked to enhance the credibility of the government of **Prayuth Chan-ocha** domestically and restore international confidence in Thailand in the wake of political turmoil that had bedevilled the country since the coup in 2014.

see also: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (ASEAN) 2002; East Asia Summit 2005–; Prayuth Chan-ocha; Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership; South China Sea.

### **Banharn Silpa-archa** (Thailand)

Banharn Silpa-archa was prime minister of Thailand between July 1995 and November 1996. He led the **Chart Thai Party** (Thai National Party) to victory with the largest number of seats in elections in July 1995 and formed a seven-party coalition, which broke up over political spoils in September 1996 and lost office after elections in November 1996. Banharn Silpa-archa was born on 20 July 1932 in Suphanburi in central Thailand of Chinese immigrant parents. He was educated initially at Bangkok Business College and started working life as an office boy. He entered politics as a member of the municipal assembly for Suphanburi in 1974 at the inception of the *Chart Thai Party*, which was partly based on provincial business networks. Banharn had already established a strong local base through public beneficence using wealth accumulated from his success in the construction industry. He rose quickly to the office of deputy secretary-general of his party and entered the national Parliament in its interest in 1976. He held a number of ministerial appointments during the 1980s, including the agriculture, communications, and finance portfolios, and enjoyed a reputation as a political fixer and an exponent of 'money politics'. Banharn was the subject of an inconclusive investigation by an anti-corruption committee after his party was removed from government by a military coup in 1991. He sought to demonstrate a seriousness of mind by studying law but, in office, was accused of plagiarizing his master's thesis. He took over the leadership of the *Chart Thai Party* in May 1994 after the resignation of a caretaker leader who had assumed the position following the defection of former prime minister **Chatichai Choonhavan**. After a significant electoral setback in November 1996, Banharn took his party into opposition but then negotiated its entry into a coalition government

headed by **Chuan Leekpai**, which was formed in November 1997. In January 2008 he reneged on a pledge never to join a government led by **Thaksin Shinawatra** because of corruption and announced that his *Chart Thai Party* would join in coalition with the **People's Power Party**, a successor to Thaksin's dissolved **Thai Rak Thai Party**. The *Chart Thai Party* was dissolved by the Constitutional Court on 2 December 2008 and Banharn was barred from politics for five years. Still an influential political fixer, Banharn operated by proxy, forming the **Chart Pattana Party** (Thai National Development Party) with non-executive members of his former party chaired by his younger brother, Chumpol Silpa-archa. Banharn died on 23 April 2016 at the age of 83. see also: *Chart Pattana Party*; *Chart Thai Party*; Chatichai Choonhavan, General; Chuan Leekpai; People's Power Party; *Thai Rak Thai Party*; Thaksin Shinawatra.

### **Bao Dai, Emperor** (Vietnam)

Bao Dai was the last emperor of Annam, the central part of Vietnam, which became a French protectorate in 1874. Although never more than a figurehead, he was of political significance from 1940 until 1955 because of his successive collaboration with the Japanese, the **Viet Minh**, the French and finally the anti-communist nationalists who deposed him. His genuine attempts at political reform never bore fruit. Bao Dai was born in Hue, in October 1913, the son of the Emperor Khai Din, and ascended the throne in January 1926 on the death of his father. He was denied a political role by the French but in March 1945 proclaimed Vietnam's independence under Japanese auspices. With their surrender to the allies and the **August Revolution**, he was persuaded to abdicate in favour of a provisional government set up by the communist-led Viet Minh, headed by **Ho Chi Minh**, in which he accepted the nominal role of supreme counsellor. He left Vietnam in March 1946, initially for Hong Kong, with the restoration of French rule. Bao Dai returned to Vietnam encouraged by French assurances. On 8 March 1949, he entered into an exchange of letters (known as the **Elysée Agreement**) with French President Vincent Auriol, which

restored him as head of state of a nominally independent Vietnam. This attempt to demonstrate a semblance of independence failed to stem the political and military advance of the Viet Minh. In June 1954, following the French defeat at the Battle of **Dien Bien Phu**, he called on the anti-communist exile **Ngo Dinh Diem** to form a government, which he did in the southern half of a Vietnam partitioned by the **Geneva Agreements on Indochina** of July 1954. With US backing, Diem organized a referendum in October 1955, which deposed Bao Dai and established the Republic of Vietnam. He left the country soon after to spend the remainder of his life in exile, mainly in the south of France where he earned a reputation as a playboy. He died in Paris on 31 July 1997.

see also: August Revolution 1945; Dien Bien Phu, Battle of, 1954; Elysée Agreement 1949; Geneva Agreements on Indochina 1954; Ho Chi Minh; Ngo Dinh Diem; Viet Minh.

### **Barisan Alternatif (BA)** (Malaysia)

The Malay term *Barisan Alternatif* (Alternative Front) was the name of an electoral pact set up in June 1999 to challenge **Barisan Nasional** (National Front, BN) in federal and state elections, which were held in the following November. It comprised **Parti Islam Se-Malaysia** (PAS) and the **Democratic Action Party (DAP)**, both well-established; the newly established *Parti Keadilan Nasional* (National Justice Party); and the minor *Parti Rakyat Malaysia* (PRM, Malaysian People's Party). The significance of the pact was the attempt to appeal across racial bounds in the manner of BN. In the event, only PAS made a major electoral impact by increasing its federal parliamentary strength from 7 to 27 seats as well as gaining control of the Terengganu state legislature. DAP increased its federal representation from nine to ten, while *Parti Keadilan Nasional* won five seats. *Parti Rakyat Malaysia* failed to win any seats. Despite this mixed electoral showing and fundamental differences between PAS and DAP over the issue of Malaysia becoming an Islamic state, *Barisan Alternatif* held together as an opposition replica of the ruling coalition.

However, the ideological differences proved to be too great, and DAP withdrew from the pact in September 2001. By the 2004 general election, *Barisan Alternatif* consisted of only two parties: **Parti Keadilan Rakyat** (People's Justice Party) – the result of a merger between *Parti Keadilan Nasional* and PRM – and PAS, and managed to win only eight parliamentary seats and the state legislature of Kelantan. Their loss was partly attributable to Malaysia's newly appointed prime minister, **Abdullah Badawi**, who was seen as a positive symbol of change in the country's politics, as well as PAS's insistence on furthering their divisive Islamic state agenda. *Barisan Alternatif* was succeeded by the **Pakatan Rakyat** coalition, formed shortly after the 2008 general election.

see also: Badawi, Tun Abdullah Ahmad; *Barisan Nasional* (BN); Democratic Action Party (DAP); *Parti Islam Se-Malaysia*; *Pakatan Rakyat*; *Parti Keadilan Rakyat*.

### **Barisan Nasional (BN)** (Malaysia)

The Malay term *Barisan Nasional* (National Front, BN) is the name of the ruling federal coalition in Malaysia. The coalition is constituted on an inter-communal basis but subject to Malay dominance, which is reflected in the distribution of cabinet portfolios. BN is the direct successor to the **Alliance Party** coalition, which formed the first government of Malaya before independence in August 1957. The Alliance was also an inter-communal coalition comprising the politically predominant **UMNO (United Malays National Organization)**, the Malayan (subsequently **Malaysian**) **Chinese Association (MCA)** and the Malayan (subsequently **Malaysian**) **Indian Congress (MIC)**. The rationale of coalition politics is that bargaining and compromise at the elite level serve to ensure the exercise of collective power, the control of patronage, and racial peace.

BN employs the same inter-communal governing model but on a far more extensive coalition basis, with up to 14 parties contesting general elections under its banner since its formation. Its origins are to be found in the electoral reverse suffered by UMNO in May 1969, which was followed by inter-communal

violence in the **May 13 Racial Riots**. Prime Minister **Tun Abdul Razak** employed the device of a wider coalition to entrench the position of UMNO and to ensure political stability. In February 1972, the primarily non-Malay **Gerakan Rakyat Malaysia**, which provided the state government on the island of Penang, was brought into the Alliance federal structure, to be followed in April by a coalition arrangement at the state level in Perak between the Alliance and the Indian-led People's Progressive Party. More significant, however, was the agreement in September 1972 between the ruling Alliance and **Parti Islam Se-Malaysia (PAS)**, the principal Malay opposition party, to establish coalition governments at both state and federal levels. That coalition was constituted formally on 1 January 1973. BN was registered as a political party on 1 June 1974 and went on to secure a resounding electoral success in August.

BN survived a major crisis in December 1977 when PAS was expelled after a revolt within the Kelantan state legislature against a chief minister appointed by the federal government. That expulsion was not permitted to undermine the political centrality of the national coalition, which was extended to Malaysian Borneo. Despite reverses in state elections, continuous success at the polls has been demonstrated at the federal level from 1978, the first election after the expulsion of PAS. BN enjoyed comfortable political success in the 1990s; in April 1995 it was returned to office with 162 seats in a federal Parliament of 192, although in the subsequent November 1999 elections, that number was reduced to 148 seats in a Parliament of 193 as support from their Malay base was eroded by **Barisan Alternatif** parties. The 1999 elections also saw PAS secure control of the state legislature in Terengganu, while holding on to Kelantan, which it had retained since 1990.

In the 2004 general election, helmed by **Abdullah Badawi**, BN performed exceptionally well, winning 198 of the 219 parliamentary seats. However, the coalition's performances have taken a tumble in recent times, culminating in defeat at the 2018 election. In 2008 they won only 140 out of the 222 parliamentary seats, the first time the BN lost its two-thirds parliamentary majority, precipitating Badawi's

resignation. In 2013 their majority dipped further to 133 of the 222 parliamentary seats with MCA accounting for most of the seats lost. Neither MCA nor MIC have managed to recover from their poor performance. BN has also not governed the states of Selangor and Penang since 2008. Among the reasons for BN's poor performance was the resurgence of a more united opposition coalition and the weaknesses of its non-Malay component parties, especially MCA and MIC, which are viewed in their respective communities as having become too subservient to UMNO. There has also emerged within UMNO's fringes a view that BN could do without the deadweight of these considerably weakened component allies.

The fortunes of BN deteriorated further following the 2013 election. Confronted with the **1MDB** corruption scandal and a reinvigorated opposition in the form of the **Pakatan Harapan** coalition anchored by evident political rapprochement between **Mahathir Mohamad** and **Anwar Ibrahim**, BN registered its worst-ever electoral performance in 2018. It not only lost federal power after 61 years of uninterrupted rule, but it also had to endure the ignominy of winning only two state legislatures: Pahang, the home state of Prime Minister **Najib Tun Razak**, and Perlis. The devastating nature of the defeat was exemplified in the fact that BN managed to secure barely 34 per cent of the popular vote. It returned to power in 2020 by partnering the **Perikatan Nasional** coalition to form a government after the *Pakatan Harapan* administration collapsed following the political machinations of the **Sheraton Move**. Relations frayed between BN and *Perikatan Nasional*, however, when UMNO, the anchor party of BN, failed to be given the position of deputy prime minister despite commanding the largest parliamentary representation among the ruling parties. At the same time, the prospect of aligning with *Pakatan Harapan* and Anwar Ibrahim to unseat **Muhyiddin Yassin** and *Perikatan Nasional* was equally uninviting, notwithstanding it being the preference of BN chairman **Ahmad Zahid Hamidi**. At any rate, the inability of UMNO and **Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia** to reach an agreement on their respective roles in the *Perikatan Nasional* government led to UMNO's

withdrawal of support for the ruling coalition and its subsequent collapse. Following the resignation of Muhyiddin Yassin, UMNO vice-president **Ismail Sabri Yaakob** was appointed as Malaysia's ninth prime minister, returning UMNO, and by extension, BN, to leadership of the Malaysian government.

see also: 1MDB; Alliance Party; Anwar Ibrahim; Badawi, Tun Abdullah Ahmad; *Barisan Alternatif* (BA); Ismail Sabri Yaakob, Datuk Seri; Mahathir Mohamad, Tun; Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA); Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC); May 13 Racial Riots 1969; Muhyiddin Yassin, Tan Sri; Najib Tun Razak, Datuk Seri Mohamad; *Pakatan Harapan*; *Parti Islam Se-Malaysia*; *Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia*; *Perikatan Nasional*; Razak, Tun Abdul; Sheraton Move 2020; UMNO (United Malays National Organization); Zahid Hamidi, Ahmad.

### ***Barisan Revolusi Nasional*** (Thailand)

The *Barisan Revolusi Nasional* or BRN is one of the oldest armed insurgent groups operating in Thailand's Malay-majority southern provinces. It was formed in the early 1960s by Haji Abdul Karim bin Hassan, a headmaster of a traditional Islamic boarding school in Narathiwat. Although BRN drew its support from a network of traditional Islamic schools in Thailand's three Malay-speaking southern border provinces, Karim himself was heavily influenced by the brand of socialism espoused by Indonesia's founding president, **Sukarno**. So closely aligned was BRN to Sukarno's ideals that Karim was known to have voiced support for Indonesia's policy of **Confrontation** against Malaysia. BRN established a loose pact with the Communist Party of Malaya in the early 1960s and built up its own armed wing in 1968. Even though it attempted to reach out to Islamic countries in the Middle East, BRN's embrace of socialist ideals alienated it from more conservative Muslim elements.

By the early 1980s, differences within BRN led to the creation of two separate factions, BRN-Coordinate under Haji Amin Tohmeena and BRN-Congress. In the face of increasing pressure from more effective Thai counterinsurgency activities which had the attendant

effect of weakening the southern insurgency, both factions were forced to withdraw from open confrontation with the Thai government in the 1990s. During this time BRN-Coordinate managed to recruit a new generation of militants to their cause, allowing them to resume armed conflict in the region at the turn of the century when the government of **Thaksin Shinawatra** came to power. However, the nature of their recruitment and mobilization strategy, designed to prevent penetration, has meant that this new generation of insurgents do not follow a readily identifiable chain of command, and so their attacks have taken on a decentralized character without any overarching leadership. This was evident from the inability of self-proclaimed BRN-Coordinate leaders to restrain violence after entering into talks with the Thai government on several occasions since 2006. Therefore, the extent to which BRN elements exercise control over the ongoing insurgency in the southern provinces remains unclear (see: **Insurgency, Southern Provinces**).

see also: Confrontation; Insurgency, Southern Provinces; Sukarno; Thaksin Shinawatra.

### ***Barisan Revolusi Nasional-Coordinate*** (Thailand) see ***Barisan Revolusi Nasional***

### ***Barisan Sosialis*** (Singapore)

The *Barisan Sosialis* (a Malay term meaning Socialist Front) was a radical left-wing party, which was established in July 1961 as a result of a split within Singapore's ruling **People's Action Party** (PAP). At issue was the prospect of the self-governing island becoming part of a new Federation of Malaysia, comprising also Malaya and British territories in North Borneo, which had been proposed by Malaya's prime minister, **Tunku Abdul Rahman**, in May 1961. That proposal was welcomed by Singapore's prime minister, **Lee Kuan Yew**, and his cabinet colleagues but was denounced as a neo-colonialist plot by a left-wing faction within PAP. Thirteen parliamentary dissidents crossed the floor of the house to jeopardize PAP's working majority and to precipitate a major political crisis.



For a short period, *Barisan Sosialis* gave the impression of being an alternative government in waiting with the capability of thwarting the Malaysia project. However, through political intimidation and the support of conservative opposition parties, PAP maintained itself in office until after the formation of Malaysia on 16 September 1963. Elections were held in Singapore a week later in which PAP was returned to office with 37 out of 51 seats, which marked a loss of only six seats from its political triumph in May 1959. *Barisan Sosialis* retained its 13 seats but failed to make a significant political impact, especially after Singapore became independent in August 1965 on its separation from Malaysia. PAP increased its seats to 49 by the next elections in April 1968 through winning a series of by-elections caused by the resignation of *Barisan Sosialis* members. The party then ceased to function as a credible political entity when it decided to boycott the polls, and PAP won all 58 seats in an enlarged Parliament. From then on, it maintained a vestigial existence; for example, it nominated only four candidates without success in elections in September 1988. After those elections, its longstanding leader, Lee Siew Choh, took a place in the Parliament as a ‘non-constituency MP’ with restricted voting rights as one of two defeated candidates with the highest number of votes. However, *Barisan Sosialis* failed to nominate candidates in subsequent elections in September 1991 and January 1997 and has ceased to be of any political relevance. see also: Abdul Rahman, Tunku; Lee Kuan Yew; People’s Action Party.

***Bersatu*** (Malaysia) see ***Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia***

***Bersih*** (Malaysia)

*Bersih*, which stands for the Coalition of Free and Fair Elections, is a collection of 84 civil society groups and organizations which advocate electoral reform in Malaysia. Since November 2007 when the coalition successfully organized the first of a series of major street demonstrations, ‘*Bersih*’ has entered the Malaysian political lexicon to describe their rallies as well.

The first *Bersih* rally was held on 10 November 2007, and has been seen as a major contributor to the massive gains made by the opposition **Pakatan Rakyat** coalition in the March 2008 general election. The organizers had targeted 100,000 demonstrators, but attendees were estimated to be about 20,000, of which 245 were later detained by the authorities. A heavy police presence diverted the march from the original destination of Dataran Merdeka to the National Palace, where the organizers handed a memorandum to the king of Malaysia. Although the number of participants was small compared to later *Bersih* rallies, it was nevertheless regarded as a success due to the political impact it had on the general election a few months later. The original *Bersih* rally also seemed to have emboldened other non-governmental organizations to take to the streets. Within the same month, another public rally took place, this time organized by **Hindraf (Hindu Rights Action Force)** over alleged injustices against Hindus. The second *Bersih* rally, aptly named *Bersih 2.0*, took place in July 2011, and gained more support than its predecessor. Estimates put the number of demonstrators at around 30,000, although the organizers claimed 50,000 attended. Around 1,600 protestors were arrested and later released. This time, **UMNO (United Malays National Organization)** attempted to counter with a simultaneous rally of their own at a nearby venue, but their turnout was negligible. The build-up to *Bersih 2.0* was a contentious affair. Aware of the devastating effect of the first *Bersih* rally on their political fortunes, the incumbent government moved quickly to respond once they received word that a second *Bersih* rally was being planned. Attempts to stop the rally from proceeding ranged from intimidation to persuasion to the spread of disinformation. A heavy downpour on the day itself did not deter a turnout much larger than the first *Bersih* rally. Following *Bersih 2.0*, the **Barisan Nasional** (National Front) government announced the creation of a non-partisan parliamentary select committee to look into the demands for electoral reform. The third *Bersih* rally was held less than a year later on 28 April 2012, and an estimated 100,000 people took part. The number of arrests made, about

500, was however much smaller. Despite Prime Minister **Najib Razak's** attempt to assuage civil society groups with pledges of reform and the repeal of the internal security act, *Bersih* 3.0 brought out the largest crowd of the *Bersih* series of rallies calling for the government not only to make good on pledges of reform, but to do so in time for the 2013 general election. The increased number of demonstrators at *Bersih* 3.0 was indicative of growing dissatisfaction towards the government, as well as growing opposition momentum. In August 2015, *Bersih* 4.0 mobilized an estimated 100,000 protestors in response to allegations of corruption involving Najib Razak, which ultimately became the **1MDB** scandal. Of significance was the fact that the former prime minister, **Mahathir Mohamad**, participated in the protests. This was followed by *Bersih* 5.0 on 16 November 2016, which boasted a turnout of more than 40,000 demanding for the resignation of the prime minister and investigation into corruption allegations. As with the previous protest, *Bersih* 5.0 also witnessed the active participation of Mahathir Mohamad as well as his new political party, **Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia**.

Although *Bersih* claims to be apolitical, it is closely associated with opposition political parties that obviously stand to benefit from *Bersih's* demands for a more transparent electoral system. Led by **Anwar Ibrahim** and, in the later iterations, Mahathir Mohamad as well, opposition parties seized upon the opportunity *Bersih* presented to mobilize popular sentiments against the incumbent government. Aside from opposition political leaders, *Bersih* catapulted several personalities to the status of household names. *Bersih* leaders Ambiga Sreenevasan and Maria Chin Abdullah, and the popular grandfatherly Malay literary figure A. Samad Said became well-known political activists due to their prominent roles during these rallies. Another development that the *Bersih* rallies unveiled was the increasingly crucial role that internet social networks such as Facebook and Twitter played in social mobilization.

see also: 1MDB; Anwar Ibrahim; *Barisan Nasional* (BN); Hindraf (Hindu Rights Action Force); Mahathir Mohamad, Tun; Najib Tun Razak, Datuk Seri Mohamad; *Pakatan Rakyat*; *Parti*

*Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia*; UMNO (United Malays National Organization).

### **Bhumibol Adulyadej, King** (Thailand)

King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand, of the Chakri dynasty founded in 1782 by King Rama I, was the world's longest-ruling monarch when he passed away on 13 October 2016 at the age of 88. During his reign, he exercised a remarkable political influence by augmenting the traditional aura of the throne through an exemplary personal life. He became king on 9 June 1946 after the unexplained death of his elder brother, **Ananda Mahidol**, from a gunshot wound. Bhumibol was then 19; he had been born on 5 December 1927 in Boston, Massachusetts, where his father, Prince Mahidol, was studying medicine. Ananda had ascended to the throne following the abdication of his uncle King Prajadhipok in 1935 in the wake of the coup that abolished absolute monarchy. Both brothers lived in Switzerland, except for a brief visit to Thailand in 1938, until their return in December 1945. After his accession, King Bhumibol went to live again in Switzerland and returned to Bangkok in 1950 for his coronation as Rama IX of the Chakri dynasty. By then, Thailand had reverted to military rule for which the monarchy served as a compliant symbol despite an underlying tension which was a legacy of the coup of 1932.

After Field Marshal **Sarit Thanarat** seized power from Field Marshal **Phibul Songkram** in 1957, a conscious policy was adopted of grooming the young king for a national role by exposing him and other members of the royal family to popular contact through an extensive range of ceremonial and civic duties. He took a special interest in rural development and social welfare and began to speak out on constitutional matters after Sarit's death in 1963 when the successor military government lost its authority. King Bhumibol first demonstrated his political facility and authority in October 1973 in reaction to bloodshed in the streets when university students demonstrated against military rule. He intervened to end the violence and was responsible for the prime minister, **Thanom Kittikachorn**, and deputy prime minister, **Praphas Charusathien**, going into exile,

which paved the way for a democratic political interlude. The king endorsed democracy but as a conservative became alarmed at the breakdown in public order coincident with the success of revolutionary communism in Indochina in 1975, which resulted in the Laotian monarchy being overthrown. A right-wing assault on students protesting at the return of exiled prime minister Thanom resulted in the **Thammasat University Massacre** on 6 October 1976; this provided the pretext for a military coup, which installed a nominee of the king as prime minister. The king came down on the side of political conservatism and lost popularity as a consequence. With the return to military rule, Thailand began to experiment with a series of constitutions over which the role of the armed forces was centrally at issue. In this chequered process, the king played a cautious part, being careful not to tarnish the throne by too close an association with political life.

During the 1980s King Bhumibol supported the non-elected administration of General **Prem Tinsulanonda** without loss of popular respect because it conducted itself with regard for the virtues of good government. When the elected government of **Chatichai Choonhavan** was overthrown by a military coup in February 1991, he indicated his mild disapproval. In May 1992 popular demonstrations against the unelected retired general **Suchinda Kraprayoon** assuming the office of prime minister were dispersed by the military with great loss of life. After initial hesitation, the king intervened personally to defuse the crisis, which was brought to an end with Suchinda's resignation and fresh elections in September, which produced a democratically elected prime minister, **Chuan Leekpai**. By that intervention, the king restored his political standing and that of the Thai monarchy. In late 1997, during a devastating economic crisis, he let it be known that he was opposed to military intervention and favoured democratic political change. In December 2002, King Bhumibol called for a 'war on drugs' to arrest the upsurge in substance abuse cases across the country, following which Prime Minister **Thaksin Shinawatra** launched a controversial campaign against such illicit activity in January 2003. The campaign led to more than 2,000 deaths

and drew heavy international and domestic criticism.

Even so, King Bhumibol openly endorsed Thaksin's heavy-handed approach, suggesting that otherwise the casualty figures from substance abuse would have been much higher. Notwithstanding his endorsement on this occasion, the relationship between King Bhumibol and Prime Minister Thaksin was for the most part a tense one. Thaksin's surging popularity, demonstrated in the election results of 2001 and 2005 when his **Thai Rak Thai Party** won landslide victories, unnerved a royal palace concerned about the rise of an alternative power centre to which popular sentiments gravitated. Indeed, Thaksin's growing personal stature among the masses was seen to be a direct challenge to the king, to whom the Thai people traditionally genuflected. In the event, King Bhumibol was believed to have given his tacit approval of the 2006 coup that removed Thaksin. This stemmed from suggestions that he had received a briefing from privy councillors on their plan to stage a coup, and later granted a special audience to Privy Council president and palace confidante, Prem Tinsulanonda, on the day of the coup. Throughout the political crisis that followed, King Bhumibol's role came under heavy scrutiny and criticism, especially in the international media. The fact that he later appointed coup plotters **Surayud Chulanont**, the interim prime minister, and Air Chief Marshal Chalit Pukbhasuk to the Privy Council only further fanned the flames of suspicion of his role.

King Bhumibol was protected by *lèse majesté* laws that sanction the incarceration of critics of Thai royalty for periods of between 3 and 15 years. However in 2005, he openly called for criticism of the king to be permitted, and for him to be alerted to his mistakes. Heeding the king's call, critics began speaking out, but this merely led to a sharp rise in *lèse majesté* prosecutions from five to six per year prior to 2005 to 478 cases in 2010. King Bhumibol had a history of cardiac problems which required angioplasty treatment on two occasions during 1995. In September 2009, he was admitted to hospital for flu and pneumonia. He also suffered from lumbar spinal stenosis, and was hospitalized in

July 2006, October 2007, and September 2009. In November 2011, the king was diagnosed with diverticulitis and received further treatment for the condition in January 2012. His failing health meant he could only observe the latest events in Thailand's unfolding political crisis silently from the sidelines in his final years. King Bhumibol was absent from the ceremony which endorsed the military coup of 22 May 2014. The world's longest-reigning monarch was hospitalized again in late September 2016 and eventually succumbed to his illnesses on 13 October. The cause of death was not officially given, but he had been afflicted with a series of ailments including pneumonia and kidney failure in his final days. Bhumibol's son, **Maha Vajiralongkorn**, ascended the throne as Rama X on 1 December 2016. His coronation was delayed until after the official mourning period which lasted a year, taking place only in May 2019.

Bhumibol reigned for 70 years, and for many Thais, he was the only monarch they had known. With his passing, Thailand lost a central, dominant figure at the heart of its political culture. Long associated with the singular reputation of a stabilizing figure for Thailand's oft-fractious politics, Bhumibol was however unable in his final years to play that role as political turmoil escalated.

see also: Ananda Mahidol, King; Chatichai Choonhavan, General; Chuan Leekpai; Maha Vajiralongkorn, King; Phibul Songkram, Field Marshal; Praphas Charusathien, Field Marshal; Prem Tinsulanonda, General; Sarit Thanarat, Field Marshal; Suchinda Kraprayoon, General; Surayud Chulanont, General; Thammasat University Massacre 1976; *Thai Rak Thai* Party; Thaksin Shinawatra; Thanom Kittikachorn, Field Marshal.

### **Bhumjaithai Party** (Thailand)

Currently the second largest member of the ruling coalition led by the **Palang Pracharat Party**, the *Bhumjaithai* (Thai Pride) Party was formed in 2008 by members of the **Thai Rak Thai Party** and **People's Power Party** after the two were disbanded. Despite its roots in *Thai Rak Thai*, *Bhumjaithai* under Newin Chidchob would go on to join forces with the opposition, led by

the **Democrat Party**, giving them the numbers required in Parliament to form a government under **Abhisit Vejjajiva**, a government that did derive its legitimacy from a popular election.

With a strong party base in the northeast, *Bhumjaithai* contested the 2011 election and won 34 seats out of 500 in Parliament in the 2011 election. Despite coming in third behind the **Pheu Thai Party** and the Democrat Party, the party performed below its own expectations. At the 2019 polls, it claimed 10 per cent of the popular vote on its way to 51 parliamentary seats. Its current leader, businessman-politician leader Anutin Charnvirakul, who is known to be close to King **Maha Vajiralongkorn**, was appointed deputy prime minister and public health minister. Bizarrely, the party's successful campaign was predicated on its advocacy for the legalization of marijuana for medical purposes and the right of households to grow marijuana plants as a cash crop, gaining the moniker of 'weed party'. The party's parliamentary bloc increased to 61 following defections from the **Future Forward Party** after the latter's dissolution. Faced with the prospect of budget cuts to the health ministry, several *Bhumjaithai* MPs called for a government walkout, fomenting a degree of tension within the party and the ruling coalition as a consequence.

Because of the manner of its formation as well as the pivotal role it played in propping up **Prayuth Chan-ocha's** governing coalition, *Bhumjaithai* acquired a reputation for being a 'kingmaker'. After the 2011 election, several of its MPs were confined in a hotel without their mobile phones to prevent them from defecting to *Pheu Thai*.

see also: Abhisit Vejjajiva; Democrat Party; Future Forward Party; Maha Vajiralongkorn, King; *Palang Pracharat Party*; People's Power Party; *Pheu Thai Party*; Prayuth Chan-ocha; *Thai Rak Thai Party*.

### **Boat People** (Vietnam)

The term Boat People has been associated with more than one million refugees who fled from Vietnam in the wake of the communist seizure of power in the southern half of the country in April 1975. Initially, the exodus was composed of indigenous Vietnamese linked in some way

with the defeated Saigon administration who had reason to fear the retribution of the revolutionary government. They left in small boats and undertook perilous journeys across the **South China Sea**, braving the elements and pirates to make landfall in particular in Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia as well as travelling in a northeasterly direction to reach Hong Kong when the prevailing winds blew that way. The composition of the Boat People changed over the years, however. For example, as the Socialist Republic of Vietnam applied economic dogma in agriculture and directed urban dwellers to new economic zones in the countryside in the late 1970s, Boat People came to be driven by a determination to seek a better life, often to join relatives in the United States and Australia. Then in the late 1970s, with a marked deterioration in Sino-Vietnamese relations which was expressed in discrimination against the Chinese community, Vietnamese of ethnic Chinese identity increasingly made up the flow of Boat People coming from both north and south of the country. That flow was aggravated with Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia in December 1978 and the People's Republic of China's retaliatory military intervention in Vietnam in February 1979.

During the course of the 1980s, however, the flow of Boat People was sustained by economic circumstances in the main, which coincided with a decline in global compassion for their condition. The growing refusal of Western governments to accept economic refugees led to a slowing down in the rate of their movement from camps in Southeast Asia to final destinations. The issue of economic refugees from Vietnam came to a head during the late 1980s in Hong Kong, whose camps harboured at one stage over 60,000 refugees, some of whom had travelled overland via China. The solution to the problem of the Boat People came about as a function of Vietnam embarking on market-driven economics followed by concessions over the Cambodian conflict. Under the terms of a comprehensive plan of action agreed in 1989, Vietnam accepted the involuntary repatriation of economic refugees from Hong Kong while the UN High Commission for Refugees applied increasing pressure

on the population of the Hong Kong camps to return. By the early 1990s, only a handful of Boat People continued to arrive in the territory, with matching figures for Southeast Asian landfalls. In February 1994 the UN High Commission for Refugees announced that Vietnamese people would no longer be automatically eligible for consideration as political refugees, which meant that all those resident in camps could be returned home under international law. By 1995, after the United States had lifted its trade and investment embargo against Vietnam, the number of refugees remaining in camps amounted to around 40,000, half of whom were in Hong Kong. In January 1996, the UN High Commission for Refugees announced that it would halt funding for all Boat People in first asylum camps by the following July, while Vietnam agreed to speed up repatriation. In the special case of Hong Kong, China urged that all Vietnamese refugees be repatriated before it resumed sovereignty in July 1997, by which time only a remnant were left in one holding camp. In January 1998, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region abolished the port of first asylum policy, which had applied for the past 19 years, while the last holding camp was closed in May 2000 with some 1,400 remaining refugees being offered local identity cards.

*see also:* South China Sea; Vietnam War.

### **Boediono** (Indonesia)

Boediono was vice-president of Indonesia during the second presidential term of **Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono**. He was born on 25 February 1943 in East Java and received his higher education from Gadjah Mada University before leaving to study at the University of Western Australia. He graduated in 1967 with an economics degree and received his master's degree in 1972 from Monash University. Boediono completed his doctoral degree from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania in 1979.

Boediono began his career as Director III in Bank Indonesia, the Central Bank of Indonesia from 1996 to 1997. During this period he was also a professor teaching economics at Gajah Mada University. Subsequently, from 1997 to 1998, he assumed the post of Director I of Bank

Indonesia, being in charge of operations and monetary policy. Boediono worked closely with the economist Mubyarto to propound concepts regarding 'the people's economy' and formulated policies that focused on the poor.

Known primarily as a brilliant economist, Boediono entered politics late in his career when he was appointed state minister of national planning and development in 1998. In 2001, President **Megawati Sukarnoputri** appointed Boediono as minister of finance. Under his leadership the economy grew by 4 per cent during 2001–2 as it recovered from the financial meltdown at the end of the last decade. In 2005, President Yudhoyono appointed Boediono as coordinating minister for the economy. In 2008 Boediono was elected governor of Bank Indonesia. He resigned from this post in 2009 to become Yudhoyono's running mate in the latter's successful 2009 presidential re-election campaign. His candidature was not well-received by conservative Islamic groups which viewed him to be a nominal Muslim, and some even suspected him of adherence to Javanese animism (*kejawen*). A lowkey vice-president, Boediono became embroiled in controversy in 2012 when efforts were made to impeach him on the grounds that he should be held accountable for the controversial US\$696.8 million bailout of Bank Century (currently named Bank Mutiara) in 2008, when he was the governor of Indonesia's central bank. However, according to Indonesia's ambiguous constitutional legislation governing investigations into the actions of 'special citizens', any move to impeach Boediono will require the support of two-thirds of the **People's Consultative Assembly**, a sizeable task given that Yudhoyono's **Partai Demokrat** and its allies command more than a third of the house. In the event, Boediono completed his term of office and stepped down on 20 October 2014 when **Yusuf Kalla** succeeded him following the election of **Joko Widodo** to the presidency.

see also: Kalla, Yusuf; Megawati Sukarnoputri; *Partai Demokrat*; People's Consultative Assembly; Widodo, Joko; Yudhoyono, Susilo Bambang.

### **Bolkiah, Sultan Hassanal** (Brunei)

Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah is the 29th absolute ruler of the sultanate of Brunei. He was born on 15 July 1946 and succeeded his father Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddin in October 1967 when Sultan Omar abdicated the throne in order to thwart British attempts to promote greater democratization. At the time, Hassanal Bolkiah was only a few weeks from graduating from the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst. He was crowned as head of state in August 1968. For nearly 20 years, however, until the former sultan's death in 1986, he was overshadowed by his domineering father, from whom he became progressively estranged.

Brunei assumed full independence in January 1984, following which a cabinet system of government was established with the sultan as prime minister. In that role, Hassanal Bolkiah consolidated his position, assuming also the portfolio of minister of defence after the death of his father. Hassanal Bolkiah has acquired notoriety by becoming known as one of the richest men in the world, exemplified by his private collection of 500 Rolls Royce cars. Since the death of his father, however, he has adopted a more serious frame of mind, exhibiting greater interest in the business of government of the oil-rich state. He was obliged to assume the additional portfolio of finance minister in February 1997 following the resignation of his brother, Prince Jefri. In August 1998, against a background of economic adversity and fraternal tensions, the sultan had his eldest son, Prince Billah, invested as crown prince in order to assure the succession. In 2001, the sultan sued his brother, Prince Jefri Bolkiah, for embezzling US\$20.7 billion from the Brunei Investment Authority (BIA) for personal expenses. The sultan dropped these charges in London's High Court in February 2006. Though original charges against Prince Jefri had been settled, further complications led him to appeal to the Privy Council in London. The Council ruled against him, and in 2008 an arrest warrant was issued against him in London, but he has since claimed to have reconciled with the sultan and settled matters privately.

In a rare move towards political reform, an appointed Parliament (also known as the **Legislative Council**), which had been suspended since independence in 1984, was reconvened in 2004. The 2004 amendment to the country's constitution called for a 45-seat Legislative Council with 15 elected members, though no timeframe for an election was announced. In September 2005, the sultan appointed 29 members to the Legislative Council but further increased the size of the Council to 33 members in June 2011. However, the Legislative Council is only invested with advisory powers, and nothing in the constitution could be deemed to derogate from the prerogative of the sultan. In the 2004 constitutional amendment, the sultan conferred upon himself the equivalent of papal infallibility, with the clause: 'His Majesty the Sultan . . . can do no wrong in either his personal or any official capacity'. The amendment not only removed checks on the sultan and granted him complete immunity, but also broadened his powers, for instance, with the clause that the sultan alone has the right to amend the constitution.

Notwithstanding the sultan's moves to consolidate power, at issue is whether this absolutist political system – whose form, **Melayu Islam Beraja** (meaning Malay Islamic Monarchy), is something of an anachronism within Southeast Asia – can be maintained over time. Hassanal Bolkiah is also head of religion of Brunei. From that position, the absolute monarch passed a controversial edict on the implementation of **shari'a law**. This move triggered an international backlash, with calls for a boycott of the sultan's string of luxury hotels including the 'Dorchester Collection' of hotels across Europe and the Beverly Hills Hotel in Los Angeles.

The second-longest reigning monarch in the world behind Queen Elizabeth II, Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah has four sons and six daughters with his first wife Queen Saleha and his second wife, Queen Mariam. In 2003, he stripped his second wife of all her royal titles and divorced her, and married Queen Azrinaz Mazhar Hakim in August 2005.

see also: Legislative Council; *Melayu Islam Beraja*; *Shari'a Law*.

### **Bouasone Boupavanh** (Laos)

Bouasone Boupavanh was prime minister of the People's Democratic Republic of Laos from 2006 to 2010. Bouasone was born in Salavan Province in 1954. A student activist in Vientiane in 1975 and key protest organizer against the royalist regime of **Souvanna Phouma**, he attended the Communist Party Institute in Moscow from 1986 to 1990. He was later considered a protégé of former party leader and prime minister **Khamtay Siphandon**. Bouasone is widely seen to be a key member of a new generation of leaders in the **Lao People's Revolutionary Party** (LPRP) whose political and strategic outlook have been shown to be less constrained by the traditional ties to Vietnam and more open to the People's Republic of China. At the same time, the start of Bouasone's premiership also coincided with plans to overhaul the Lao economy, increase foreign investments, and open a stock exchange. Bouasone unexpectedly resigned as prime minister in 2010 and was removed from the Politburo and the Central Committee during the Ninth Congress of LPRP a year later. Bouasone was replaced as prime minister by **Thongsing Thammavong**. His sudden resignation and fall from grace raised many questions that remain unanswered, one of which was that under his stewardship Laos was gravitating away from Vietnam towards the People's Republic of China.

see also: Khamtay Siphandon; Lao People's Revolutionary Party; Souvanna Phouma, Prince; Thongsing Thammavong.

### **Bounnhang Vorachith** (Laos)

The Tenth Congress of the **Lao People's Revolutionary Party** elected Bounnhang Vorachith as its party secretary at the apex of an 11-member Politburo in January 2016, replacing **Choummaly Sayasone**, who stepped down after a decade in power. In April, Bounnhang assumed the post of president of the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

A protégé of late party elder **Nouhak Phoumsavan** and ally of Choummaly, Bounnhang was born in 1937 in Savannakhet Province and held several senior positions in provincial and national administration in the course of a

long career. This included the posts of governor of Savannakhet from 1982 to 1992, mayor of Vientiane from 1993 to 1996, deputy prime minister from 1996 to 2001, prime minister from 2001 to 2006, and vice-president from 2006 to 2016. Bounnhang joined the Laos revolutionary movement, the forerunner of the party, in 1952 and underwent military training in Hanoi. A moderate conservative, he continues to enjoy close relations with Vietnam, where he studied before returning to join the revolutionary movement, and made Hanoi the destination of his first visit as president. During his term in office, Laotian foreign policy was distinguished by a gradual reduction in dependence on the People's Republic of China while strengthening relations with the United States, the high point of which was his hosting of the visit of President Barack Obama to Laos in September 2016. He also ably managed the ASEAN summits that Laos hosted in 2016.

Representing the last of the **Pathet Lao** revolutionary generation, Bounnhang Vorachith retired in January 2021 upon completion of his five-year term and was succeeded as party secretary and state president by **Thongloun Sisoulith**.

see also: Choummaly Sayasone; Lao People's Revolutionary Party; Nouhak Phoumsavan; *Pathet Lao*; Thongloun Sisoulith.

### **Brevié Line** (Cambodia/Vietnam)

The Brevié Line is a delimitation drawn on a map in 1939 to differentiate administrative and police responsibilities over offshore islands between Cochin China (southern Vietnam) and Cambodia, then both subject to French control. Named after Jules Brevié, a governor-general of Indochina, the line extended into the Gulf of Siam from the land border between the two territories without confirming sovereign jurisdiction. The line was recognized as a maritime boundary in 1967 after negotiations between the government of Cambodia and representatives of the Democratic Republic of (North) Vietnam and the **National Liberation Front of South Vietnam**. It became a matter of contention after the **Khmer Rouge** assumed power in Cambodia in April 1975. Talks with Vietnam in May 1976 broke down over the proposal by its

government to modify the line so as to redefine the configuration of territorial waters to permit easier access to the Vietnamese island of Phu Quoc. The status of the line remains unclear in the wake of the settlement of the Cambodian conflict at the **International Conference on Cambodia** in Paris in October 1991. Although relations between Phnom Penh and Hanoi have been repaired, an underlying historical tension has prevented any conclusive agreement on the definition and demarcation of territorial waters. see also: International Conference on Cambodia, Paris 1991; Khmer Rouge; National Liberation Front of South Vietnam.

### **Brunei Revolt 1962** (Brunei)

An abortive uprising was staged in the British-protected sultanate of Brunei on 8 December 1962 by members of the opposition **People's Party** (*Partai Ra'ayat*) led by **A. M. Azahari**. The People's Party had won an overwhelming majority of elective seats in the first general elections to the Legislative Council in August 1962 on a platform of opposition to Brunei joining the projected Federation of Malaysia. Expressing a local irredentism, Azahari had called for the establishment of a state of North Borneo (to include adjacent Sarawak and Sabah). Frustrated in its attempt to have the **Legislative Council** convened, the clandestine military wing of the People's Party – the self-styled North Borneo National Army – made an attempt to seize power. The sultan called on British military support under a treaty of 1959; troops dispatched from Singapore put down the revolt within a matter of days. Since then, a state of emergency has been in force in the sultanate. The constitution has remained suspended and the People's Party proscribed. Azahari's absence from Brunei at the time of the uprising suggests an ill-planned exercise, although material support and training were believed to have been provided from Indonesian Borneo. He had enjoyed close political associations with President **Sukarno's** Indonesia where he found asylum and diplomatic support after the uprising had failed. Domestically, the Brunei Revolt arrested political development in the sultanate. Internationally, it provided the pretext for Indonesia's policy of **Confrontation** of Malaysia



with support proffered for the so-called state of North Borneo. The revolt almost certainly was a factor in the decision by Sultan Sir Omar Ali Saifuddin in July 1963 not to take Brunei into Malaysia.

see also: Azahari, A. M.; Confrontation; Legislative Council; People's Party; Sukarno.

### **Buddhism** (Cambodia/Laos/Myanmar/Thailand/Vietnam)

The Buddhist faith in Southeast Asia is identified primarily with countries of the mainland part of the region. It draws its name from the philosopher Gautama Buddha, who lived in the sixth century in Nepal. His personal revelation came from an attempt to transcend the constraints of Hinduism based on a continuing cycle of life, death, and reincarnation. He claimed to have found the secret to *nirvana* or personal salvation from the suffering of life through renouncing all worldly possessions and desires and by total immersion in meditation, not through worship of any deity. His example lives on in the regime of saffron-robed monks who eat only one meal a day provided by benefactors who fill their bowls at the roadside.

Buddhism came to Southeast Asia through two routes and has taken two forms. Mahayana Buddhism (the greater vehicle) is to be found primarily in Vietnam, where it was brought from India via China. Theravada Buddhism (the lesser vehicle) is believed to have penetrated Myanmar (Burma), Thailand, Laos, and Cambodia from India via Sri Lanka (formerly Ceylon). Although Buddhism is a religious philosophy which renounces the material world, its clergy and adherents have been directly involved in political activity. In Burma and Cambodia before the Pacific War, Buddhism served as a vehicle for expressing nationalist sentiment against the colonial powers. In South Vietnam in 1963, Buddhist agitation against the government of the Catholic **Ngo Dinh Diem** was an important factor in US support being withdrawn and a military coup being mounted during which he was killed. In Thailand, the *Palang Dharma* (Moral Force) Party led by retired general **Chamlong Srimuang**, which challenged military rule on the streets of Bangkok in May 1992, has been closely identified

with the *Santi Asoke* Buddhist sect. In September 1998, Buddhist monks were in the forefront of a mass protest outside the US embassy in Phnom Penh against Prime Minister **Hun Sen** whose **Cambodian People's Party** had secured victory in general elections in the previous July. Buddhist monks were also at the forefront of widespread anti-government demonstrations in Myanmar in August 2007 in what has come to be called the **Saffron Revolution**.

Although Buddhism stresses peace and harmony, the political cultures of countries in mainland Southeast Asia have not been informed by its ethics, and political violence has been commonplace. Against the backdrop of political liberalization in Myanmar under the government of President **Thein Sein**, Buddhist aggression, inflamed by the radical teachings of the popular monk Ashin Wirathu, has been directed at **Rohingya** Muslims in 2012–13. On the other hand, Buddhist monks have frequently been victims in Thailand's southern border provinces where a Malay-Muslim insurgency rages. see also: Cambodian People's Party (CPP);

Chamlong Srimuang, General; Hun Sen; Insurgency, Southern Provinces; Ngo Dinh Diem; Rohingya; Saffron Revolution 2007; Thein Sein.

### **Buddhist Liberal Democratic Party** (Cambodia) see **Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF)**

### **Bumiputera** (Malaysia)

*Bumiputera* is a Malay term which translates as sons of the soil or indigenous people. In practice, the term has been applied exclusively to the Malays and not the *orang asli* (aborigines) whose settlement predates them. *Bumiputera* entered the vocabulary of Malaysian politics with a vengeance after racial violence in the **May 13 Racial Riots** of 1969. That violence, which followed an electoral rebuff to **UMNO (United Malays National Organization)**, was interpreted as a strong indication that the principal Malay party was losing its traditional constituency. To counter this trend, in 1970 the Malay-dominated government introduced a **New Economic Policy** whose objective was to

redress the balance of economic advantage in favour of the *Bumiputera* or Malays. Underlying the affirmative action was a Malay anxiety that they would lose their political birthright to the non-Malays of migrant origin, especially the Chinese, unless control of the economy was radically revised. Communal prerogative in economic affairs was demonstrated from then on by financial and trade portfolios being held exclusively by Malay ministers, by the redistribution of corporate wealth, and by the allocation of educational scholarships and access to government-controlled employment. The allocation of shares in publicly listed companies in order to give Malays a greater stake in corporate wealth has been controversial, with recurrent charges of corrupt practice. The equivalent term in Indonesia is **Pribumi**.

see also: May 13 Racial Riots 1969; New Economic Policy; *Pribumi*; UMNO (United Malays National Organization).

### Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP) (Burma/Myanmar)

On 2 March 1962 a military-based Revolutionary Council led by General **Ne Win** seized power in Burma. The Revolutionary Council then published an ideological document entitled the 'Burmese Way to Socialism', which sought to justify the coup against the democratically elected government and to chart the future course of the state. On 4 July the Revolutionary Council announced the establishment of a new Burma Socialist Programme Party or BSPP (*Lanzin* in Burmese) charged with the task of guiding the country along the so-called way to socialism. All other parties were declared illegal. Comprising initially members of the Revolutionary Council only, BSPP was modelled on communist counterparts but, in effect, served as a political instrument at the personal disposal of Ne Win and his clients in the armed forces for only as long as it was necessary.

BSPP was changed from a cadre to a mass party in 1971; membership became essential for any kind of preferment in society. Of the one million full and candidate members, over half were drawn from serving or retired military or police, while around 80 per cent of the

active armed forces belonged to the patronage network. A new constitution promulgated in January 1974, which inaugurated the Socialist Republic of Burma, made no difference to the power structure with which Ne Win through the armed forces controlled BSPP and its mass organizations. For example, Ne Win stepped down as head of state in November 1981 but continued as chairman of BSPP. In the meantime, through a dogmatic and highly bureaucratized system of economic planning compounded by an isolationist foreign policy, the Burmese people experienced a steady decline in their standard of living. The party and the army, however, maintained a position of privilege, generating a growing popular alienation which came to a head in the late 1980s.

Popular dissent began to manifest itself in a politically significant way from September 1987 after an arbitrary act of demonetization to cope with economic collapse removed some 80 per cent of banknotes in circulation. In March 1988 a clash involving students in a teashop in a Rangoon suburb sparked off sustained protests which were put down by the military with great loss of life. BSPP convened an extraordinary congress in July at which Ne Win announced his intention to retire as chairman. After a bloody confrontation in the streets of Rangoon in August, BSPP convened a second extraordinary congress in September at which multiparty elections were promised. Shortly after, the government revealed that all members of the armed forces had given up membership of BSPP. On 18 September 1988 the minister of defence, General Saw Maung, announced that the military had set up a **State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC)** which, in effect, marked the end of BSPP as the main political instrument of Ne Win's rule. On 26 September 1988 BSPP changed its name to the **National Unity Party**. It took part in elections for a constituent assembly in May 1990, losing heavily to the **National League for Democracy** led in effect by an incarcerated **Aung San Suu Kyi**, the daughter of nationalist martyr **Aung San**. The military authorities refused to recognize the results of the elections and employed SLORC as the principal vehicle for exercising power, having lost all use for BSPP in its revised form. In

November 1997, SLORC was succeeded by the **State Peace and Development Council (SPDC)**. see also: Aung San; Aung San Suu Kyi; National League for Democracy; National Unity Party; Ne Win, General; State Law and Order Restoration Council; State Peace and Development Council.

### **Buy British Last Policy (Malaysia)**

The Buy British Last Policy was an act of open discrimination against the purchase of British goods and services which was first announced by Malaysia's prime minister, **Mahathir Mohamad**, in October 1981 within three months of his assumption of high office. The Buy British Last Policy was precipitated by the decision of the London Stock Exchange to adjust its rules in order to make 'dawn raids' or surprise takeover bids more difficult to execute. In September 1981 Malaysia's National Investment Corporation, acting through British agents, had secured control of Guthrie, which owned large plantations in the country, by such means. Mahathir construed the decision by the Stock Exchange as a deliberate attempt to frustrate his government's policy of securing control of national assets. He was angered also by the British government's decision to oblige its universities to charge higher fees for overseas students, of whom Malaysians constituted the largest number, as well as resistance to additional flights into London for his country's national airline. In employing the policy, Mahathir was giving public vent to a deep-seated personal resentment arising from his experiences during the colonial period as well as securing political advantage from his open confrontation of Britain.

The Buy British Last Policy was sustained until April 1983 when Mahathir withdrew his directive to government departments which required all contracts with British firms to be scrutinized by his office to see whether or

not there was a better alternative source. His change of political heart had been prompted by discussions with Britain's prime minister, Margaret Thatcher, during a visit to London in the previous month. Anglo-Malaysian rapprochement was sealed during a visit to Malaysia by Prime Minister Thatcher in April 1985, but an understanding on aid and trade reached during that visit sowed the seeds for future acrimony between the two governments.

A confidential Anglo-Malaysian memorandum of understanding was concluded in September 1988 for Malaysia's purchase of British defence exports. An earlier draft of that memorandum had linked aid provision and defence sales. The matter became public knowledge in Britain following a report from the National Audit Office in October 1993, which was highly critical of aid provided for a hydroelectric dam on the Pergau River in the state of Kelantan. During the course of an extensive press investigation and hearings by the House of Commons Public Accounts Committee and its Select Committee on Foreign Affairs, the memorandum of understanding was leaked to a British newspaper, to the embarrassment of the two governments. In addition, a report in *The Sunday Times* in February 1994 alleged that a leading British construction company had been involved in negotiating 'special payments' at the highest level in Malaysia in order to secure a contract. The Malaysian government reacted angrily on 25 February 1994 when the then deputy prime minister, **Anwar Ibrahim**, announced a boycott of all British companies bidding for official contracts. Malaysia's decision was prompted by the personal fury of Mahathir at allegations of his personal financial impropriety set against a domestic background of political challenges and setbacks after nearly 13 years in high office. The ban was rescinded in September 1994. see also: Anwar Ibrahim; Mahathir Mohamad, Tun.

## C

### **Cam Ranh Bay (Vietnam)**

Cam Ranh Bay is situated on the central coast of Vietnam some 20 miles to the south of Nha Trang. It provides good natural anchorages and was used in 1905 by the ill-fated Russian fleet on their way to engage the Japanese. It assumed more than local significance from the mid-1960s, when it was developed into a major military logistical facility for both aircraft and naval vessels by the United States, then assuming the prime burden in military confrontation with the Vietnamese communists. In the **Vietnam War** the base was subject to rocket attack during the **Tet Offensive** in 1968 and was taken over by the government in Hanoi following its ultimate military success in 1975. Soviet interest in replacing the United States as the tenant of the base was resisted by Hanoi until early 1979, when relations with the People's Republic of China had deteriorated dramatically over Cambodia. A **Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation** signed with the Soviet Union in November 1978 provided the basis for the deployment of its aircraft and naval vessels at Cam Ranh Bay from March 1979. That deployment never had a tangible military role; Soviet forces were never engaged in any military action from the base. Intelligence gathering and showing the flag constituted the main purpose of the exercise, which aggravated Vietnamese and Soviet relations with China and caused suspicion within Southeast Asia. The Soviet presence was directly affected by the attempt by Mikhail Gorbachev from his assumption of power in March 1985 to improve relations with both China and the United States.

In January 1990 it was announced in Moscow that, in line with an overall reduction in overseas commitments, the Soviet Union had begun withdrawing most of its aircraft from Cam Ranh Bay from the end of 1989. In October 1990 the Soviet ambassador to Vietnam announced that his country had begun withdrawing its troops from the base. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia assumed responsibility for

the residual military presence in Vietnam, and it was announced in January 1992 that the last major warship had returned to Vladivostok in December 1991. A vestigial presence of neither military nor political significance has remained which Russia has sought to retain, while the Vietnamese have begun to explore alternative commercial possibilities for the facility. After a visit by Russia's foreign minister in July 1995, it was announced that its fleet would continue to enjoy access to the military base. After reconstruction in October 2010, Cam Ranh Bay was open for use by foreign naval vessels.

see also: Tet Offensive 1968; Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation 1978; Vietnam War.

### **Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP) (Cambodia)**

The Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP) was an electoral alliance formed in October 2012 between the two main opposition parties, the **Sam Rainsy Party** (SRP) and the Human Rights Party (HRP). The CNRP is led by former leader of SRP, **Sam Rainsy**, who had lived in self-imposed exile in France since 2005 and returned to Cambodia only a week before the polling for the 2013 general elections after receiving a royal pardon from King **Norodom Sihamoni** at the request of the prime minister, **Hun Sen**. Nevertheless, the National Election Commission banned Sam Rainsy from contesting an electoral seat as it deemed his return too late for his inclusion in the polls. In the event, CNRP exceeded expectations on its way to victory in 55 out of the 123 National Assembly seats, in the process capturing 44 per cent of the valid vote. In doing so CNRP prevented the ruling party from obtaining a two-thirds majority in Parliament. This was a marked improvement from the previous election, when both the SRP and HRP managed to collectively win only 29 seats. CNRP rejected the victory of the **Cambodian People's Party (CPP)** and called for investigations to be performed by an independent committee into alleged election irregularities, to

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which Hun Sen had agreed. The ground gained by CNRP at the 2013 polls was attributed to a united opposition, the return of Sam Rainsy, and a generational shift in attitudes and voting allegiances as youths cast dissenting votes against the prolonged authoritarian rule of Hun Sen. Faced with new lawsuits, Sam Rainsy fled to France in 2015 to avoid conviction for alleged defamation and leadership of the party passed into the hands of **Khem Sokha** who was himself imprisoned in 2017 for treason. In November 2017 CNRP was dissolved by the Cambodian supreme court on charges that it was plotting revolution. All 55 CNRP parliamentarians lost their seats.

*see also:* Cambodian People's Party (CPP); Hun Sen; Khem Sokha; Sam Rainsy; Sam Rainsy Party; Sihamoni, King Norodom.

### **Cambodian People's Party (CPP)** (Cambodia)

CPP is the direct lineal successor of the **Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Party (KPRP)**, which was established in January 1979 in the wake of Vietnam's invasion and occupation of Cambodia. The change in nomenclature, together with a disclaimer of Marxist identity and Vietnamese links, took place at an extraordinary congress on 17–18 October 1991 just before the **International Conference on Cambodia** reconvened in Paris. CPP was a signatory to the political settlement reached in the French capital, which left its administration of Cambodia intact during the transitional period before elections held under UN auspices. CPP, headed by **Chea Sim**, president of the National Assembly, and **Hun Sen**, the prime minister, cooperated up to a point with **UNTAC (United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia)** but employed its internal security apparatus to intimidate its non-communist electoral opponents. In the event, it came second with 51 seats to **FUNCINPEC** led by Prince **Norodom Ranariddh** with 58. CPP contested the outcome vociferously and, for a time, threatened secession in the country's eastern provinces as a gambit to ensure its participation in government. It eventually joined a fragile coalition at the end of October in which Hun Sen assumed the office of second prime minister to Prince

Ranariddh, while Chea Sim maintained his National Assembly position.

The coalition government existed more in form than substance and was flawed by the refusal of CPP to share power within the army, police, and the provincial administration where its hold was tightly maintained. Political polarization within the coalition came to a head over the competing ambitions of Hun Sen and Prince Ranariddh and their attempts to recruit defectors from the **Khmer Rouge** for their bitter struggle. In April 1997, Hun Sen engineered the defection to CPP of sufficient **FUNCINPEC** members of the National Assembly to overturn its majority. In July 1997, Hun Sen ousted Prince Ranariddh in a bloody coup and established his political dominance, while still holding the office of second prime minister. Hun Sen led CCP to electoral victory in the July 1998 elections, as it won 64 of the 123 seats in the National Assembly. After elections in July 1998, a new coalition government was established in November based on a new power-sharing agreement between CPP and **FUNCINPEC**, which barely masked political realities. Hun Sen became the sole prime minister, while Ranariddh assumed the office of president of the National Assembly. By that juncture, CPP had long shed its Vietnamese provenance and had become a vehicle for the personal political ambitions of Hun Sen.

Hun Sen continued to lead CPP to victory in 73 out of 123 National Assembly seats at the 2003 elections. However, this was short of the two-thirds majority required to form a government on its own. In order to overcome this deadlock, CPP held protracted negotiations with **FUNCINPEC** and a new coalition government was cobbled together in July 2004. In early 2006, CPP moved to shed its dependence on **FUNCINPEC** when it mobilized its majority to amend the constitution in order that the formation of a government required only a simple majority in the National Assembly. In 2008, CPP won the popular vote by the largest margin since the introduction of democratic elections in the country, on the way to 90 seats. Despite the fact that CPP secured an outright majority in the National Assembly and Senate, it continued to govern in coalition with the

royalist FUNCINPEC, although the influence of the latter has declined steadily since 1998. In 2013, however, CPP saw its majority erode to 68 seats as it lost considerable ground to the opposition **Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP)**. It regained the initiative when the supreme court dissolved CNRP, by far its most competitor from the ranks of the opposition, in 2017, ostensibly for inciting revolution against the government. With the main opposition emaciated, CPP assured its dominance on the Cambodian political landscape at the July 2018 election by winning all of the 125 parliamentary seats. As leadership succession looms, the party has also thrown its unanimous support behind Hun Manet, the eldest son of Hun Sen, to succeed his father as the leader of the party.

see also: Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP); Chea Sim; FUNCINPEC; Hun Sen; International Conference on Cambodia, Paris 1991; Khmer Rouge; Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Party (KPRP); Ranariddh, Prince Norodom; United Nations: Cambodia 1991–3; UNTAC (United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia).

### **Cebu Summit (ASEAN) 2006** (Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/Laos/Malaysia/Myanmar/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand/Vietnam)

The 12th meeting of heads of government of **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** convened in Cebu, Philippines, from 9 to 15 January 2007. The summit was originally scheduled to be held in December 2006, but the Philippines government postponed it two days before ASEAN leaders were to meet, citing adverse weather disturbance as Typhoon Seniang was expected to hit Cebu during that period. Instability in the administration of President **Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo** and growing civil unrest against the government at the time might have also contributed to the government's decision to postpone the summit.

The leaders gathered in January 2007 amidst a heavy security presence in Cebu after three consecutive bombings struck cities in Mindanao only hours after the summit kicked off. ASEAN leaders signed the Cebu Declaration

on the blueprint of an **ASEAN Charter**, endorsing the recommendations of the Eminent Persons Group (EPG). The High Level Task Force (HLTF) was then tasked to draft the charter for submission at the 13th ASEAN summit in Singapore in 2007. The Cebu meeting also witnessed the signing of the Cebu Declaration on the Acceleration of the Establishment of an ASEAN Community by 2015, which effectively pushed forward the original deadline by five years. At the second **East Asia Summit (EAS)**, special attention was given to cooperation on energy issues including but not limited to energy security, renewable energy, energy efficiency, and climate change. To that end, the leaders signed the Cebu Declaration on East Asian Energy Security, which aims to enhance regional cooperation in reducing dependence on fossil fuels, improving energy efficiency, mitigating greenhouse gas emissions, and encouraging private sector investment, as well as developing open competitive regional and international energy markets. The summit also witnessed the accession of France and Timor-Leste to the **Treaty of Amity and Cooperation**.

see also: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; ASEAN Charter (Charter of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations); East Asia Summit 2005–; Macapagal-Arroyo, Gloria; Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (ASEAN) 1976.

### **Cham** (Cambodia/Vietnam)

The Cham are a distinct ethno-cultural group to be found in both Cambodia and Vietnam. They trace their origins to the ancient kingdom of Champa once located in central Vietnam, which was overwhelmed and its inhabitants dispersed in the 15th century by Vietnam's relentless expansion to the south. By that time, **Islam** had been adopted as the religious faith, which has been more rigorously maintained in the Cambodian diaspora, while a form of Malay has become the common language. Cham in Cambodia, who numbered fewer than 100,000, sustained a distinct identity under French rule which began to be challenged by Prince **Norodom Sihanouk's** regime. They suffered cruelly from the **Khmer Rouge**, however, who sought to extinguish their separate cultural existence,

decimating their communities in the process. Since Vietnam's overthrow of **Pol Pot's** government, the Cham have maintained a vestigial existence, although a significant number have been accepted as refugees in Malaysia.

see also: Islam; Khmer Rouge; Pol Pot; Sihanouk, King Norodom.

### **Chamlong Srimuang, General** (Thailand)

Chamlong Srimuang played a critical role in mobilizing popular protest against the former army commander-in-chief, General **Suchinda Kraprayoon**, in May 1992 after he had assumed the office of prime minister in Thailand without having stood in general elections in March 1992. Chamlong Srimuang was born on 5 July 1935 in Thonburi of Chinese immigrant parents and was educated at the Chulachomkloa Royal Military Academy, after which he began his career as a signals officer. He served in Vietnam and received postgraduate training in public administration in the United States. He was a prominent member of the **Young Turks** faction of the military, which was responsible for replacing General **Kriangsak Chomanan** with General **Prem Tinsulanonda** as prime minister in 1980. He served as secretary-general to Prem but resigned this post after an abortive coup in April 1981 mounted by his military contemporaries. Chamlong had joined the radical Buddhist *Santi Asoke* sect in 1979 and became an open advocate of its regime of personal self-denial. In 1985, he resigned from the army with the rank of major general and in November stood as an independent candidate in elections for the office of governor of Bangkok, which he won comfortably. In 1988 he established the *Palang Dharma* (Moral Force) Party, which had only limited success in general elections in July.

Chamlong won a second term as governor of Bangkok in January 1990 but resigned in January 1992 to stand in national elections in March. His party fared much better this time, and after General Suchinda assumed the office of prime minister, Chamlong led the popular confrontation in the streets against the military which resulted not only in great loss of life but in

Suchinda's political downfall. Chamlong was re-elected to Parliament in September 1992, and his party became a member of the ruling coalition. Chamlong refused to hold office, however, and announced in January 1993 that he was giving up the leadership of *Palang Dharma*. Nevertheless, he continued to be politically active. In April 1994 he made a crude bid for cabinet office, which was resisted by Prime Minister **Chuan Leekpai**. He then secured re-election as leader of *Palang Dharma* and in October 1994 entered the cabinet as deputy prime minister. He gave up the leadership of his party just before parliamentary elections in July 1995 in favour of **Thaksin Shinawatra**, reflecting the tension between religious and business-oriented factions, and also announced his withdrawal from political life. However, in June 1996, he stood unsuccessfully for governor of Bangkok and again announced his retirement from politics.

Chamlong remained out of the public eye until 2005, when he led a protest against the initial public offering of Thai Beverage PLC on the Stock Exchange of Thailand. In the same year he rose to prominence and became a key leader in the **People's Alliance for Democracy** (PAD), protesting against the rule of Thaksin Shinawatra which culminated in the September 2006 military coup. Chamlong was rewarded for his role with an appointment to the new Parliament. His stance shifted somewhat afterward towards the military, but against the government of **Surayud Chulanont**. Chamlong and PAD took to the streets again in May 2008 after the elections of December 2007 and the establishment of the **People's Power Party** government. Perceiving the government to be a vehicle for Thaksin's return from exile, Chamlong and PAD organized demonstrations to urge the ousting of the government. Stepping up the pressure, PAD seized the Government House compound on 26 August. Although **Samak Sundaravej** resigned as prime minister in early September, he was replaced by **Somchai Wongsawat**, Thaksin's brother-in-law. Chamlong was arrested on 4 October on charges of treason, illegal assembly, insurrection, and conspiracy, but the insurrection charges were later withdrawn and he was released on bail. Chamlong

remained a leader of PAD, threatening to bring the group back to the streets in 2009 in response to the growing 'red shirt' protest movement against the government of **Abhisit Vejjajiva**. Chamlong has enjoyed a mixed reputation. His role in challenging military autocracy has been acknowledged, but together with a ruthless personal ambition and an authoritarian disposition.

see *also*: Abhisit Vejjajiva; Chuan Leekpai; Kriangsak Chomanan, General; People's Alliance for Democracy; People's Power Party; Prem Tinsulanonda, General; Samak Sundaravej; Somchai Wongsawat; Suchinda Kraprayoon, General; Surayud Chulanont, General; Thaksin Shinawatra; Young Turks.

### **Chart Pattana Party** (Thailand)

The *Chart Pattana* (National Development) Party was set up in July 1992 as the political vehicle of former prime minister **Chatichai Choonhavan**, who defected from the *Chart Thai* Party of which he had been leader. It enjoyed modest electoral success in September 1992 and was in opposition until December 1994, when it entered the Democrat Party-led coalition but without Chatichai assuming ministerial office. It returned to opposition after elections in July 1995 but then joined the government headed by the **New Aspiration Party** after elections in November 1996. In November 1997, with a political realignment induced by economic adversity, and after an abortive bid by Chatichai to become prime minister, the **Democrat Party** replaced the New Aspiration Party as the core of the ruling coalition and *Chart Pattana* returned to opposition. Chatichai died in May 1998 but, despite expectations of the party's demise, it entered the Democrat-led ruling coalition in October 1998 in the face of some resistance because of its reputation for corruption. After the sweeping victory of the **Thai Rak Thai Party** (TRT) in the 2001 elections, *Chart Pattana* joined the coalition government of **Thaksin Shinawatra** in December 2001, but was later dropped in November 2003. Several party members subsequently defected while the party was pressured by Thaksin to merge with TRT before the 2005 elections.

TRT was dissolved by the Constitutional Court in May 2007 following the September 2006 military coup that ousted the Thaksin government. In September 2007, members of the *Chart Pattana* faction of TRT merged with the *Ruam Jai Thai* (Thai United) Party to form the *Ruam Jai Thai Chart Pattana* Party. In the 2007 election the party won eight seats in the House of Representatives and became a member of the six-party coalition government led by the Democratic Party's **Abhisit Vejjajiva**. In 2011 the party merged with the *Puea Pandin* Party to form the *Chart Pattana Puea Pandin* Party under Wannarat Channukul. The party won seven seats in the July 2011 elections, a step down from the combined total of 41 seats held by the two parties before the elections. Following the overwhelming victory of the **Pheu Thai Party** in 2011, *Chart Pattana Puea Pandin* joined three others and *Pheu Thai* in a coalition government under **Yingluck Shinawatra**. In September that year, the party reverted to its original name. Following the return of elections in 2019 after the coup five years earlier, *Chart Pattana*, led by Tewan Liptapanlop, joined the coalition government led by the **Palang Pracharat Party** as a junior partner.

see *also*: Abhisit Vejjajiva; Chatichai Choonhavan, General; *Chart Thai* Party; Democrat Party; New Aspiration Party; *Palang Pracharat* Party; *Pheu Thai* Party; Samak Sundaravej; Somchai Wongsawat; *Thai Rak Thai* Party; Thaksin Shinawatra; Yingluck Shinawatra.

### **Chart Thai Party** (Thailand)

The *Chart Thai* (Thai National) Party served as a junior member of the **Democrat Party**-led ruling coalition which assumed office in November 1997. It had been the core party in government between July 1995 and November 1996, when a poor electoral showing led to a period in opposition. *Chart Thai* has its origins in a military-business family network in direct lineal descent from Field Marshal Pin Choonhavan, a political strongman during the 1950s. It was founded in 1974 by close relatives of Field Marshal Pin, including his son-in-law, General Adireksan, who became its leader. He was succeeded in 1986 by Pin's son, General **Chatichai**



**Choonhavan**, who was prime minister between 1988 and 1991. *Chart Thai* has participated in a series of coalition governments since 1975 primarily as a political vehicle for a set of business interests with military links, which have disposed of great wealth in election campaigns. Like virtually all Thai parties, it has experienced recurrent defections from its ranks, including its former leader, Chatichai Choonhavan, who established the **Chart Pattana Party** (National Development Party) just before elections in September 1992.

Despite factional tensions, *Chart Thai* has sustained its institutional identity. It was led nominally by retired air chief marshal Sombun Rahong until May 1994, when he was succeeded by provincial businessman **Banharn Silpa-archa**, who took the party to electoral success in July 1995 when it secured 92 seats in a Parliament of 391 and took over the office of prime minister. It lost office in elections in November 1996 but returned to government as a junior partner in November 1997. In coalition, Banharn has retained tight control over the party without assuming ministerial office. *Chart Thai* won 41 seats in the 2001 elections and formed a coalition government with the largest party, the **Thai Rak Thai Party** (TRT), led by **Thaksin Shinawatra**. However, during the 2005 elections the party won only 27 seats. Policy conflicts led *Chart Thai* to defect from its coalition with TRT, and later, together with the Democrat Party, it boycotted the April 2006 elections in an attempt to block TRT from forming a new government. *Chart Thai* participated in the December 2007 election, winning 37 seats, making it the biggest winner after the **People's Power Party** (PPP) and the Democrat Party. In January 2008, *Chart Thai* joined PPP and five other parties to form a coalition government, only to fall victim to the constitutional court's decision on 2 December 2008 to dissolve the party, along with PPP and *Matchima* Party, for having violated electoral laws during the 2007 election. Party executives, including Banharn, were banned from politics for five years.

see also: Banharn Silpa-archa; *Chart Pattana* Party; Chatichai Choonhavan, General; Democrat Party; People's Power Party; *Thai Rak Thai* Party; Thaksin Shinawatra.

## **Chatichai Choonhavan, General**

(Thailand)

Chatichai Choonhavan was a flamboyant political figure who served as prime minister of Thailand from August 1988 until his removal from office through a military coup in February 1991. As leader of the **Chart Thai Party**, with the largest number of members in the Parliament, he succeeded **Prem Tinsulanonda** on his resignation. As the first elected prime minister for 12 years, Chatichai Choonhavan made an immediate impact in foreign policy by softening his country's stance towards Cambodia and Vietnam and announcing his intention of turning Indochina from a battleground into a trading market. In domestic policy he departed from the cautious technocratic culture of his predecessor to provide a more direct business orientation. In the event, his administration's reputation for corrupt practices softened the public response to his overthrow, which was precipitated by suspicion within the military establishment that he intended to purge its serving hierarchy.

Chatichai Choonhavan was born in Bangkok on 5 April 1922. His father was Field Marshal Pin Choonhavan, who was a powerful political figure during the 1950s until displaced by Field Marshal **Sarit Thanarat**. He was educated at the Chulachomkiao Royal Military Academy in Bangkok and served with Thai units in Burma and southern China during the Pacific War and also saw action in the Korean War. With his father's political fall, he was sent, in effect, into exile, serving as ambassador in Europe and Latin America. After the death of Sarit, he returned to Thailand and worked in the foreign ministry; in 1972 he distinguished himself for his bravery in rescuing Israeli hostages seized by the Palestinian Black September organization. He was a founder member of *Chart Thai* in 1974. As a leading member of that alliance between the military and business, he held a number of government offices including that of foreign minister. Following his removal from power, he spent time in exile in Britain but returned to political life in 1992. He led a defection from *Chart Thai* to form the **Chart Pattana Party**, which took part in elections in September 1992 to win 60

seats but without securing membership of the coalition government led by **Chuan Leekpai**. His new party entered the ruling coalition in December 1994 but without Chatichai assuming ministerial office. It returned to opposition after elections in July 1995 but re-entered government after further elections in November 1996, again without Chatichai. In November 1997, when Prime Minister **Chavalit Yongchaiyuth** was obliged to give up office against a background of economic crisis, Chatichai made an abortive bid to succeed him. He died in May 1998.

see also: *Chart Pattana Party*; *Chart Thai Party*; Chavalit Yongchaiyuth, General; Chuan Leekpai; Prem Tinsulanonda, General; Sarit Thanarat, Field Marshal.

### **Chavalit Yongchaiyuth, General** (Thailand)

General Chavalit Yongchaiyuth was prime minister of Thailand between November 1996 and November 1997 when he was obliged to resign office against a background of economic crisis. Chavalit Yongchaiyuth was born on 15 May 1932 in Nonthaburi Province and began his career as a professional soldier on entering the Chulachomklao Royal Military Academy in 1953. He received staff training in Thailand and also at Fort Leavenworth in the United States. He developed strong ideas from communist defectors about the need to promote rural economic development as a counter to insurgency and was associated with the influential **Democratic Soldiers** faction. He put such ideas into practice when he rose to become army commander-in-chief in 1986. In that position, he indicated clear political ambition but his crude ideological formulations aroused hostility from the royal family, who suspected him of republican leanings. He was never tempted to realize his ambition through direct military means but was attracted by an offer of political preferment by then Prime Minister **Chatichai Choonhavan**. He retired from active command in March 1990 to be directly appointed deputy prime minister and minister of defence. His first spell in politics as an unelected minister proved to be frustrating, and in June he resigned from the government,

ostensibly because of allegations of corruption by a cabinet colleague.

In October 1990 General Chavalit founded the **New Aspiration Party** with military and bureaucratic support. He was out of office when the military coup of February 1991 took place. His party contested the elections held in March 1992 and won 72 seats but was not made a member of the governing coalition which nominated the non-elected former army commander, General **Suchinda Kraprayoon**, as prime minister. General Chavalit was not tainted by the bloodshed which occurred in May when mass protests at General Suchinda's appointment took place in Bangkok. In the fresh elections which were held in September 1992, the New Aspiration Party secured only 51 seats but was included in the ruling coalition led by **Chuan Leekpai**. After elections in July 1995, he became a deputy prime minister and minister of defence in the ruling coalition formed by **Banharn Silpa-archa** and demonstrated his political influence in September that year when he secured the appointment of his nominee as army commander against the wishes of the retiring incumbent. In elections in November 1996, his New Aspiration Party won 125 seats in Parliament to form a new coalition government under his leadership. That realization of political ambition turned sour within a year as Thailand was confronted with economic adversity, which brought his government down. In opposition, he has been combative but has been unable to live down his close association with economic failure.

After his resignation as prime minister, Chavalit continued to exert influence in Thai politics by aligning himself with various political factions and interests at various times. Chavalit led his New Aspiration Party into coalition with the **Thai Rak Thai Party** in 2001 in a collaborative venture that eventually transformed into a merger of the two parties. Later, Chavalit was believed to have also played a clandestine role in bringing down the government of **Thaksin Shinawatra** in 2006 and proceeded to establish a close relationship with **Sonthi Limthongkul**, one of the key leaders of the **People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD)**. In 2008 however, Chavalit returned to Cabinet

as deputy prime minister to **Somchai Wongsawat** tasked with resolving the crisis between the government and PAD, only to resign several months later to take partial responsibility for police violence perpetrated against ‘yellow shirt’ protestors at Parliament Building. He followed this up by controversially suggesting that a military coup was the only way through which order could be restored in the country. In October 2009, Chavalit joined the **Pheu Thai Party** as chairman, a move that led to a major falling out between him and his mentor, Privy Council president and former prime minister, **Prem Tinsulanonda**. He subsequently resigned from *Pheu Thai* in April 2011. As deputy prime minister, Chavalit was also tasked with mediating the brewing conflict with Cambodia over the **Preah Vihear** temple dispute but failed to make any headway, and instead came under heavy domestic criticism.

see also: Banharn Silpa-archa; Chatichai Choonhavan, General; Chuan Leekpai; Democratic Soldiers; New Aspiration Party; People’s Alliance for Democracy; *Pheu Thai* Party; Preah Vihear Temple Dispute; Prem Tinsulanonda, General; Somchai Wongsawat; Sonthi Limthongkul; Suchinda Kraprayoon, General; *Thai Rak Thai* Party; Thaksin Shinawatra.

### **Chea Sim** (Cambodia)

Chea Sim became the president of a newly constituted appointed Senate in November 1998. He was born on 15 November 1932 into a peasant family in Svay Rieng Province. His revolutionary activity is believed to date from the early 1950s, and two decades later he was secretary of a district committee of the Communist Party of Cambodia under the **Khmer Rouge**. After they came to power in April 1975, he was elected to the National Assembly but then became disaffected and was one of the leaders of a rebellion in eastern Cambodia against Pol Pot’s rule. That rebellion provided the Vietnamese with an opportunity to invade through a united front of Cambodians. Chea Sim rose in the hierarchy of the Vietnamese-sponsored **Kampuchean People’s Revolutionary Party (KPRP)** as well as holding ministerial portfolios in the **People’s Republic**

**of Kampuchea** and the chairmanship of the National Assembly from its establishment in 1981. He has enjoyed a reputation as a party hardliner and asserted his position against the younger prime minister, **Hun Sen**. Chea Sim assumed leadership of the **Cambodian People’s Party (CPP)**, established in succession to KPRP when it was set up at an extraordinary congress on 17–18 October 1991, shortly before the **International Conference on Cambodia** was reconvened in Paris. After the formation of a coalition government in October 1993 following elections conducted by the United Nations, he became the president of the National Assembly until November 1998. Although he remains chairman of CPP, effective power was by then assumed by Hun Sen. When King **Norodom Sihanouk** announced his official abdication on 7 October 2004, Chea Sim once again became the acting head of state, having performed this role in 1993, 1994, and 1995. Chea Sim left this position on 14 October 2004 when **Norodom Sihamoni** ascended the throne. He remained titularly CPP president, although for all intents and purposes, power was already being assumed by Hun Sen. After long bouts of illness, Chea Sim died on 8 June 2015 at the age of 82.

see also: Cambodian People’s Party (CPP); Hun Sen; International Conference on Cambodia, Paris 1991; Kampuchea, People’s Republic of (PRK); Kampuchean People’s Revolutionary Party (KPRP); Khmer Rouge; Sihamoni, King Norodom; Sihanouk, King Norodom.

### **Chiam See Tong** (Singapore)

Chiam See Tong was the secretary-general of the Singapore People’s Party (SPP) until his retirement in October 2019. He was also the second longest-serving opposition member of Parliament after **Low Thia Kiang**. Born in Singapore on 12 March 1935, Chiam pursued his bachelor of science degree in New Zealand (1956–61) before starting his career as a teacher. In 1972, he went to Inner Temple in London to study law and became a barrister-at-law. On his return to Singapore, he worked for two years at Philip Wong & Co (Advocates & Solicitors) before opening his own practice, Chiam & Co, in 1976.

Chiam See Tong founded the Singapore Democratic Party (SDP) in 1980 and contested and won the Potong Pasir seat in the 1984 general election, marking the start of a 27-year career as a representative for Potong Pasir. He was the head of the SDP until 1993 when he resigned and left the party after infighting within the party leadership when he opposed the preference of the new generation of SDP leaders, led by Chee Soon Juan, to pursue a more confrontational approach towards the **People's Action Party** (PAP). In 1994, Chiam and other disenchanting SDP members formed the current SPP, winning in Potong Pasir again in the 1997 election. Chiam's spearheading of the Singapore Democratic Alliance (SDA) in 2001, which initially brought together four political parties – the National Solidarity Party, the Singapore Justice Party, the Singapore Malay National Organization, and Chiam's SPP – reflected his belief that opposition parties in Singapore should work closely together to have a stronger voice in Parliament. He was re-elected for Potong Pasir under the SDA banner for another two terms in the 2001 and 2006 elections. However, the SDA failed to make an impression, having only won one seat in Parliament (that of Potong Pasir held by Chiam) since its inception. Just prior to the 2011 elections, Chiam announced that the SPP had decided to pull out of the SDA and he would stand for re-election under the SPP banner instead. In an attempt to capture more seats for the opposition in Parliament, Chiam handed over the reins of the SPP in the contest for the Potong Pasir to his wife, Lina Loh, while he led a team of SPP candidates to contest the election in the Bishan-Toa Payoh Group Representation Constituency. However, the SPP failed to win in both constituencies; Chiam lost his seat in Parliament, while the SPP narrowly lost its bastion of Potong Pasir.

Unlike many of his peers in opposition politics, Chiam's political career is notable for the fact that he has managed to avoid having lawsuits brought against him. He is widely respected in Singapore for his dedication to the opposition cause. His popularity increased after 2008, when he refused to retire from opposition politics despite suffering a stroke. He eventually stepped down as

secretary-general of the SPP in October 2019 at the age of 84 years.

see also: Low Thia Khiang; People's Action Party.

### **Chiang Mai Initiative** (Brunei/ Cambodia/Indonesia/Laos/Malaysia/ Myanmar/Philippines/Singapore/ Thailand/Vietnam)

The Chiang Mai Initiative (CMI) was established in May 2000 in the wake of the devastating **Asian Financial Crisis** to serve as a financial safety net for regional currencies. It comprises a network of bilateral currency swap agreements among the central banks of **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)**, China, Japan, and South Korea to provide greater liquidity. The arrangement was transformed in March 2010 into the Chiang Mai Initiative–Multilateral (CMIM), with pooled resources amounting to US\$240 billion. Notwithstanding its potential, the CMIM remains an unused financial mechanism. Despite having the CMI at its disposal in 2008 when it was confronted with a looming crisis, South Korea chose to arrange direct swap lines with China and Japan.

see also: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Asian Financial Crisis 1997–8.

### **Chin** (Myanmar)

The Chin are an indigenous minority group of Tibeto-Myanmar origin who are to be found in a stretch of mountainous terrain extending southwards along Myanmar's borders with India and Bangladesh and then into the heart of the Arakan region. Mixed culturally in attachment to Hindu, Christian, and folk religions, the Chin have never assimilated to **Buddhism** and during the colonial period were recruited by the British into the local army. Their leaders welcomed independence in 1948 but sought political autonomy within the Union of Burma beyond the special territorial division which they were accorded. The Chin, like other ethnic minorities in Myanmar, have long been in a state of armed rebellion against the government in Yangon. They found increasing difficulty in sustaining their military campaign during the 1990s, however, as the ruling **State Law and Order Restoration Council** (SLORC) and its

successor, the **State Peace and Development Council** (SPDC), were able to disrupt their lines of logistical support as well as to reinforce their own counterinsurgency capabilities. The Chin remain a target of discrimination, including arbitrary arrests and forced labour, and in a 2011 study by the United Nations Development Programme, Chin State was identified as the poorest region in Myanmar. In May 2012, a ceasefire was signed between the central government and Chin rebels. This was followed by a landmark visit to the Chin capital of Hakha on 20 February 2013, the occasion of the Chin National Day, by President **Thein Sein**. While promises of development were made during that visit and abuses of Chin minorities stopped with the new government, doubts remain if a resolution to the longstanding clash between centre and periphery can be found. In the event, violence erupted again in the aftermath of the February 2021 coup between the military and the Chinland Defence Force, a Chin militia formed after the coup, giving rise of concerns that a humanitarian crisis may be in the making in Chin State.

see also: State Peace and Development Council;  
State Law and Order Restoration Council;  
Thein Sein.

### **Chin Peng** (Malaya/Malaysia)

Chin Peng, whose real name is Ong Boon Hua, became general secretary of the Communist Party of Malaya in March 1947 in succession to **Loi Tack**, who was revealed as a double agent after he had absconded with party funds. Chin Peng, who was born in Malaya in 1922, had been a wartime guerrilla commander decorated with the OBE by the British for his role against the Japanese. He assumed the leadership of the Communist Party of Malaya at the outset of the Cold War and, when confirmed in office by its Central Committee in March 1948, the party announced a programme of mass struggle against British imperialism. Under his leadership, an insurrection was launched from June after the colonial government had declared a state of **Emergency** in response to growing acts of communist violence. By the mid-1950s, that insurrection had been well contained with its fighting remnant regrouped along the border with Thailand.

In November 1955 Chin Peng indicated a willingness to negotiate with the elected governments of Malaya and Singapore. The **Baling Talks** with the chief minister of Malaya, **Tunku Abdul Rahman**, and that of Singapore, **David Marshall**, took place near the border with Thailand in the following month but without success. Chin Peng's offer to end the insurrection in return for the legalization of the Communist Party met with a blank refusal. He returned to the jungle but the insurrection continued to lose momentum and the state of Emergency was rescinded in 1960 by the government of an independent Malaya. There were no further confirmed sightings of Chin Peng, who was alternately reported to be in southern Thailand and in China. His voice was heard, however, on the clandestine radio station, the Voice of the Malayan Revolution, whose transmitter was located in southern China. During the 1970s, when the Communist Party of Malaya split into three factions concurrent with a revival of guerrilla activities, he was rumoured to have been replaced as general secretary. On 2 December 1989 Ching Peng appeared in public for the first time since 1955 at a hotel in the southern Thai town of Hat Yai dressed in a business suit and in apparent good health. On behalf of the Communist Party, he signed two peace agreements with the governments of Thailand and Malaysia which, in effect, constituted acts of surrender but without indicating the party's disbandment. He then appeared to return to the jungle but in the following decade was known to engage in business in Thailand, and also to give media interviews about his experience as an insurgent leader with a view to publishing his memoirs.

Living in exile in Thailand, Chin Peng applied for permission to enter Malaysia at the beginning of 2000. The application was rejected by the Malaysian High Court on 25 July 2005. His subsequent appeal was rejected by the Court of Appeal in June 2008, which upheld the earlier ruling that requested that he present identification papers as proof of citizenship. Chin Peng maintained that his birth certificate had been seized during a police raid in 1948. Chin Peng passed away on 16 September 2013 at the age of 90. His ashes were evidently smuggled into

Malaysia from Thailand on 16 September 2019, and after a short funeral ceremony on the same day were scattered on a hillside in Chemor, in his home state of Perak, and also at sea in Lumut.

see also: Abdul Rahman, Tunku; Baling Talks 1955; Emergency 1948–60; Loi Tack; Marshall, David.

## Chinese Communities in Southeast Asia

Once known as 'Overseas Chinese', ethnic Chinese communities throughout Southeast Asia make up well over 22 million people of migrant origin who are dispersed disparately across the region. They comprise a majority of the population only in Singapore.

Chinese migration to Southeast Asia was driven by a mixture of push and pull factors and took place in the main from the southern provinces of China precipitated by adverse economic circumstances and political upheaval during the 19th century. It was also affected and tied up with colonialist expansion and an attendant demand for supplies of disciplined labour. The Chinese term for such migrants has been *Hua Qiao* (sojourners) indicating the intention of the first waves of migrants to amass sufficient wealth to return to their native villages to retire in comfort and with respect. Up to the 1930s, migration was primarily a male phenomenon and there was a return traffic, but there were few cases of peasants living in rags and returning with riches. However, with the migration of Chinese women and marriage among Chinese within Southeast Asia, a pattern of permanent settlement began which has been sustained and consolidated with successor generations, so that Chinese communities are an established part of Southeast Asian societies. Of the main concentrations, around seven million reside in Indonesia, six million in both Thailand and Malaysia, and three million in Singapore.

During the colonial period, Chinese migrants distinguished themselves by their industry and acumen and established a strong position in the retail trades in particular, assisted by close-knit kin and dialect associations. Their economic success as well as continuing ties with China

and engagement in Chinese politics attracted envy and suspicion. In 1914 Thailand's King Vajiravudh wrote a booklet entitled *The Jews of the East*, which compared Chinese immigrants to insect pests that devour crops and leave fields dry and bare of grain. He attacked the migrant Chinese for their racial loyalty and sense of racial superiority, which stood in the way of their assimilation and transfer of allegiance to their country of residence. Ironically, although Chinese in Thailand rose to over 10 per cent of the population, their assimilation has been quite striking, with intermarriage leading to a close identification with Thai culture. Although Chinese distinctiveness has not been erased completely, assimilation has more readily occurred where the local cultures have been receptive. Thus, in predominantly Buddhist Thailand and in the predominantly Christian Philippines, for example, the intermarried-Chinese communities have found a social niche that has allowed them to rise to the highest offices in politics. The same cannot be said of Chinese in Indonesia and Malaysia, where clear distinctions have been made and perpetuated that identify Chinese as outsiders in one way or other. Having said that, the situation in Indonesia has improved to a far greater extent than in Malaysia, where this distinction has caused Malaysian Chinese voters to gravitate *en masse* to the opposition.

If the Chinese of Southeast Asia were suspect by indigenous communities because of their attachment to their homeland, that suspicion was made acute after the Pacific War with the establishment of the People's Republic of China as a revolutionary state. Earlier Chinese involvement in communist insurrection in Malaya and Singapore had made the Chinese susceptible to the charge of being both capitalist and communist at the same time. Initially, the communist government in Beijing carried over the *jus sanguinis* policy of its ousted nationalist predecessor whereby any person of all or partly Chinese parentage was treated as a Chinese citizen. That policy was changed from the mid-1950s, when it began to be realized in Beijing that it was a major obstacle to promoting good state-to-state relations in the region. A landmark Dual Nationality Treaty with Indonesia, negotiated and signed by Prime Minister Zhou

Enlai in April 1955, marked a change in formal practice. However, where it has suited Chinese interests, the welfare of overseas Chinese has been employed for political purposes, as in the case of Vietnam in the late 1970s.

The centre of ethnic Chinese achievement in Southeast Asia is the Republic of Singapore, which became independent in August 1965 on its expulsion from the Federation of Malaysia. Singapore's population of just over five million is more than 70 per cent Chinese. Before China gave up its revolutionary mission, the government of Singapore was at great pains to play down any ethnic Chinese identity and indeed chose Malay as the national language. Any depiction of Singapore as a third China after the People's Republic and Taiwan (Republic of China) was strongly resisted. Since China has embarked on the road to economic modernization and with the end of the Cold War, such inhibitions have been discarded. Indeed, with China and communism ceasing to be synonymous, a revival of pride in Chinese cultural identity has taken place, with Singapore being willing to host a World Congress of Overseas Chinese in 1991.

It is important to register that today, the nature of how members of the Chinese communities in Southeast Asia identify with China and with their 'host' country has changed fundamentally. In the first instance, many ethnic Chinese view themselves primarily no longer by ethnic affiliation, but by citizenship. Second, ethnic ties have not had a considerable effect on how new generations of Southeast Asian Chinese relate to their ancestral country. This is perhaps most profoundly evident in Singapore, where many Singaporean Chinese harbour resentment towards the influx of Chinese from the mainland. However, that has not prevented expectations among some leaders of the People's Republic that ethnic and cultural affinity with the island-state should find expression in greater sympathy for the interests of the cultural motherland. Indeed, over time, numerous factors have combined to weaken presumed ethnic affiliation. Concomitantly, there have been fewer instances of the scapegoating of the Chinese community for national ills. Nevertheless, despite the fact that large numbers of Chinese

in Southeast Asia have either adopted the host nationality or, more importantly, were born and raised in their 'host' country, it remains that many are still viewed with envy and suspicion. One reason for this is the fact that the elite of various Southeast Asian Chinese communities are in possession of a disproportionate share of the wealth and economic influence in their host countries.

### **Choummaly Sayasone (Laos)**

Choummaly Sayasone was president of Laos from 2006 to 2016. He served concurrently as the general secretary of the **Lao People's Revolutionary Party (LPRP)** during that time. Choummaly was born in Attapeu Province in southern Laos on 6 March 1936. He joined the military and fought in the Lao civil war from 1962 to 1975, eventually attaining the rank of lieutenant general. He was elected to LPRP's Central Committee in 1982 during the third National Congress and became an alternate member of the Politburo and secretary of the secretariat of the Central Committee in 1986. Choummaly became a member of LPRP's Politburo in 1991, the same year he became minister of defence. He was re-elected to the Politburo in 1996 and 2001 and remained minister of defence until 1993. From February 1998 to March 2001 he held the dual positions of minister of defence and vice prime minister. In 2001 he became vice-president of Laos. He was elected general secretary during the LPRP's eighth Congress in March 2006, succeeding **Khamtay Siphandon**. Three months later he succeeded Khamtay as president. He retained his position as general secretary at the ninth Congress in 2011 and in June of that year was re-elected president by the seventh Lao National Assembly. He completed his term in 2016 and did not seek re-election into a position in the senior party leadership ranks. He was succeeded by **Bounnhang Vorachith**. In possession of a strong conservative disposition, Choummaly was averse to publicity during his term in office and avoided radical policy decisions. As president, Choummaly was a keen advocate of improving relations with the People's Republic of China.

see also: Bounnhang Vorachith; Khamtay Siphandon; Lao People's Revolutionary Party.

### Chuan Leekpai (Thailand)

Chuan Leekpai was prime minister of Thailand from September 1992 until July 1995 and then, after more than two years in opposition, assumed high office again in November 1997. He was also leader of the **Democrat Party** during this period, stepping down only in 2003.

Chuan Leekpai was the first truly civilian prime minister since the mid-1970s and has maintained a reputation for personal probity and integrity. He came to power through elections in September 1992, which were held in the wake of a bloody confrontation on the streets of Bangkok in the previous May. Civilian demonstrators had challenged the right of former army commander General **Suchinda Kraprayoon** to become prime minister without election to Parliament. The Democrat Party secured 79 seats, the largest number in Parliament, and provided the core of a new coalition government.

Chuan Leekpai was born on 28 July 1938 in Trang Province. He studied law at Thammasat University in Bangkok and entered Parliament at the age of 31, when Thailand was still under military rule. He first held government office as deputy minister of justice in 1975. He was speaker of the Lower House during 1986–8 as well as a deputy prime minister between the end of 1989 and August 1990, which is when he became leader of the Democrat Party on the resignation of Bhichai Rattakul. During his first term of high office, Chuan Leekpai ruled at the head of a discordant coalition without demonstrating inspired or decisive leadership. For example, in early 1994, he failed to secure the passage of amendments designed to revise the constitution imposed by the military after they seized power in 1991. This failure indicated his inability then to overcome a structural tension in Thai politics between civilian and military interests. He was also embarrassed by the residual support of the military for the **Khmer Rouge**, despite his government's commitment to good relations with its counterpart in Phnom Penh. He lost office in July 1995 after elections, which had been precipitated by the defection of a coalition partner. The Democrat Party won 86 seats compared to 96 by the **Chart Thai Party**, which provided the core of a new coalition from which the Democrat Party was excluded.

Chuan Leekpai returned to high office in November 1997 when **Chavalit Yongchaiyuth** lost national confidence and was obliged to resign as prime minister after the devastating onset of the **Asian Financial Crisis**. A political realignment allowed Chuan to form a new coalition government, although initially with only a limited parliamentary majority, which was not augmented until October 1998 when the **Chart Pattana Party** joined. There was no resistance from the armed forces to his return to power, while he enjoyed critical support from King **Bhumibol Adulyadej**.

On taking office, he put together a credible economic team that inspired confidence among international financial institutions as well as the approval of the United States. Nevertheless, his conservative economic policies also came under heavy domestic criticism for their elitist nature and neglect of the plight of the common Thai citizen. This brewing antagonism eventually culminated in his defeat by the populist **Thaksin Shinawatra** in elections in 2001. Following his defeat, Chuan remained a senior advisor to the Democrat Party and trenchant critic of Thaksin and the **Thai Rak Thai Party**. Chuan was instrumental in the grooming of his protégé, **Abhisit Vejjajiva**, for leadership, and he articulated a stout defence of the Democrat Party during the party's dissolution trial in 2010. Upon the resumption of Parliament in 2019, Chuan was chosen to be speaker of the House of Representatives and president of the National Assembly in exchange for the Democrat Party's support of the **Palang Pracharat Party**-led governing coalition.

*see also:* Abhisit Vejjajiva; Asian Financial Crisis 1997–8; Bhumibol Adulyadej, King; *Chart Pattana Party*; *Chart Thai Party*; Chavalit Yongchaiyuth, General; Democrat Party; Khmer Rouge; *Palang Pracharat Party*; Suchinda Kraprayoon, General; *Thai Rak Thai Party*; Thaksin Shinawatra.

### Clark Air Base (Philippines)

Clark Air Base on the island of Luzón was one of the major military facilities to which the United States acquired leasehold title, initially for 99 years, under an agreement concluded with the government of the Philippines on 17



March 1947. That tenure was reduced to 25 years under a revised agreement of 16 September 1966. Under a further agreement concluded with the Philippines government on 27 August 1991, designed to extend US tenure at Subic Bay Naval Base for ten years, the United States agreed to transfer jurisdiction over Clark Air Base by September 1992, but by then it had lost its operational value because of the damaging effect of the volcanic eruption of neighbouring Mount Pinatubo. Also, the Philippine Senate repudiated the overall package in September 1991. Clark Air Base had been the site for the only major US tactical air force deployment in Southeast Asia with fighter and airlift wings. It had also been the air logistics centre for all US forces in the western Pacific, while the Crow Valley Weapons Range provided the only facility for live tactical training west of California. The base lost its former military significance with the end of the Cold War, and tactical fighter aircraft were withdrawn early in 1991. In June 1991 the volcanic eruption of nearby Mount Pinatubo caused irreparable damage to the base, which was completely evacuated by US personnel. Under **Rodrigo Duterte**, the Philippines inked a deal with China in 2021 to build a railway linking Clark Air Base and Subic Bay as part of the Philippines government's aim to develop Clark for commercial purposes. see also: Duterte, Rodrigo; Subic Bay Naval Base.

### **Cobbold Commission 1962** (Malaya/Malaysia)

A commission of inquiry was appointed by the British and Malayan governments on 16 January 1962 to ascertain whether or not the inhabitants of Britain's colonies of Sarawak and North Borneo wished them to become constituent parts of the projected Federation of Malaysia. Comprising five members and chaired by Lord Cobbold, governor of the Bank of England, the commission issued its report in July 1962. Its members concluded that about one-third of the population in each territory strongly favoured an early realization of Malaysia; another third, many of whom favoured the project, had asked for conditions and safeguards of a varying nature;

the remaining third was divided between those who insisted on independence before Malaysia was considered and those who strongly preferred British rule to continue. The report had the effect of reinforcing the momentum for the new Federation which enjoyed the explicit support of the Malayan and British governments. At the time, Brunei was a candidate for membership but was not included within the Cobbold Commission's remit.

### **Cobra Gold Military Exercises** (Indonesia/Malaysia/Philippines/ Singapore/Thailand)

Cobra Gold is the name given to combined exercises between Thai and US forces which have been held on an annual basis from 1982, with an interruption in 1991. After the end of the **Vietnam War** in April 1975, Thailand moved quickly to distance itself from a close military relationship with the United States. The civilian government brought about the withdrawal of all US military bases and troops by July 1976. However, a military coup in October restored an earlier strategic perspective in Bangkok, which was reinforced after Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia at the end of 1978 in the third phase of the **Indochina Wars**. The exercises, involving troops from both countries, were intended to signal the continued commitment of the United States to the territorial integrity of a Thailand seemingly under threat from an expansionist Vietnam. Following the end of the Cold War and Vietnam's withdrawal from Cambodia, the United States had no compunction in suspending the exercises after the military removed the elected government of **Chatichai Choonhavan** by a coup in February 1991. Political violence in May 1992 by the military in an attempt to hold on to power served to maintain that suspension.

The appointment of a civilian prime minister, **Chuan Leekpai**, after elections in September 1992 led to a decision to revive Cobra Gold, which resumed in northern Thailand in May 1993. Since 2000, the Cobra Gold military exercises have expanded to involve the militaries of Indonesia, Malaysia, Australia, Singapore, Philippines, Japan, and South Korea, and have had

up to 20 observer nations, including Myanmar which was invited in 2013. In response to the 2014 coup in Thailand that deposed the government of **Yingluck Shinawatra**, the United States chose not to suspend participation as they did in 1992, but the size of their contingent was scaled back to register disapproval. Relations soon improved, however, under President Donald Trump, and in 2018 the size of the US contingent doubled their 2017 number. China was invited to participate in Cobra Gold for the first time in 2015, although their participation was restricted to only certain aspects of the exercise. In addition to conventional military exercises, Cobra Gold activities have increasingly emphasized humanitarian and disaster relief operations, drug interdiction, and peace-keeping training.

see also: Chatichai Choonhavan, General; Chuan Leekpai; Indochina Wars; Vietnam War; Yingluck Shinawatra.

### **Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw** (Myanmar) see **National Unity Government**

### **Communism in Southeast Asia**

Communism in Southeast Asia has attained and maintained positions of power only in Vietnam and Laos.

The Communist Party of Vietnam, established originally as the Communist Party of Indochina in 1930, came to power in two stages. In July 1954, after a period of armed revolution from 1945 when it seized power briefly in Hanoi, it formed the government north of the 17th parallel of latitude in the name of the **Lao Dong** (Workers Party). It then inspired and supported the insurgency to the south of that latitude led nominally by the **National Liberation Front of South Vietnam**. In April 1975 its armed forces seized power in the southern part of Vietnam, which was formally reunified in July 1976 as the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. At its fourth National Congress in December 1976, the name Communist Party of Vietnam was adopted. The **Lao People's Revolutionary Party**, which was created from the Communist Party of Indochina, consolidated its power in the wake of the communist victory in Vietnam.

In December 1975 it established the Lao People's Democratic Republic, displacing the Kingdom of Laos.

A communist government came to power in Cambodia in April 1975 through the revolutionary success of the **Khmer Rouge**. In the name of the State of **Democratic Kampuchea**, it achieved notoriety through its brutal and bloodthirsty collectivism. It was overthrown by a Vietnamese invasion in December 1978, and in January 1979 an alternative Marxist regime was established under Vietnamese aegis in the name of the **People's Republic of Kampuchea**. That regime was superseded in September 1993 when a royalist constitution was reinstated in the wake of the political settlement of the Cambodian conflict concluded by an **International Conference on Cambodia** in Paris in October 1991. The former ruling **Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Party (KPRP)**, in the name of the **Cambodian People's Party (CPP)**, which had repudiated Marxist ideology, then shared power in a coalition government from October 1993.

After mounting a violent coup in July 1997, CPP consolidated its position, which was validated by elections a year later. The insurgent Khmer Rouge had begun to disintegrate as a fighting force from the establishment of the coalition government and also suffered political defections. With the death of its leader **Pol Pot** in April 1998, it ceased to exist as a viable organization and to inspire the awesome fear that had been generated during its murderous rule between 1975 and 1978.

Elsewhere in Southeast Asia, communism has come close to seizing power but has experienced declining fortunes from the mid-1960s. Communism in the region has its origins in the colonial connection and through links with overseas Chinese (see **Chinese Communities in Southeast Asia**).

The first party to be established was in the Netherlands East Indies, where a Dutch Marxist, Franciscus Marie Sneevliet, set up the Indies Social Democratic Association on 9 May 1914. It was transformed into the Communist Party of Indonesia (*Partai Komunis Indonesia*: PKI) on 23 May 1920, the first such organization to be set up in Asia outside of the former

Russian empire. Under an indigenous leadership in the mid-1920s, the party launched an uprising, which was crushed. It also failed to put its political stamp on the nascent republic through involvement in an abortive uprising, the **Madiun Revolt**, in East Java in 1948. After international recognition of independence in December 1949, a younger generation of cadres led by D. N. Aidit secured a legitimate place for communism within the parliamentary system by stressing its nationalist credentials. During the period of **Guided Democracy**, the PKI established a close relationship with President **Sukarno** and raised its membership to three million, which made it the largest party outside of China and the Soviet Union. By the mid-1960s, the PKI seemed to be on the threshold of power, but an abortive coup (see **Gestapu**) in October 1965, in which it was implicated, provided an opportunity for the armed forces to destroy and outlaw it. The Communist Party of Indonesia has never recovered from that act of repression in which its leadership was liquidated and its membership decimated.

Communism in the Philippines has also had a colonial connection in its provenance. Harrison George, a leader of the Communist Party of the United States, took the initiative to induct Filipinos into the international movement. The Communist Party of the Philippines was founded on 26 August 1930 by Crisanto Evangelista, who was a trade union leader. It began to make an impact during the Japanese occupation when it organized the insurgent *Hukbo ng Bayan Laban sa Hapon*, in abbreviation **Hukbalahap**, which translates as People's Anti-Japanese Army. Mixed success in harassing the Japanese led to the establishment of local territorial positions of power prior to liberation which were not recognized by the United States. A period of legal struggle followed, with the Democratic Alliance Party serving as an electoral vehicle in April 1946 just before independence. Its six successful candidates were then denied seats in the Congress and its demands for land reform were rejected. The *Hukbalahap* took up armed struggle in January 1950 under the banner of the *Hukbong Mapagpalaya ng Bayan* (People's Liberation Army). During the course of the year a series of military challenges were posed to the

government in Manila; these were overcome in October only when virtually the entire party Politburo was arrested in Manila. From that juncture, and with the subsequent surrender of their military commander, Luis Taruc, they went into decline despite the failure of the government to address fundamental economic and social ills.

The Communist Party of the Philippines then degenerated into an armed banditry, although a fraternal affiliation of a kind was maintained with the Soviet Union. Under the intellectual guidance of **José María Sison**, the party was reconstituted at the end of 1968, inspired by Chinese revolutionary experience, when a **New People's Army** was established in March 1969 as its military wing. Adopting a strategic doctrine which exploited the archipelagic condition of the Philippines as well as economic distress in the rural areas, the Communist Party was able to make dramatic gains from the mid-1970s as the rule of President **Ferdinand Marcos** began to decay. The prospect of political victory slipped away after the downfall of President Marcos and his succession by **Corazón Aquino**. A miscalculation of the popular mood followed, and unrealistic demands of the government in Manila were met with military repression, which took its toll of insurgent strength. By 1992 President **Fidel Ramos**, who had succeeded Aquino, felt sufficiently confident to persuade the Congress to make the Communist Party a legal organization. Subject to internal cleavage and a loss of morale from the failure of communism as a practical ideology, the party enjoys only a vestigial existence despite continuing gross inequalities within Philippine society. It continues to be represented by the **National Democratic Front**, whose leadership has been bitterly divided. The movement was dealt a significant blow in March 2014 when its top leaders, Benito Tiamzon and Wilma Austria, were captured.

Chinese influence was more direct and continuous in the case of communist parties in Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand, although their achievement has been even less than that of comrades in the Philippines. The Chinese Communist Party was instrumental in organizing in Singapore in January 1928 the Nanyang

or South Seas Communist Party, which was succeeded in April 1930 by the Communist Party of Malaya, which incorporated Singapore within its revolutionary jurisdiction. The party engaged in trade union agitation but built up its following through anti-Japanese activity in the late 1930s. With the outbreak of the Pacific War, British assistance was provided for military training for the insurgent Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army, which engaged in jungle warfare after the surrender of Singapore. Only limited demobilization took place after the defeat of the Japanese and peaceful struggle was replaced by armed struggle against the colonial government in June 1948.

During the **Emergency** declared by the colonial administration, the Communist Party drew on support almost exclusively from the Chinese community and appeared to have seized the military initiative by 1951, when they assassinated the British High Commissioner, Sir Henry Gurney. However, by that juncture, the balance of military advantage had already begun to turn against the party, which had sought to revise its militant strategy in order to widen its political appeal. The **Baling Talks** between its leader, **Chin Peng**, and the chief ministers of Malaya and Singapore in December 1955 were inconclusive, because the latter refused to countenance the legality of the party. Chin Peng refused to give up armed struggle, which continued in a sporadic manner from redoubts established along the border with Thailand. The reduction in military activity enabled the independent government of Malaya to announce an end to the Emergency in 1960. The Communist Party was afflicted by splits within its ranks during the late 1960s but revived its military activities at the end of the **Vietnam War** without any political advantage. In Singapore, the communist movement had been effectively crushed by the time the island became independent in 1965. In December 1989 Chin Peng appeared along the border with Thailand to sign two ceasefire agreements with the Malaysian and Thai authorities, which amounted to a virtual surrender after 40 years of fruitless struggle. A communist movement developed in Sarawak in northern Borneo during the wartime Japanese occupation with a

constituency among the Chinese community. It enjoyed a measure of success during Indonesia's **Confrontation** of Malaysia but was crushed after their reconciliation.

The Communist Party of Thailand originated from the same source as the Communist Party of Malaya in the form of a Siam Special Committee, which was set up by the South Seas Communist Party in the late 1920s. Although a full-fledged Thai party was established in July 1929, its first congress is believed to have convened only in 1942 with a predominantly Chinese membership. Significant activity by the party dates only to the 1960s, concurrent with the United States' growing military involvement in Vietnam, with a clandestine radio station, the Voice of the People of Thailand, operating from March 1962. Armed struggle, which began only in August 1965 in the economically deprived northeastern province of Nakhon Phanom, spread during the decade to the north and south of the country. The overthrow of the military regime in October 1973 provided an opportunity for the party to extend its support to a student constituency which was strengthened with the **Thammasat University Massacre** in October 1976 and the return to power of the armed forces. The ranks of the party were augmented by students seeking refuge in the jungles, but tension developed between an ethnic Chinese leadership and the younger generation of Thai members. The opportunity to pose a challenge of substance to the government in Bangkok was frustrated by the development of civic action programmes by the armed forces as well as by the alienation that developed between the Vietnamese and Chinese communists. With the onset of the Cambodian conflict, the Thai communists were driven out of sanctuaries in Laos, and their cause was sacrificed by China to the need to align with Thailand to challenge Vietnam's occupation of Cambodia. From that juncture, the Thai communist movement began to collapse until it had ceased to exist as a viable entity by the end of the Cold War.

Communism in Burma/Myanmar has had a more indigenous source arising from the Marxist stream of the nationalist movement against the colonial administration. At the end of the Pacific War, communist rebellion challenged

the government in Rangoon together with ethnic-minority uprisings. The party then split into two factions which aligned in time with Moscow and Beijing. The White Flag faction, which looked to China, was provided with a measure of material support and served as a point of leverage for Beijing, but without ever enabling the party to pose an effective military threat. The Burmese army was successful in driving the communists from the Pegu Yoma heartland in the 1970s, and the party continued its insurgency with support from Wa tribesmen in the north adjacent to the border with China. A revolt by these tribesmen in 1989 removed an ethnic Chinese leadership, which had the effect of emasculating the party as a viable political entity.

Communism has enjoyed its greatest success in Indochina. Under the original inspiration and leadership of **Ho Chi Minh** acting for the Comintern, rival revolutionary groupings were amalgamated into the Communist Party of Indochina at a unity conference in Hong Kong in 1930. The Communist Party of Indochina provided the core of the **Viet Minh**, a national front which challenged French rule at the end of the Pacific War in the **August Revolution** of 1945. The party divided formally into three national components in 1951, with the *Lao Dong* assuming responsibility for revolution in Vietnam. Corresponding parties were set up for Laos and Cambodia under Vietnamese patronage, but in the case of Cambodia, an alternative leadership emerged in the 1960s, which rejected lineal descent from the Communist Party of Indochina and became known as the Khmer Rouge. The ruling parties in Hanoi and Vientiane have maintained their monopoly of power but have been obliged to compromise their socialist doctrine in order to practise market economics. The lead was taken by Vietnam's communist party at its sixth national congress when it adopted a policy of **Doi Moi** (economic renovation) followed by its Laotian counterpart. Both parties have resisted demands for liberalization and have maintained a tight control over their respective political systems.

see also: Aquino, Corazón; August Revolution 1945; Baling Talks 1955; Cambodian People's Party (CPP); Chin Peng; Chinese

Communities in Southeast Asia; Confrontation; Democratic Kampuchea; *Doi Moi*; Emergency 1948–60; *Gestapu*; Guided Democracy; Ho Chi Minh; *Hukbalahap* Movement; International Conference on Cambodia, Paris 1991; Kampuchea, People's Republic of (PRK); Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Party (KPRP); Khmer Rouge; *Lao Dong*; Lao People's Revolutionary Party; Madiun Revolt 1948; Marcos, Ferdinand; National Democratic Front; National Liberation Front of South Vietnam; New People's Army; Pol Pot; Ramos, Fidel; Sisón, José María; Sukarno; Thammasat University Massacre 1976; Viet Minh; Vietnam War.

### **Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB) 2014** (Philippines)

Signed between the Government of the Republic of Philippines and the **Moro Islamic Liberation Front** (MILF) on 27 March 2014, the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB) brought together 17 years of documents agreed between the two parties, starting from the Agreement for General Cessation of Hostilities, signed in July 1997, and ending with the Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro signed on 15 October 2012. It also includes the critical four annexes that followed on from the Framework Agreement, namely:

- 1 Annex on Transitional Arrangements and Modalities, signed on 27 February 2013.
- 2 Annex on Revenue Generation and Wealth Sharing, signed on 13 July 2013.
- 3 Annex on Power Sharing, signed on 8 December 2013.
- 4 Annex on Normalization, signed on 25 January 2014.

Together, these documents form the basis of a complete agreement under which a Bangsamoro entity will be created to replace the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao that was formed under the auspices of agreements with the **Moro National Liberation Front** (MNLF). This Bangsamoro entity would be formed under a transitional authority until elections are held in 2016. The Comprehensive Agreement

brings to an end almost three decades of insurgency led by the MILF. In reality it still remains to be seen if implementation will be a success. Moreover, in response to CAB elements from the MNLF as well as breakaway factions of the MILF voiced their rejection of the agreement and have continued their own armed struggles. Since the outbreak of armed insurgency in the southern Philippine islands of Mindanao and Sulu in the early 1970s, there have been a string of failed agreements between the Philippines government and various Mindanao-based rebel movements, including the **Tripoli Agreement** of 1976, the Final Peace Agreement of 1996, the Agreement on the General Cessation of Hostilities in 1997, the Tripoli Agreement of 2001, and the Memorandum of Agreement on Ancestral Lands of 2008.

In the main, the signing of the CAB was made possible by a two-hour secret meeting between **Benigno Aquino III** and the leader of the MILF, Murad Ebrahim, which took place in Narita, Japan on 4 August 2011 which paved the way for their respective panel representatives to push through the peace effort.

*see also:* Aquino, Benigno Simeon Cojuangco, III; Moro Islamic Liberation Front; Moro National Liberation Front; Tripoli Agreement.

### **Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership** (Brunei/Malaysia/Singapore/Vietnam)

Soon after his inauguration as the 45th President of the United States, Donald J. Trump made good on his campaign promise and promptly withdrew the United States from the **Trans-Pacific Partnership**. Threatened with premature collapse because of the departure of the largest economy in its stable, TPP was eventually reshaped and rescued by the remaining 11 members. In the event, the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership or CPTPP was signed on 8 March 2018 as a free trade agreement FTA between Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, New Zealand, Singapore, and Vietnam. Unlike TPP, which

was designed such that it could take effect only if 6 of the 12 signatories ratify it and their collective GDP accounted for 85 per cent of the total GDP of the 12 signatories (which effectively meant that the United States had to be one of the six and thereby, also explained its collapse with the US withdrawal), CPTPP required ratification by only six signatories before it takes effect 60 days after signing. Accordingly, CPTPP took effect on 30 December 2018 for Australia, Canada, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, and Singapore. Vietnam, Malaysia, Peru, Chile, and Brunei joined over the ensuing few months, after ratification by their respective Parliaments.

For the most part, CPTPP retained the core content of TPP, a deliberate move with intent to leave the door open for the United States to rejoin at a future date. Nonetheless, 20 articles still were postponed or revised. Eleven of the 20 involved matters pertaining to intellectual property which were introduced at the insistence of the United States. Their revision or removal lifted the burden on some signatories such as Vietnam, for whom TPP was a matter of considerable domestic debate because of those articles. There were other differences between the two agreements pertaining to delays in licensing approval for copyright reasons and the operations of dispute resolution mechanisms in the event of investors seeking legal action against host states. Politically, the completion of CPTPP was significant in that it signalled the region was not prepared to allow progress in trade and economic development to be imperilled by American disengagement. Equally significant was the leadership role played by Japan in salvaging and transforming TPP into CPTPP.

*see also:* Trans-Pacific Partnership.

### **Conference of Rulers** (Malaysia)

The Conference of Rulers (*Majlis Raja-Raja*) is a gathering of Malaysia's nine hereditary rulers and four governors who represent states that did not have a hereditary Malay ruler. The Conference evolved from its earlier incarnation as the Council of Rulers or Durbar, established in 1897 for the Federated Malay States in British Malaya.

While largely a ceremonial institution, the Conference has as its main function the election of the **Yang di-Pertuan Agong**, the king of Malaysia, and his deputy every five years. Only the hereditary rulers are involved in this process. Although the *Yang di-Pertuan Agong* ascends the throne through the vehicle of election in the Conference of Rulers, the reality is that the position follows a fixed schedule that was based on seniority of the rulers at the point of Malayan independence in 1957. The Malaysian constitution further invests the Conference of Rulers with several other major functions. These include constitutional oversight of articles pertaining to the interests of the Malays and the **Bumiputera**, as well as over matters of language and religion, veto power over some constitutional amendments, and the right to be consulted on some key government appointments. The constitution also authorizes the Conference to deliberate matters of national policy, although they are not invested with the powers of actual policy making. Indeed, because of their constitutionally enshrined role as protectors of Malay culture and religion, they possess considerable power and influence in times of national crisis. To that end, it was significant that against the backdrop of the **Covid-19** pandemic and a brewing political crisis involving the **Perikatan Nasional** government led by the embattled **Muhyiddin Yassin**, the Conference of Rulers broke away from traditional norms in June 2021 by issuing a statement calling for Parliament to reconvene in order to debate the worsening public health and political crisis.

see also: *Bumiputera*; Covid-19; Muhyiddin Yassin, Tan Sri; *Perikatan Nasional*; *Yang di-Pertuan Agong*.

### **Confrontation** (Indonesia/Malaysia)

Confrontation (*Konfrontasi* in Indonesian) was a term first employed by President **Sukarno** in June 1960 to register his country's militant stance towards the Netherlands in pursuing its claim to the western half of the island of New Guinea, now **Irian Jaya**. The term was subsequently employed in January 1963 by Sukarno's foreign minister, **Subandrio**, to register a corresponding stance towards the advent of the Federation of Malaysia, whose legitimacy was

thereby challenged. Described by Sukarno as a contest of power in all fields, Confrontation amounted to a practice of coercive diplomacy, employing military measures stopping short of all-out war, which was designed to create a sense of international crisis in order to provoke diplomatic intervention in Indonesia's interest. The campaign of Confrontation to recover West New Guinea from the Dutch, who had retained the territory after according independence to the rest of the Netherlands East Indies, reached a successful conclusion in August 1962. US mediation, driven by fear of communist advantage, produced a negotiated settlement which provided for the transfer of the territory to Indonesia, via the United Nations' temporary administration in May 1963. In the case of Malaysia (a British-backed Malayan proposal to merge the Federation of Malaya, the self-governing island of Singapore, the British colonies of Sarawak and North Borneo and the British-protected sultanate of Brunei), Confrontation failed in its purpose (see **Anglo-Malayan/Malaysian Defence Agreement 1957–71**; **Brunei Revolt 1962**). Indonesia was not able to press its anti-colonial claim with the same legitimacy as in the case of Irian Jaya and proved unable to mobilize corresponding international support. President Lyndon Johnson did dispatch the US attorney general, Robert Kennedy, to engage in seeming mediation in January 1964 but was not disposed to bring pressure to bear on Malaysia in the way that the late President John F. Kennedy had coerced the Dutch. Britain honoured its treaty commitment and with Australian, New Zealand, and Malaysian military support, fended off armed incursions in northern Borneo and peninsular Malaysia and also deterred more substantial military intervention. After the political downfall of Sukarno in 1966, Indonesia became reconciled with Malaysia, with which it established diplomatic relations in August 1967. The term Confrontation disappeared from Indonesia's political lexicon with the consolidation of President **Suharto's** New Order.

see also: *Anglo-Malayan/Malaysian Defence Agreement 1957–71*; *Brunei Revolt 1962*; *Irian Jaya*; *New Order*; *Subandrio*; *Suharto*; *Sukarno*.

### Constitution 2008 (Myanmar)

Myanmar's 2008 Constitution is the current constitution of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, approved through a nationwide referendum in May 2008. It replaces the 1974 Constitution, which was suspended by the **State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC)** when it came to power in 1988. A constitutional convention was convened in 1993 as a prerequisite for a transition to a civilian government. Hampered by government manipulation and the **National League for Democracy's (NLD)** withdrawal, it moved at a glacial pace and was eventually suspended in 1996. The convention was reconvened in 2004 by the **State Peace and Development Council (SPDC)** with representatives chosen from the government, military, civil society, and ethnic minorities, but without the involvement of major opposition figures and parties. In September 2007, the government announced the conclusion of the convention and a set of fundamental principles and basic rules for a new constitution. A final draft of the new constitution was made available to the public on 9 April 2008, and a national referendum was held in May that approved the new constitution, albeit with complaints of government manipulation of the referendum process.

The new constitution came under heavy criticism by opposition parties, ethnic minority leaders, international organizations, and Western governments for its preservation of a paramount role for the military in decision-making. The document guarantees the military 25 per cent of seats in Parliament as well as a strong presence on the ill-defined National Defence and Security Council, an extra-legal group headed by the president and empowered to carry out executive functions without reference to Parliament and to assume power in a national emergency. Additional regulations make it difficult for former political prisoners to stand for office and prohibit opposition leader **Aung San Suu Kyi** from assuming high office. For all its controversial points, the constitution holds out the opportunity for collaboration with the opposition and tries to address a number of issues that have emerged since independence, including the complex issue of political autonomy for ethnic minorities, and

the distribution of power between the executive, judicial, and legislative branches. In 2014, a 109-member parliamentary committee assembled to look into constitutional reform, but the eventual amendments were mostly cosmetic. An effort to reduce the threshold for constitutional revision from 75 per cent to 70 per cent was voted down by the military in June 2015. Speaker of Parliament **Shwe Mann**, a former general who was chairman of **Union Solidarity and Development Party** at the time, was subsequently purged from the party for allowing parliamentary debate on the NLD proposal for constitutional amendment to take place. In 2019, the NLD government established a 45-member Joint Parliamentary Committee for Constitutional Amendment representing all parties in the Union Parliament and tasked with proposing amendments for consideration. This effort would eventually be overtaken by events. The military launched a coup in February 2021 which it claimed was in accordance with the constitution, which in any event has not been abrogated.

*see also:* Aung San Suu Kyi; National League for Democracy; Shwe Mann; State Law and Order Restoration Council; State Peace and Development Council; Union Solidarity and Development Party.

### Constitutional Crises (Malaysia)

In 1983 and in 1992, the popularly elected government of the Federation of Malaysia came into conflict with the country's constitutional monarchy comprising the king and the other hereditary sultans or rulers of the peninsular Malaysian states. The king, known in Malay as **Yang di-Pertuan Agong**, serves an elected five-year term of office which rotates among the nine rulers in an agreed order of seniority. The initial conflict was precipitated when a package of constitutional amendments was rushed through the federal Parliament in August 1983. The most significant measure provided for any bill to become law automatically 15 days after it had been presented to the king for his assent, with a corresponding application to states' legislatures and sultans. In addition, the formal right of the king to proclaim a state of emergency was transferred to the prime minister. The



particular motive for the legislation was concern on the part of the government at the likely interventionist political role of a future king. An underlying complementary factor was the attitude towards the rulers and the monarchy on the part of Prime Minister **Mahathir Mohamad**, whose social background disposed him against the idea of royal prerogative. The constitutional crisis arose when the king – then the sultan of Pahang – refused his assent to the package of amendments with unanimous support from all the other hereditary rulers. After a period of political tension, a basis for compromise was reached at the end of the year. In mid-December during the indisposition of the king, who had suffered a stroke, his deputy signed the Constitution (Amendment) Bill on the understanding that a special session of Parliament would be called to introduce new legislation restoring the monarch's right to proclaim a state of emergency on the advice of the prime minister. The right of the king to refuse his assent to any federal legislation was not restored, but his power of delay was extended to 30 days in the case of non-money bills; the states' rulers retained such a right in principle. The compromise package was approved by Parliament in January 1984, with the prime minister judged to have made important concessions.

A second constitutional crisis arose at the end of 1992 when Parliament, in a unanimous and unprecedented measure, approved a motion censuring the sultan of Johor, and former king, for having (allegedly) assaulted a college field-hockey coach. Parliament convened in a special session in January 1993 and proceeded to amend the constitution so as to remove the immunity from criminal prosecution enjoyed by the hereditary rulers. The rulers initially refused to grant their assent to the legislation as required under the constitution, which prompted a politically inspired press campaign against their self-indulgent lifestyles. Compromise was reached in March when a revised bill was passed which made provision for a special court to hear criminal cases which might be brought against any of their number. In May 1994 a further constitutional amendment was passed whereby all Acts of Parliament would be deemed to have been assented to by the

*Yang di-Pertuan Agong* after 30 days following approval by both houses, even if not formally granted.

see also: Mahathir Mohamad, Tun; *Yang di-Pertuan Agong*.

### **Constructive Engagement** (Myanmar/Thailand)

Constructive Engagement was a term coined to describe a dual-track policy embarked on by **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** towards Myanmar in the 1990s and 2000s. The policy was premised on the belief prevalent in ASEAN circles that the best way to change the behaviour of the Myanmar government towards its own people and the international community was through diplomatic engagement and economic inducements. Beyond this, ASEAN was conscious of the need to prevent Myanmar from gravitating strategically, politically, and economically towards China. The *modus operandi* of constructive engagement held closely to the ASEAN way, in which dialogue, consultation, consensus, and a strict adherence to non-interference in affairs of member states is critical. On the other hand, the policy came in for much criticism from Western governments and human rights activists that favoured the use of a sanctions regime, which ASEAN viewed as counterproductive, to change the behaviour of the military junta in Myanmar.

Introduced by Thailand in 1991, the policy marked a departure from the international condemnation aimed at Myanmar after the military junta there crushed the 1988 pro-democracy protests and invalidated the results of the 1990 national election. The policy was a part of Thai prime minister **Chatichai Choonhavan's** vision to establish Thailand as the economic hub of mainland Southeast Asia by strengthening economic relations with former adversaries Laos, Cambodia, and Myanmar. Chatichai's policy toward Myanmar was subsequently followed by the governments of **Anand Panyarachun** and **Chuan Leekpai**. Thailand's policy was later adopted by ASEAN as justification for bringing Myanmar into ASEAN in 1997. Over time, certain ASEAN member countries

deviated somewhat by openly criticizing the regime. Underlying these criticisms were concerns that the policy allowed Myanmar to shelter behind ASEAN's non-interference principle while it persisted with its hardline approach against its own population. At the same time, ASEAN countries, particularly Thailand and Singapore, continued to invest heavily in the country. While this benefited Myanmar's growing economy, ASEAN also came under criticism from Western governments and rights advocates who claimed that economic investments simply propped up the regime. To a certain degree, Myanmar was able to undertake gradual reforms because it was sheltered by the constructive engagement policy. However, ASEAN membership and, occasionally, grudging diplomatic protection could neither counterbalance growing Chinese influence in Myanmar nor completely shelter it from the effects of Western sanctions and diplomatic censure.

see also: Anand Panyarachun; ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Chatichai Choonhavan, General; Chuan Leekpai.

### Contemplacion, Flor: Hanging 1995 (Philippines/Singapore)

In March 1995, a diplomatic rift occurred between the governments of the Philippines and Singapore over the execution of Flor Contemplacion, a Filipino domestic helper working in the Republic who had been convicted of murder. Flor Contemplacion was hanged in Singapore on 17 March 1995. She had been sentenced to death by its High Court in January 1993 for the murder in May 1991 of another Filipino domestic helper, Della Marga, and a four-year-old Singaporean boy in the latter's charge. An appeal led to a further trial in April 1994 which upheld her death sentence, while a further appeal was dismissed in October 1994. In January 1995, President **Fidel Ramos** wrote to President **Ong Teng Cheong** requesting clemency on humanitarian grounds, which was refused in the absence of special circumstances. He wrote again in March, six days before the scheduled hanging, asking for a stay of execution in the light of alleged new evidence forthcoming from

another domestic helper. Once again his plea was refused, this time on the grounds that the so-called new evidence had no basis in fact. The execution of Flor Contemplacion went ahead as scheduled but aroused an immediate emotional outrage among Filipinos, which had an adverse effect on relations with Singapore. That popular outrage, which was fanned by the press and exploited by opponents of President Ramos in the run-up to mid-term congressional elections in May, caught his government by surprise. In addition to the element of political opportunism, the outrage expressed a strong sense of national guilt and anguish that it was necessary for so many Filipino women to work overseas in trying circumstances in order to support their impoverished families. The government in Manila was charged with not doing enough for such workers, who number around two million, while Flor Contemplacion was portrayed as a hero and martyr in their cause. Singapore was depicted as arrogant and insensitive in its handling of the case and as not acting as a friendly regional partner.

The Philippines government immediately postponed a visit to Manila by Singapore's prime minister, **Goh Chok Tong**, and also downgraded its representation in the island-state to that of chargé d'affaires, which was reciprocated. President Ramos then set up a special commission to investigate the case and threatened to break off diplomatic relations should it find that Flor Contemplacion had been the victim of injustice. By the end of March, however, President Ramos was making conciliatory noises out of concern at the damage that might be caused both to relations with Singapore and to **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)**. Singapore responded by indicating a willingness to accept his proposal for an independent autopsy, but in early April the Philippines commission found that Flor Contemplacion had been mistakenly blamed and hanged for the two murders, and that Della Marga had been severely beaten before she died and therefore could have been killed only by a man. President Ramos then acted to contain domestic anger by suspending nine diplomats and labour officials allegedly remiss in their duties in connection with Flor Contemplacion's hanging,

including the ambassador to Singapore. The two governments then agreed to a re-examination of Della Marga's remains by forensic experts of both countries, but President Ramos still found it necessary to force the sacrificial resignation of his foreign secretary, Roberto Rómulo, on 17 April, two days before an inconclusive joint autopsy attended by American forensic experts, who supported the initial Singaporean conclusion. Both parties then recognized the value of a cooling-off period before seeking a further, fully independent autopsy in a neutral location. That autopsy was not held until after the mid-term congressional elections in May, in which President Ramos's coalition overcame the burden of the Flor Contemplacion issue to secure command of the Senate. The diplomatic rift did not affect working relations between Singapore and the Philippines, with the former offering strong support for the latter in its dispute with China over its seizure of Mischief Reef in the **South China Sea**. Tourist traffic and much-needed Singaporean investment in the Philippines suffered, however. Moreover, within the Philippines, the making of a film about the life and death of Flor Contemplacion sustained popular interest in the alleged miscarriage of justice. In July 1995, an independent panel of American pathologists examined the remains of Della Marga in the presence of medical observers from the Philippines and Singapore and upheld the original findings of Singapore's pathologists that her death was due to strangulation. Those findings were accepted as final by the government of the Philippines. President Ramos then announced that he had taken steps to normalize ties with Singapore. Singapore's new ambassador to Manila presented his credentials in April 1996.

*see also:* ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Goh Chok Tong; Ong Teng Cheong; Ramos, Fidel; South China Sea.

### **Corregidor Affair 1968** (Philippines/Malaysia)

The Corregidor Affair is the term used to describe an alleged massacre of Filipino

Muslims on the island in Manila Bay which was the site of a memorable last stand by Filipino and US troops following Japan's invasion of the Philippines at the outset of the Pacific War. The episode was reported in the Philippine press from 21 March 1968 after a survivor of the alleged massacre presented himself at the residence of the governor of Cavite Province. He claimed to be one of more than 100 young Muslims recruited in the southern Sulu region in 1967 by an air force major who was head of the Civil Affairs Office of the Department of National Defence. Their role was to undergo special forces training in preparation for infiltration into Sabah, which had become part of Malaysia in September 1963 in the face of Philippine objections. It was claimed initially that 11 trainees had been killed by their officers when they mutinied over demands for back pay. The full facts of the episode have never been established but confirmation of the training programme was indicated when the Malaysian government announced that it had arrested 26 Filipinos in possession of small arms and explosives on an island belonging to the Federation some 30 miles to the north of Sabah's mainland early in March 1968. The revelations had the effect of reversing the signal improvement in Malaysia–Philippines relations indicated by the official visit to Kuala Lumpur in January 1968 by President **Ferdinand Marcos**. Malaysian demands that the government in Manila affirm its recognition of the Federation's sovereignty over the territory prompted a revival of the **Philippines' Claim to Sabah**, first enunciated in June 1962. The episode led to a suspension of diplomatic relations and imposed a strain on the workings of the recently established **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)**, of which Malaysia and the Philippines were founding members. It also served as a factor in aggravating Muslim alienation in the Philippines which erupted into revolt in 1972 (*see* **Moro National Liberation Front**).

*see also:* ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Marcos, Ferdinand; Moro National Liberation Front; Philippines' Claim to Sabah.

## Corruption Eradication Commission (Indonesia)

Empowered by Law No. 30/2002, the Indonesian Corruption Eradication Commission or *Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi*, better known by its Indonesian abbreviation, KPK, was created in 2003. The KPK was tasked with the mobilization and coordination of efforts to fight corruption and malfeasance through the investigation and prosecution of corruption cases, and also the monitoring of state governance, which has traditionally been given to practices of graft.

The KPK very quickly established a reputation for professionalism and effectiveness, winning accolades in its early years for its robust conduct of probes against graft as it achieved a perfect record of conviction rates. Its impressive record of prosecutions against more than 600 suspects included former ministers, a former chief of police, a former central bank governor, a former chief justice of the constitutional court, a former speaker of the **People's Representative Council** or DPR, members of Parliament, and governors. A less visible aspect of KPK's work is its slew of community outreach programmes, designed to educate the population on corruption, transparency, and proper implementation of public services. Despite enjoying strong public support, the work of KPK has not been without difficulties. Technically independent of the state, KPK is nevertheless funded by the government, and this had led to periodic run-ins with Parliament. KPK officers also operate at risk of physical harm. In April 2017, KPK investigator Novel Baswedan, a former policeman, was a victim of an acid attack. At the time, he was investigating a case that eventually led to the conviction of Setya Novanto, chairman of the DPR and of **Golkar**. On other occasions, KPK had come into direct conflict with the National Police which had threatened to arrest KPK commissioners and senior investigators in retaliation for investigations into corruption cases involving senior police officials.

The broad mandate and operational capacity of KPK was dealt something of a blow in September 2019, when, during its final sitting, DPR passed revisions to earlier legislation that brought KPK into being. Under the new

amendments, which entered into force as Law No. 19/2019, the anti-graft body, hitherto an independent entity, would now be considered an instrument of the state. Passed with uncharacteristic speed by the DPR, the implications of the revisions are that its 1,000-strong force are now civil servants, and the agency now reports to, and hence can be controlled by, the government. Its new status also means that KPK officers will require authorization and permits before conducting investigations, and prosecutions would have to be coordinated with the Attorney-General's Office, which has its own chequered history. Moreover, the amended law now requires KPK investigators to be chosen only from the ranks of the police, whereas previously, it could appoint its own investigators from other agencies based on a 2015 ruling of the constitutional court. A supervisory council, appointed by the president, was also created to oversee KPK and approve its investigations.

Aside from the swift enactment of the bill in a process that lasted a fortnight from the time President **Joko Widodo** initiated deliberation of a possible review and approval of the bill for the reforms by DPR, concerns were also expressed at the number of closed-door deliberations between lawmakers and government officials in the run-up to its passage. Also telling was the fact that President Widodo neither signed into law the amendments nor did he express any opposition to them. Notwithstanding the president's inaction, the amendments were passed in accordance to stipulations in the 1945 Constitution stating that amended laws proposed by DPR would automatically take effect after 30 days even if the president has not signed them. Advocates of the new law maintain that the revisions were to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of KPK after mounting allegations that the agency was plagued by infighting and had mismanaged budgets, whereas opponents have decried the revisions as an attempt to undermine the independence of the agency and compromise its ability to fight corruption.

*see also: Golkar; People's Representative Council; Widodo, Joko.*

### Covid-19 (Indonesia/Malaysia/ Myanmar/Philippines/Singapore/ Thailand/Vietnam)

While the Covid-19 novel coronavirus eventually became a global pandemic, Southeast Asian countries were among the first to report infections outside of China, due in no small part to the fact that the region is a popular destination for Chinese tourists during the Chinese New Year holiday season, which began in late January 2020. The first case outside of China was reported in Thailand on 13 January 2020. The first Vietnamese case was reported on 17 January, involving a Vietnamese woman who had returned from business travel to Wuhan, China, the early epicentre of the virus. Singapore reported its first Covid-19 case on 23 January, and Malaysia announced its first three cases two days later, on 25 January. The Philippines recorded its first infection on 30 January, just as it acquired the capability to conduct confirmatory tests. Amid testing accuracy controversies, Indonesia reported its first Covid-19 case only on 2 March, which it traced to a Japanese visitor, although most assessments were that the virus was already actively circulating among the population by then. In the event, triggered by massive movement of people during the Muslim fasting month of Ramadhan, the government of **Joko Widodo** was prompted to declare a national disaster on 13 April followed by a ban on all intercity travel a week later. The health minister was also removed from office in December 2020 for his lackadaisical approach to the national public health crisis. Malaysia's Covid-19 measures were distracted by political uncertainty triggered by the **Sheraton Move** which displaced the incumbent **Pakatan Harapan** government. It was not until 13 March that the new government formulated a comprehensive inter-agency approach to the pandemic. Even though the Philippines activated an inter-agency task force two days before registering its first infection on 30 January, President **Rodrigo Duterte** declared Covid-19 a national public health emergency only on 8 March.

Among Southeast Asian states, Singapore and Vietnam were comparatively quicker to react to the virus outbreak and as a result

managed to bring the pandemic under some degree of control through border checks and compulsory quarantine measures. On the other hand, national responses in Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines were delayed for a variety of reasons, and at considerable cost of human lives. Eventually, all Southeast Asian states would engage different degrees of 'lock-down' to effectively limit the spread of the virus. This, however, came at a hefty economic cost, as economies ground to a halt; all the major Southeast Asian economies with the exception of Vietnam recorded negative economic growth for 2020. Nevertheless, an aggressive mutation of the virus, known in the lexicon as the 'delta variant', originating from India, eventually surfaced across the region leading to a sharp increase in the number of infections. Indonesia, the Philippines, and Malaysia have struggled to contain numerous outbreaks as national medical facilities have been stretched to breaking point.

To head off growing infections, Malaysia imposed 'movement control orders' in several states after infections surged following political campaigning during the Sabah state elections. Concomitantly, on 12 January 2021 the **Yang di-Pertuan Agong** of Malaysia, al-Sultan Abdullah, declared a controversial state of emergency on the advice of the government of prime minister **Muhyiddin Yassin**. The emergency declaration was decried by the political opposition, however, as a veiled attempt by the **Perikatan Nasional** government to forestall a political crisis after a series of defections rendered it effectively a minority government. In Thailand, Prime Minister **Prayuth Chan-ocha** declared a state of emergency on 26 March and imposed a curfew on 3 April. However, Covid-19-related restrictions did little to curb political protests against the **Palang Pracharat Party**-led government, which were methodically timed to coincide with lifting of the restrictions. The situation in Myanmar has also grown dire in the aftermath of the February 2021 coup and an influx of the delta variant from neighbouring India. Restrictions imposed by the **State Administration Council** and the *Tatmadaw* have made it difficult for public health supplies to reach civilians, while civil disobedience on

the part of doctors and medical personnel has also cut their access to much-needed resources as they have taken their practice underground. The effect of this has been a sharp increase in infections and deaths approaching tragic proportions.

Beyond the public health crisis, the Covid-19 pandemic also created severe economic duress. Manufacturing, a mainstay industry in many economies across Southeast Asia, was particularly hard hit, as factory production rates slowed to a standstill and supply chains were disrupted. Slow vaccination rates in most Southeast Asian countries have also impeded efforts to catalyse a robust economic rebound as production was suspended in various sectors. In their attempt to contain the regional public health crisis, **ASEAN (Association of**

**Southeast Asian Nations)** leaders agreed at the **Hanoi Summit** in June 2020 to set up a Covid-19 response fund for medical supplies and financial aid. Member states also agreed to adopt the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework as an exit strategy from the Covid-19 crisis. Notwithstanding these efforts, the substance of the regional response remained confined to information sharing rather than meaningful regional cooperation.

*see also:* ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Duterte, Rodrigo; Hanoi (Virtual) Summit (ASEAN) June 2020; Muhyiddin Yassin, Tan Sri; *Pakatan Harapan*; *Palang Pracharat* Party; *Perikatan Nasional*; Prayuth Chan-ocha; Sheraton Move 2020; State Administration Council; Widodo, Joko; *Yang di-Pertuan Agong*.

## D

### **Daim Zainuddin, Tun** (Malaysia)

Daim Zainuddin was a senior cabinet minister in the first government of Prime Minister **Mahathir Mohamad**, a close and trusted advisor during Mahathir's second term in office, and a highly influential corporate figure. Daim was born on 29 April 1938 in the same village in Kedah as Mahathir. He qualified as a lawyer at Lincoln's Inn in London in 1959. He worked for a while in government legal service before entering private business in the late 1960s. He has enjoyed a longstanding close personal relationship with Mahathir, who was instrumental in appointing him to head of government enterprises, including Fleet Holdings, the investment arm of **UMNO (United Malays National Organization)**. Daim was elected to the federal Parliament in 1982 when Mahathir first led UMNO and the ruling **Barisan Nasional** (National Front) coalition at the polls. As finance minister, he managed the scandal which arose over bad loans that led to the Bank **Bumiputera** crisis and was also responsible for guiding Malaysia through a period of economic recession in the mid-1980s to a spectacular recovery by the early 1990s. He remained an economic advisor to the prime minister after giving up office in 1991.

Daim returned to the cabinet as finance minister of Malaysia for the second time in January 1999. His resumption of high office was precipitated by economic and political crisis. He had returned to the cabinet in June 1998 with the portfolio of minister for special functions in charge of economic development, which was interpreted as an attempt by Prime Minister Mahathir to reduce the influence of the deputy prime minister and finance minister, **Anwar Ibrahim**. After the imposition of exchange controls and the dismissal and arrest of Anwar Ibrahim, Mahathir assumed the finance portfolio but then transferred it to Daim after his ruling coalition was returned to government in elections in November 1999. Daim played a decisive role in the change of Malaysia's economic course in the face of unprecedented

adversity. After elections in November 1999, his relationship with Mahathir became temporarily strained over economic appointments and decisions. He retired from all government positions in 2001, at the same time relinquishing his post as UMNO's treasurer. He then moved back to the private sector and became active in consulting for African governments on economic planning. In late 2007, Daim accurately predicted the loss of the state governments in Kedah, Penang, and Selangor to the opposition at the March 2008 general election. He joined Mahathir in casting aspirations at Prime Minister **Najib Tun Razak** during the height of the **1MDB** scandal and the attendant crisis within UMNO, and was eventually sacked from the party in May 2018 for voicing support for Mahathir and **Pakatan Harapan**. He subsequently joined **Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia** but resigned in 2020 together with Mahathir.

Following the defeat of UMNO and **Barisan Nasional** which he predicted, Daim served as advisor to Mahathir and the *Pakatan Harapan* government by way of chairing the Council of Eminent People, which served as its advisory body for the first 100 days in power. While he did not occupy any formal position, he was actively involved in the renegotiation of Belt and Road contracts with China, and is believed to have been instrumental in obstructing Anwar Ibrahim's aspirations for high office.

*see also:* 1MDB; Anwar Ibrahim; *Barisan Nasional* (BN); Mahathir Mohamad, Tun; Najib Tun Razak, Datuk Seri Mohamad; *Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia*; UMNO (United Malays National Organization).

### **Dakwah** (Malaysia)

*Dakwah* is the generic name for an Islamic revivalist movement that arose among younger educated Malays in the wake of inter-communal violence in May 1969. *Dakwah*, which translates literally as to call or invite, is best understood as missionary activity among Muslims. It began in moderate form within Malaysia as

a dissenting search for identity and challenge to government spearheaded by **ABIM** (Islamic Youth Movement of Malaysia), which had its origins in the University of Malaya. It assumed a more radical expression through the role of students who, returning from higher education in Britain from the mid-1970s, had been subject to the influence of radical Islamic ideas from Egypt and Pakistan. *Dakwah* so dominated university campuses by the end of the 1970s that the government was obliged to launch its own countervailing programme of Islamization, but more in form than in substance. Islamic identity in Malaysia had become well entrenched by the 1990s and, in the wake of the economic crisis towards the end of the decade, served as a basis for political challenge to the ruling **Barisan Nasional** (National Front) coalition. That challenge was effectively mounted by **Parti Islam Se-Malaysia** as well as **Parti Keadilan Rakyat**. see also: **ABIM**; *Barisan Nasional* (BN); Islam; *Parti Islam Se-Malaysia*; *Parti Keadilan Rakyat*.

### **Darul Islam** (Indonesia)

*Darul Islam* (DI), which translates literally as House of Islam, is the name given to a rebellion launched against the embattled Republic of Indonesia in West Java in 1948 which petered out only in the early 1960s. In West Java, the Hizbullah (a Japanese-inspired Muslim militia) had operated independently of the aspirant republic whose forces had been withdrawn from early 1948 under the terms of the Renville Agreement with the Dutch. DI was set up in March 1948. In August its leader, S. M. Kartosuwirjo, proclaimed *Negara Islam Indonesia*, literally the Islamic State of Indonesia. Because the republic was subject to continuing military pressure from the Dutch, the theologically driven movement was able to extend its presence into Central Java. DI refused to acknowledge the authority of the Indonesian state after the transfer of sovereignty from the Dutch in December 1949. Attempts at negotiations were rebuffed and an insurgency was sustained, albeit with decreasing effect, on Java during the 1950s as the army began to bring its power to bear against the movement. Loose affiliates of DI in North Sumatra and South Sulawesi troubled the central government in

the context of widespread regional rebellions in the latter part of the decade. These rebellions were broken by the early 1960s with the capture of Kartosuwirjo, who then ordered his followers to lay down their arms. DI activism was revived, however, in the 1970s through the likes of Abdullah Sungkar and **Abu Bakar Ba'asyir**, who used the *Al-Mukmin* pesantren (Islamic boarding school) in Ngruki, Central Java, which they founded, to recruit a new generation of DI members. This elicited a crackdown by the government of President **Suharto**, and key leaders of DI were imprisoned from 1977 to 1982 on charges of anti-government activities. Sungkar and Ba'asyir fled to Malaysia in 1985 and began recruiting yet another generation of DI followers, which included the children of former DI members, who would later form its offshoot, **Jemaah Islamiyah**. Some from this generation of DI members, including **Hambali**, were dispatched to fight in Afghanistan during the Soviet invasion. After their return from Afghanistan, these elements thrived in the initial post-Suharto years. They first formed the backbone of *Jemaah Islamiyah*, and following splits and factionalism within the organization, they proceeded to splinter off into other groups, some of which, like the *Jemaat Anshorut Tauhid*, proved far more extreme than their spiritual forebears, the original DI.

see also: Ba'asyir, Abu Bakar; Hambali (Riduan Isamuddin); Islam; *Jemaah Islamiyah*; Suharto.

### **Declaration of ASEAN Concord 1976**

(Indonesia/Malaysia/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand)

The Declaration of ASEAN Concord was made on 24 February 1976 on the island of Bali at the first meeting of the heads of government of **ASEAN** (**Association of Southeast Asian Nations**). The **Bali Summit** declaration was significant for registering the political identity and goals of ASEAN nearly a decade after the **Bangkok Declaration 1967** claimed that its prime purposes were economic, social, and cultural cooperation. Cooperation in pursuit of political stability was identified as the preeminent priority, while common threat was defined



with reference to subversion. Security cooperation was excluded from the corporate structure of ASEAN but could be undertaken on 'a non-ASEAN basis'. The open commitment to political cooperation was a direct response to the success of revolutionary communism in Indochina in April 1975. The declaration brought the commitment in November 1971 to a **ZOPFAN**, a Zone of Peace, Freedom, and Neutrality, under the formal aegis of the Association as well as recording the agreement to establish an ASEAN Secretariat.

see also: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Bali Summit (ASEAN) 1976; Bangkok Declaration (ASEAN) 1967; ZOPFAN (Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality) 1971.

### **Declaration of ASEAN Concord II 2003** (Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/Malaysia/ Myanmar/Laos/Philippines/Singapore/ Thailand/Vietnam)

The Declaration of ASEAN Concord II was signed on the occasion of the **Bali Summit of ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** in October 2003. An aspirational document, ASEAN Concord II served to lay the foundations for a more institutionalized ASEAN. Foremost of its stated objectives was the formation of an **ASEAN Community** by 2020 which would be built on enhanced security and political cooperation, economic cooperation, and socio-cultural cooperation. At ASEAN's January 2007 Summit in Cebu, the organization signed an acceleration agreement to bring forward the goal of an ASEAN Community by five years, to 2015.

see also: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; ASEAN Community; Bali Summit (ASEAN) 2003.

### **Declaration of ASEAN Concord III 2011** (Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/ Malaysia/Myanmar/Laos/Philippines/ Singapore/Thailand/Vietnam)

In November 2011, leaders of **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** signed the Declaration of ASEAN Concord III on the

occasion of the ASEAN Summit (see **Bali Summit [ASEAN] 2011**), held in Bali. This third iteration of ASEAN's Bali ConCORDs outlined further measures to strengthen the three pillars of the **ASEAN Community**, as well as the establishment of a coordinating centre to manage humanitarian relief efforts in response to disasters. The main element to Concord III, however, was its articulation of ASEAN's outward focus on the premise of deepened integration and connectivity. This was reflected in the official title of the document: 'Bali Declaration on ASEAN Community in a Global Community of Nations'.

see also: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; ASEAN Community; Bali Summit (ASEAN) 2011.

### **Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (ASEAN) 2002** (Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/Malaysia/ Myanmar/Laos/Philippines/Singapore/ Thailand/Vietnam)

The Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea, known as the **DOC**, was signed on 4 November 2002 in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, by the foreign ministers of the ten **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** member countries and China. Signatories to the DOC pledged to find a peaceful and durable solution to differences and disputes among them in the **South China Sea**. Specifically, they committed to the resolution of their territorial and jurisdictional disputes by peaceful means without resorting to the threat or use of force, through friendly consultations and negotiations in accordance with universally recognized principles of international law. The signatories also pledged to exercise self-restraint in the conduct of activities that would complicate or escalate disputes before the peaceful settlement was reached. The DOC was agreed to be the initial step towards a more binding Code of Conduct.

The provisions laid out in the DOC were violated on several occasions, leading to criticisms that it was little more than a political statement. In May 2009, Malaysia and Vietnam made separate and joint submissions to the UN

Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf, which were later protested by China. China then reacted by tabling its 'nine-dotted line' map outlining its claims to almost the entire South China Sea. Since then, China has relentlessly increased its capacity to exercise control over the South China Sea by expanding the number of vessels active in the area. It has also constructed a naval base at Sanya on Hainan Island. In response to China's actions, Vietnam has modernized its navy and the Philippines announced plans to increase its maritime territorial defence capability with the help of the United States. China has insisted that territorial disputes should not be settled through multilateral discussions, rejecting any involvement of non-claimants. However, ASEAN has argued the legitimacy of outside powers as stakeholders, on grounds that the escalation of any dispute in the area will affect stability and security, not to mention freedom of navigation. Despite these differences, both parties initially set 2012 as the target for the adoption of a more legally binding Code of Conduct, on the occasion of Cambodia's chairmanship of ASEAN. Yet, just three months prior to the ASEAN ministerial meeting in Phnom Penh in July 2012, tensions came to a head with the military standoff between Chinese and Philippine gunboats at **Scarborough Shoal**. The crisis was triggered when the Philippine navy attempted to arrest and detain Chinese fishermen and their vessels for illegally obtaining endangered marine life.

While only four ASEAN members are involved in the South China Sea territorial and maritime boundary disputes with China, ASEAN has been keen to follow a common approach to peacefully resolve the disputes, in particular an approach that would be in accordance with international law and the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). Nevertheless, instead of a showcase of ASEAN solidarity, the Phnom Penh meeting amplified differences in approach within ASEAN over the South China Sea dispute, as the foreign ministers of ASEAN member states were not able to come to a consensus on a joint statement over the issue. On this occasion, the Cambodian chair of ASEAN, a beneficiary of extensive Chinese investments, had refused Vietnamese

and Philippine requests to include references to their individual disputes with China in the joint communiqué, or offers from other members to provide alternative drafts. Cambodia chose instead to echo to the Chinese position that bilateral disputes should not be discussed in a multilateral setting. Following the failure to achieve consensus, Indonesia's foreign minister, **Marty Natalegawa**, travelled around the capitals of Southeast Asia to smooth out differences and negotiate a common ASEAN position. His shuttle diplomacy resulted in the release of a statement on the 'Six-Point Principles on the South China Sea', which reaffirmed ASEAN's commitment to a peaceful resolution of the dispute. China, in turn, expressed willingness to continue working alongside ASEAN towards the eventual adoption of the Code of Conduct. *see also:* ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967-; Natalegawa, Raden Mohammad Marty Muliana (Marty); Phnom Penh Summit (ASEAN) April 2012; Scarborough Shoal Dispute; South China Sea.

**Declaration on the South China Sea (ASEAN) 1992** (Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/Laos/Malaysia/Myanmar/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand/Vietnam)

At a meeting of ASEAN's foreign ministers in Manila on 22 July 1992, a joint declaration was issued on the South China Sea. Among its members, Malaysia and the Philippines claimed jurisdiction over some of the Spratly Islands in that sea, while Brunei claimed jurisdiction over adjacent maritime space. China, including Taiwan, and Vietnam claimed the entire group. The declaration arose from a Philippine initiative, which was supported by Malaysia in return for Manila withdrawing its candidate for the office of secretary-general of ASEAN (**Association of Southeast Asian Nations**) in favour of that from Kuala Lumpur. ASEAN's interest and apprehension had arisen since 1988 when China had engaged in military action at Vietnam's expense in order to hold some of the Spratly Islands. China had also published a law on its territorial waters and their contiguous areas in February 1992 which proclaimed its

maritime rights in a way that suggested a policy of creeping assertiveness. The disturbing effect of the disintegration of the Soviet Union at the end of 1991 and the impending withdrawal of the US military presence from the Philippines later in 1992 on the regional balance of power served to encourage the diplomatic initiative. The declaration emphasized 'the necessity to resolve all sovereignty and jurisdictional issues pertaining to the **South China Sea** by peaceful means, without resort to force' and also urged 'all parties concerned to exercise restraint with the view to creating a positive climate for the eventual resolution of all disputes'. The declaration, which invited all parties concerned to subscribe to the declaration of principles, received a positive response from Vietnam, whose foreign minister attended the Manila meeting as an observer. China responded more equivocally and subsequently seized an additional reef in the Spratly Islands. The declaration had a moderating effect on the issue at the time but without inducing any ASEAN claimants to modify their own positions on sovereignty. The ASEAN governments invoked the declaration in March 1995 in response to China's maritime assertiveness but without any signal effect. The place of the Declaration as the blueprint governing behaviour in the South China Sea has since been superseded by the **Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea** signed in 2002.

see also: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (ASEAN) 2002; South China Sea.

### **Democracy Uprising 1988** (Myanmar)

The 1988 democracy protests were a series of demonstrations and riots against the government of the **Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP)**. The protests became known as the '8888 Uprising' after the general strike that began on 8 August 1988 and were supported by large segments of the civilian population throughout the country. The protests were a direct response to more than two decades of poor governance under BSPP led by General **Ne Win** since it was installed after the coup of 1962. Economic mismanagement under the guiding principle of the

Burmese Way to Socialism had impoverished the country, resulting in Myanmar's inclusion on the UN list of least-developed countries in December 1987. Anger at the situation was compounded by two unannounced reissues of banknotes in 1985 and 1987 that destroyed the savings of many citizens.

The initial protest occurred on 12 March 1988 in response to the release from police custody of the son of a BSPP official arrested for injuring a student in a scuffle at a teashop. During the ensuing clash with police, a student was shot and killed. Angered by the injustice, students rallied at several campuses across Yangon over the next few days. The protests quickly cascaded into calls for the end of one-party rule. Following the brutal killing of a number of students by security forces during a rally on 16 March, unrest intensified across a number of cities. The authorities closed the universities, but demonstrations continued with sympathizers from other walks of life now joining the students. Large-scale demonstrations continued until Ne Win's resignation on 23 July. Nevertheless, when it was announced that his replacement was to be the hugely unpopular Brigadier General Sein Lwin, also known as the 'Butcher of Rangoon' for his role in the shooting of student protestors in 1962, the protests continued. The date 8 August 1988 was chosen for a nationwide demonstration and general strike for its auspicious numerological significance. The scale of the protests surprised the government as the students were joined by people from all walks of life, including some government workers and members of the military. The military responded by bringing in more troops resulting in running fights in Yangon between protestors and soldiers. Soldiers fired into the crowds as they tried to put down the protests across the country, killing and wounding many. Estimates of casualties from the August demonstrations vary from hundreds to over 10,000 across Myanmar.

Sein Lwin resigned on 12 August and was succeeded by Maung Maung as president. Correspondingly, some concessions were made. **Aung San Suu Kyi** made her debut on the political scene at this point with a speech at Shwedagon Pagoda in Yangon on 26 August

urging non-violence. The Maung Maung government was given until 7 September to resign. The government responded with announcements that peace and security were breaking down, but continued to grant concessions to the protestors, including discussion of elections. The army, alarmed at the possibility of a complete breakdown in government authority, staged a coup on 18 September 1988, ousting Maung Maung and the BSPP government. It also repealed the 1975 Constitution and established the **State Law and Order Restoration Council** (SLORC) under General Saw Maung. Martial law was imposed and the protests violently suppressed with soldiers indiscriminately firing on demonstrators. By the time the army regained control at the end of the month, around 3,000 people had been killed. During the crackdown and the months that followed, around 10,000 people fled to insurgent areas along the country's borders and received military training, while others continued on to exile in other countries. Many of the student protest leaders were jailed and served lengthy prison terms. Some, after release from prison, would later join the 88 Generation student group, a major organizer of the 2007 anti-government protests.

see also: Aung San Suu Kyi; Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP); Ne Win, General; State Law and Order Restoration Council.

### Democrat Party (Thailand)

The Democrat (*Prachathipat*) Party has enjoyed the greatest continuity of any Thai civilian political organization. After holding office twice briefly after the Pacific War and then again briefly in the mid-1970s, it enjoyed more sustained fortunes during the 1990s and into the next century. In general elections in September 1992, it secured 79 seats, the largest number in Parliament. In consequence, its leader, **Chuan Leekpai**, became prime minister of a coalition government. The Democrat Party lost power in July 1995 after elections precipitated by the defection of a coalition partner. Its parliamentary numbers were reduced to 86, six fewer than its main rival the **Chart Thai Party**, which went on to form a new coalition. The Democrat Party returned to government with Chuan again as

prime minister in November 1997 after the ruling coalition collapsed because of its failure to cope with the **Asian Financial Crisis**.

The Democrat Party was established in 1946 as a conservative pro-monarchist parliamentary group in opposition to the government of **Pridi Phanomyong** which had replaced the military dictatorship of **Phibul Songkram**, both men having been party to removing the absolute monarchy in 1932. Democrat Party leader Khuang Aphaiwong became prime minister from November 1947 after a military coup and then again after elections in January 1948, but within two months was obliged to give up office by an assertive military. The Democrat Party drew its support in the main from Bangkok and southern Thailand and stood for liberal constitutionalism rather than for any coherent social programme.

During the course of Thailand's fluctuating political evolution, the Democrat Party has seized every opportunity for parliamentary representation. During the democratic interlude which followed the successful student-led challenge to military rule in October 1973, its political fortunes revived. Under the leadership of wartime resistance leader and co-founder **Seni Pramoj**, it initially failed to form a government. In April 1976, however, fresh elections brought them to office in a short-lived administration headed by Seni, which was then overthrown by a military coup in October. A poor performance in elections in 1979 was succeeded by a much better one in 1983, with continued minority participation in government during the decade until a military coup in February 1991 led to a further turning point in Thai politics, which after political turbulence in May 1992 saw its return to government in September. The Democrat Party attracted popular support because of its civilian credentials, but its parliamentary majority was eroded through stress within the ruling coalition over perquisites of office. It suffered also through the inability of Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai to command the political stage in the face of obstruction of democratic political reforms by the military establishment. On its return to office in 1997, the Democratic Party has commanded greater respect because of its degree of success

in economic management and also because of its relative freedom from the taint of corruption. However, it was vulnerable to revived charges of corruption, which damaged its electoral prospects. In March 2000, Sanan Kachornprasart, party secretary-general and minister of the interior as well as a deputy prime minister, was obliged to resign government offices after being charged by the National Counter Corruption Commission with concealing his assets by falsifying documents relating to a loan. He was found guilty by the Constitutional Court in August 2000, thus reducing his party's electoral prospects. The Democrat Party managed to win 128 seats at the 2001 elections, but this paled in comparison to the **Thai Rak Thai Party's** (TRT) 248 seats. Chuan stepped down from his position as party leader in 2003 and was succeeded by Banyat Bantadtan, a fellow southerner and close aide. The Democrat's Apirak Kosayothin won the Bangkok gubernatorial election in 2004, but the party lost further ground to the TRT in the 2005 general election. In an effort to launch a no-confidence vote against the **Thaksin Shinawatra**-led government, the Democrats hoped to secure at least 201 seats but managed only 96. In the wake of this defeat, Banyat resigned and was replaced by **Abhisit Vejjajiva** on 6 March 2005.

TRT's brand of populist politics posed a formidable challenge to the Democrat Party. During ensuing protests led by the **People's Alliance for Democracy** (PAD), several Democrat members of Parliament openly joined the movement. Thaksin dissolved Parliament on 24 February 2006 and called for elections. The Democrat Party, on the other hand, backed PAD in their call for a royally appointed government, which was rejected by King **Bhumibol Adulyadej**. The Democrat Party and their allies then opted to boycott the 2006 elections in April, claiming they were an attempt to divert public attention from the corruption charges against Thaksin. The boycott resulted in a constitutional crisis, and new elections were called for October 2006, only to be superseded by the seizure of power by the army on 19 September. After a period of uncertainty which included the risk of its dissolution, the Democrat Party went on to support the junta's 2007

Constitution and promoted populist policies to challenge TRT's successor, the **People's Power Party** (PPP), in the run-up to the December 2007 elections. The Democrats lost the election, failing to penetrate PPP's strongholds in central, north, and northeastern Thailand, and became the main opposition party.

After further agitation from PAD, again supported by several Democrat parliamentarians, the constitutional court dissolved PPP on 2 December 2008. A new coalition government was formed led by the Democrats, a situation many believed was engineered by army commander and coup co-leader, **Anupong Paochinda**. As part of the machinations, former PPP parliamentarians and their allies crossed over to join the Democrat Party, giving it enough representatives to form a government (*see* **Bhumjaithai Party**). Protests by the Thaksin-aligned **United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship** 'red shirt' movement aimed at destabilizing the Democrat-led coalition began to gather pace in early 2009 and turned violent in April, forcing Abhisit to declare a state of emergency for three days, during which he censored the media and used military force to disperse protestors. Abhisit dissolved Parliament in early 2011 and scheduled general elections for 3 July. The elections saw the Democrats soundly defeated by the **Pheu Thai Party**, successor to both TRT and PPP, which won an outright majority and appointed **Yingluck Shinawatra** as prime minister. Abhisit stepped down as party leader following the defeat, but was re-elected to the post on 6 August 2011, and again on 11 November 2018. The Democrat Party remained staunch opponents of the *Pheu Thai Party* right up to the May 2014 coup which removed the elected *Pheu Thai* government. At the 2019 election, the party once again flattered to deceive, securing only 53 seats, barely half of its target of 100. Despite protestations of Abhisit, the party entered into coalition with Prayuth Chan-ocha's **Palang Pracharat Party**, allowing the latter to form the government. The party's pivotal role in forming the coalition belied the declining popularity of the oldest political party in the country, to the extent that it was completely wiped out in Bangkok, its traditional stronghold, in 2019.

see also: Abhisit Vejjajiva; Anupong Paochinda, General; Asian Financial Crisis 1997–8; Bhummibol Adulyadej, King; *Bhumjaitai* Party; *Chart Thai* Party; Chuan Leekpai; *Palang Pracharat* Party; People's Power Party; *Pheu Thai* Party; Phibul Songkram, Field Marshal; Prayuth Chan-ocha; Pridi Phanomyong; Seni Pramoj; *Thai Rak Thai* Party; Thaksin Shinawatra; United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship; Yingluck Shinawatra.

## Democratic Action Party (DAP) (Malaysia)

The Democratic Action Party (DAP) is the most important non-Malay opposition party in Malaysia and currently the largest party in the Malaysian Parliament with 42 seats. DAP originated as the peninsular Malaysian branch of Singapore's ruling **People's Action Party** (PAP) while the island was a constituent part of Malaysia. As such, it participated in elections on the mainland in April but secured only one seat out of nine contested. After Singapore separated from Malaysia in August 1965, it became necessary for the PAP branch to assume a different name to avoid deregistration, which it did in March 1966. The name Democratic Action Party and a commitment to a socialist model of society corresponded closely to the declared political identity of its predecessor. The taint of its origins was often an obstacle, especially given the abiding structural tension between Malaysia and Singapore, but this effect has gradually diminished over time. The DAP's constituency is non-communal, in principle, and it puts up Malay electoral candidates. In practice, however, voting support has been drawn primarily from non-Malays and in particular urban Chinese frustrated by the denial of educational and career opportunities to their children because of the preference accorded to Malays under the **Bumiputera** policy. DAP has been outspoken on behalf of the rights of the non-Malays and also in support of civil liberties, so much so that Malay-Muslim political opponents have cast aspersions at it for allegedly manoeuvring to 'Christianize' Malaysia. During the decades when **Barisan Nasional** (National Front, BN) was in power, DAP was a constant thorn in the

side of government over constitutionalism, corrupt practices, and maladministration. Over the years, DAP has been subject to recurrent political constraints, with its leading members being detained under the Internal Security Act, as well as being disciplined by the speaker of the federal Parliament for alleged breaches of standing orders. In addition, restrictions have been placed on the circulation of the party's newspaper.

DAP has been involved in several opposition political coalitions. In 1990, it captured 20 parliamentary seats as part of the *Gagasan Rakyat* coalition together with **Semangat '46** and **Parti Bersatu Sabah**. In 1999, it was part of **Barisan Alternatif** (Alternative Front) but managed to secure only ten seats as Chinese voters were unconvinced of the prudence of political cooperation with **Parti Islam Se-Malaysia** (PAS), with which DAP has a running debate over the matter of the Islamic state, the declared objective of PAS, which was incompatible with DAP's idea of a pluralistic, democratic, and secular society. The 1999 elections also proved very disappointing as several party stalwarts, particularly the secretary-general, **Lim Kit Siang**, and chairman, Karpal Singh, lost their seats. DAP's fortunes took a turn for the better at the 2004 elections when it won 12 parliamentary seats and regained its position as opposition leader from PAS.

The party capitalized on widespread non-Malay frustration and put in strong performances in elections held both in 2008 and 2013 as part of the **Pakatan Rakyat** (People's Alliance) opposition alliance, which formalized the opposition coalition cobbled together for the 2008 election. In 2008, DAP won 28 parliamentary seats and together with **Parti Keadilan Rakyat** (PKR) and PAS managed to deny BN a two-thirds majority in Parliament. DAP was able to secure a majority of the state seats in Penang and formed the state government along with its alliance partners – PAS and PKR. DAP secretary-general, **Lim Guan Eng**, son of Lim Kit Siang, became chief minister. At the May 2013 elections, DAP improved its parliamentary representation to 38 seats. However, less than a month prior to the election, the party almost had to contest under the banner of

its coalition allies as the Registrar of Societies sought to de-register the party after a technical glitch at party elections led to a miscount. A crisis was averted when the Registrar of Societies permitted DAP to use its own symbol a few days later. *Pakatan Rakyat* would collapse two years later when PAS voted in their 2015 party congress to sever ties with DAP, a result of longstanding differences over ideology that remained unresolved. In the event, the political opposition reconstituted itself, *sans* PAS, as **Pakatan Harapan**, and ultimately unseated BN at the 2018 election. In the process, DAP secured 42 parliamentary seats, its best-ever election result. It also secured the third most important cabinet portfolio after prime minister and deputy prime minister when Lim Guan Eng was appointed finance minister, the first time a non-Malay held that post since former president of the **Malaysian Chinese Association** Tan Siew Sin relinquished the post in 1974. DAP's tryst with power was short-lived, however, as the acrimonious relationship it endured with right-wing segments of Malay political parties returned to haunt it. In the event, DAP came under attacks from UMNO and PAS that ultimately led to the unravelling of the *Pakatan Harapan* government when erstwhile ally **Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia** withdrew from the coalition to form the **Perikatan Nasional** government with the support of UMNO and PAS in March 2020, returning DAP to its familiar position as political opposition. The party closed a chapter in its history at its 17th party congress in March 2022 when Lim Kit Siang announced his retirement from politics and his son and party secretary-general, Lim Guan Eng, vacated the leadership post.

see also: *Barisan Alternatif* (BA); *Barisan Nasional* (BN); *Bumiputera*; Lim Guan Eng; Lim Kit Siang; Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA); *Pakatan Harapan*; *Pakatan Rakyat*; *Parti Bersatu Sabah*; *Parti Islam Se-Malaysia*; *Parti Keadilan Rakyat*; *Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia*; People's Action Party; *Perikatan Nasional*; *Semangat '46*.

### **Democratic Kampuchea** (Cambodia)

The **Khmer Rouge** seized power in Cambodia on 17 April 1975 in the name of the Royal

Government of National Unification, which had been proclaimed in the People's Republic of China on 5 May 1970, with Prince **Norodom Sihanouk** as head of state. On 5 January 1976 a new constitution was promulgated in Phnom Penh establishing the State of Democratic Kampuchea, initially with Prince Sihanouk as its head. He resigned on 4 April, to be succeeded by **Khieu Samphan**. On 14 April **Pol Pot** was appointed prime minister but gave up the post between 27 September and 15 October. On 25 December 1978 Vietnamese forces, acting ostensibly as volunteers in support of a Kampuchean National United Front for National Salvation, invaded Cambodia. They ousted the government of Democratic Kampuchea and replaced it on 8 January 1979 with the **People's Republic of Kampuchea**. Representatives of Democratic Kampuchea continued to occupy the Cambodian seat in the United Nations, albeit from 1982 until 1990 as part of a coalition delegation with two non-communist Khmer factions. From the General Assembly session beginning in 1991, the Cambodian seat was held, in principle, by the **Supreme National Council** comprising representatives of all four Khmer groupings until a coalition government of the restored Kingdom of Cambodia, without Khmer Rouge participation, was established in October 1993. The term Democratic Kampuchea is replete with tragic irony because of the bloody tyranny which marked its tenure.

see also: Democratic Kampuchea, Coalition Government of (CGDK) 1982–90; Kampuchea, People's Republic of (PRK); Khieu Samphan; Khmer Rouge; Pol Pot; Sihanouk, King Norodom; Supreme National Council.

### **Democratic Kampuchea, Coalition Government of (CGDK) 1982–90** (Cambodia)

At a meeting in Kuala Lumpur in June 1982, sponsored by **ASEAN (Association of South-east Asian Nations)**, representatives of three insurgent Cambodian (Kampuchean) factions challenging Vietnam's occupation agreed to form a coalition government. They comprised the **Khmer Rouge**, led nominally by **Khieu Samphan**, which had retained Cambodia's seat in the United Nations in the name of the ousted

government of Democratic Kampuchea, the republican-oriented non-communist **Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF)** led by a former prime minister, **Son Sann**, and the royalist **FUNCINPEC** (National United Front for an Independent, Neutral, Peaceful and Cooperative Cambodia) led by the former head of state, Prince **Norodom Sihanouk**. Prince Sihanouk became president, Son Sann became prime minister, and Khieu Samphan became vice-president responsible for foreign affairs.

The coalition government did not establish an identifiable territorial seat, while the agreement did not provide for merging the resistance factions. On the contrary, it was stipulated that the coalition partners would retain separate organizational and political identities as well as freedom of operational action. Moreover, the Khmer Rouge insisted on having written into the agreement their proprietary right to the political trademark 'Democratic Kampuchea' and to the seat in the United Nations should the coalition break up. The accord was an expression of tactical political convenience intended to dilute the bestial identity of Democratic Kampuchea and to refute charges that ASEAN was engaged in an immoral relationship in its diplomatic challenge to Vietnam. The coalition device made it easier to solicit voting support in the United Nations and to justify ASEAN's charge that Vietnam had implanted an illegitimate government in Cambodia. The coalition partners maintained a common diplomatic front over the terms for a political settlement, but the relationship among the disparate factions along the Thai border during the 1980s, where they drew on support from concentrations of refugees, was tense, in the main because of unprovoked armed attacks by Khmer Rouge units. Acts of resignation by Prince Sihanouk were justified on that ground, although he insisted on Khmer Rouge participation in a political settlement because of the danger of violent disruption should they be excluded. The coalition changed in nomenclature to the National Government of Cambodia in 1990 as negotiations proceeded between Cambodian factions over the terms of a UN peace plan which was approved by an **International Conference on Cambodia** in Paris in October 1991. The so-called coalition lapsed when its members

participated in the **Supreme National Council**, which was accorded a symbolic sovereignty so that authority could be delegated to the United Nations to implement the 1991 Paris Peace Agreement. The coalition broke up in discord when the Khmer Rouge refused to participate in elections in May 1993 to elect a Constituent Assembly. It was superseded when the incumbent **Cambodian People's Party (CPP)** joined with FUNCINPEC and the political successor of KPNLF to form a coalition government in Phnom Penh in October 1993.

see also: Cambodian People's Party (CPP); Democratic Kampuchea; FUNCINPEC; International Conference on Cambodia, Paris 1991; Khieu Samphan; Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF); Khmer Rouge; Sihanouk, King Norodom; Son Sann; Supreme National Council; United Nations: Cambodia 1991-3; UNTAC (United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia).

### **Democratic Soldiers (Thailand)**

Democratic Soldiers is the term applied to a group of middle-ranking Thai officers who were influential from the late 1970s in providing a conceptual social basis for the military's claim to political entitlement. More intellectual than the **Young Turks** faction which changed prime ministers in 1980 by switching support from General **Kriangsak Chomanan** to General **Prem Tinsulanonda**, its members were driven by their experience of countering communist rural insurgency by civic action. Tutored by defectors from the Communist Party of Thailand, they espoused a simplistic state socialism as a way of overcoming rural poverty and a condition of alleged international economic dependence brought about by feckless civilian politicians and Sino-Thai businesspeople. Former Democratic Soldiers sought political expression through the Thai People's Party (*Puang Chon Chao Thai*), which enjoyed a brief period of coalition government from October 1990 until February 1991. In the next elections in March 1992, it secured only one seat and had lost its political identity by the subsequent elections in September that year. Its leader, General Arthit Kamlang-ek, resigned from the party in January 1992 to join another military-based grouping, *Sammakhi*



*Tham.* By the time of the disintegration of the Thai People's Party, the ideas of the Democratic Soldiers had lost their earlier political immediacy as communist insurgency had effectively ceased.

see also: Kriangsak Chomanan, General; Prem Tinsulanonda, General; Young Turks.

***Demokrasi Terpimpin*** (Indonesia) see **Guided Democracy**

***Dewan Perwakilan Daerah*** (Indonesia) see **Regional Representative Council**

***Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat*** (Indonesia) see **People's Representative Council**

**Diem, Ngo Dinh** (Vietnam) see **Ngo Dinh Diem**

**Dien Bien Phu, Battle of, 1954** (Vietnam)

Dien Bien Phu (literally seat of the Border County Prefecture) is the name of a valley in northwestern Vietnam close to the border with Laos and the site of the most decisive battle of the First Indochina War between the communist-led **Viet Minh** and the French colonial army. The battle took the form of a siege of French military positions established in November 1953. It began on 13 March 1954 and culminated 56 days later with a Viet Minh victory which sapped the political will of the French government. The site of the battle was fixed by a French determination to force a major test of military strength on the elusive Viet Minh and because the valley was a practical blocking point against incursions into Laos. The military deployment to the valley floor proved to be a fatal blunder. Against expectations and all odds, the Viet Minh had transported heavy artillery to impregnable dominating positions in the surrounding mountains. Superiority in firepower determined the outcome of the battle, which was virtually decided in the first week, presaged by the suicide of the French artillery commander, Colonel Charles Piroth. The final

French position surrendered on 7 May 1954 with impeccable timing just one day before an international conference convened in Geneva to address the political future of Indochina.

see also: Geneva Agreements on Indochina 1954; Indochina Wars; Viet Minh.

**Do Muoi (Vietnam)**

Do Muoi served as general secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam from June 1991 until December 1997. He was elected to that office at the seventh Party Congress and was re-elected at the eighth Party Congress in June 1996. At the age of 80, he was replaced as general secretary by the party's Central Committee at its meeting in December 1997 in favour of General **Le Kha Phieu**. Do Muoi remained as an advisor to the Central Committee from 1997 to 2001, when the institution of Advisory Council of the Central Committee was abolished.

Do Muoi was born on 2 February 1917 in an outer district of Hanoi. He worked as a house painter and became involved in nationalist politics in his late teens. Do Muoi joined the original Communist Party of Indochina in 1939. He was arrested by the French authorities and sentenced to ten years' imprisonment in 1941, but he escaped in 1945 and was active as a party official and political commissar during the First Indochina War. He then rose steadily within the party hierarchy. In March 1955 he became an alternate member of the Central Committee and a full member in December 1960. Over the next 20 years, he combined governmental office with party position, rising to vice-premier. Do Muoi was elected an alternate member of the Politburo of the Communist Party at its fourth National Congress in December 1976 and became a full member at its fifth National Congress in December 1986. Over the years, Do Muoi acquired a reputation as a conservative ideologue who only reluctantly agreed to the policy of **Doi Moi** (economic renovation) which had been introduced as a matter of political necessity. In June 1988, when he was elected to the office of chairman of the Council of Ministers (the equivalent of prime minister), it was assumed that he had been chosen to balance the reformist zeal of the new general secretary of the party, **Nguyen**

**Van Linh.** In the event, he showed himself to be a pragmatist willing to encourage Vietnam's economic adaptation in order to overcome adverse circumstances. At the same time, he represented ideological continuity and reaffirmed a commitment to socialism. As general secretary for over six years, Do Muoi stood fast against any concessions to political pluralism and any diminution of the monopoly role of the ruling Communist Party. He was a vocal opponent of General Secretary Le Kha Phieu's leadership, and used his considerable influence as convener of the ninth National Congress in 2001 to criticize Le, a move which was supported by party stalwarts **Vo Van Kiet** and **Le Duc Anh**. He died on 1 October 2018 at the age of 101.

see also: *Doi Moi*; Indochina Wars; Le Duc Anh, General; Le Kha Phieu, General; Nguyen Van Linh; Vo Van Kiet.

### ***Doi Moi*** (Vietnam)

The term *Doi Moi* means renovation or renewal of the economy. It was promulgated at the sixth National Congress of Vietnam's Communist Party in December 1986 and reconfirmed at the seventh National Congress in June 1991. As a direct consequence of the attendant reforms, the material condition of Vietnam has been transformed with a growing engagement with the international economy. The policy of *Doi Moi* seeks to encourage free market economics while protecting the communist political system. It was introduced by **Nguyen Van Linh** as a matter of political necessity. The failings of the Communist Party in not fulfilling the promise of the revolution to give the people of Vietnam a better life had brought it into political disrepute and also threatened its regime. *Doi Moi* has been distinguished from *perestroika*, introduced in the former Soviet Union, because the notion of restructuring which it conveyed was regarded in Hanoi as subversive of the leading role of the Communist Party. In consequence, political conservatism induced caution in economic liberalization as hardliners refused to cede ideological ground, which had the effect of retarding the momentum of *Doi Moi* by the turn of the century.

see also: Nguyen Van Linh.

### **Domino Theory** (Cambodia/Laos/Vietnam)

Domino theory served as an underlying rationale for the United States' fateful intervention in Vietnam. In the context of the Cold War and US policy of containing a monolithic international communism, the strategic importance of Indochina was represented in terms of an analogy with a line of standing dominoes which would tumble one by one should the first fall. The theory has been most closely identified with President Dwight D. Eisenhower, who argued at a press conference in Washington on 7 April 1954: 'You have a row of dominoes set up, you knock over the first one, and what will happen to the last one is that it will go over very quickly'. He concluded that if Indochina fell to communism, the rest of Southeast Asia would go very quickly, with incalculable losses to the free world. That statement was made as French forces, embattled by the communist-led **Viet Minh** at **Dien Bien Phu**, seemed likely to be overcome in the absence of a military intervention. The US government was not prepared then to risk military intervention in the light of recent experience in Korea; nor was its British ally. In the event, Dien Bien Phu fell to the Viet Minh in the first **Indochina War** in May 1954 and at an international conference on Indochina which convened concurrently in Geneva and concluded its deliberations in the **Geneva Agreements on Indochina** in July, Vietnam became subject to a *de facto* partition with the north in communist hands. Laos was subject to a measure of partition, while only Cambodia remained intact under a non-communist government.

A domino effect did not immediately follow, but domino theory remained integral to the US strategic rationale expressed in the Collective Defence Treaty for Southeast Asia or **Manila Pact** in September 1954 and the establishment of **SEATO (Southeast Asia Treaty Organization)** in February 1955. Domino theory was based in part on an interpretation in Washington of Cold War circumstances in which Vietnam's communists were perceived as proxies of a revolutionary China, which was in turn mistakenly viewed as the Soviet Union's vehicle for expansion in Asia against whom a line had to be drawn and held. Underlying that interpretation was the US

experience of the outbreak of the Pacific War in which Japan's avenue to spectacular conquest in Southeast Asia from December 1941 had been through Indochina, where access had been secured at French expense. In the event, the forcible unification of Vietnam in April 1975 had a domino effect of a kind, as political accommodation in neighbouring Laos between communist and non-communist parties crumbled in favour of the former by the end of the year. In neighbouring Cambodia, Vietnamese communist support helped the murderous **Khmer Rouge** come to power but not as subordinates to the ruling party in Hanoi, with whom confrontation ensued. To the extent that China backed the Khmer Rouge against Vietnam, a sort of reverse domino effect occurred. Moreover, the success of revolutionary communism in Indochina during 1975, in the wake of ignominious American withdrawal, did not produce any domino effect within the rest of Southeast Asia, which did not succumb to internal communist challenge. At issue and controversial, however, is the extent to which the United States' ill-fated military intervention, prompted by the reasoning of domino theory, was responsible for 'buying time' against the threat of communism for the states of Southeast Asia beyond Indochina. *see also*: Communism in Southeast Asia; Dien Bien Phu, Battle of, 1954; Geneva Agreements on Indochina 1954; Indochina Wars; Khmer Rouge; Manila Pact 1954; SEATO (Southeast Asia Treaty Organization) 1955–77; Viet Minh; Vietnam War.

**Dong, Pham Van** (Vietnam) *see* **Pham Van Dong**

### **Dong Tam Incident 2020 (Vietnam)**

Located in northern Vietnam on the western edge of the Red River delta, the village of Dong Tam has been the site of a longstanding dispute between local farmers and the Vietnamese government over land ownership and rights. At issue was land in Mieu Mon, on which a military airbase was built. While 208 hectares were gazetted for that expressed purpose, 47 hectares of arable land remained unutilized after the building of the airbase. In April 2017, the Vietnamese government sought to transfer ownership of the 47

hectares to a telecommunications company. The move was blocked by villagers of Dong Tam, who had been farming on it. In response to the arrest of the village chief for leading protests against the move, villagers stormed the local office and took nearly 40 police and local officials hostage. Matters were temporarily resolved when national authorities promised a review of the various claims to the land. In April 2019, the central government invalidated the claim to the land made by the villagers.

Dong Tam became the scene of clashes between police and protesting villagers yet again in the early hours of 9 January 2020. The dormant dispute was triggered by plans to build a wall around the Mieu Mon airbase. Villagers from Dong Tam again accused authorities of commandeering what they insisted was their land for this purpose. During the military raid, it was reported that both rubber and live ammunition had been used against the villagers along with tear gas, while access roads to Dong Tam were blocked, as was the internet. The raid reportedly resulted in four deaths – three of which were police officers and the fourth, the leader of the village – and 30 arrests. Following the violence, *Luat Khoa Tap Chi*, a Vietnamese human rights group, called for a government inquiry into the use of force by both parties, and to verify the reported number of casualties. In September, the Hanoi City People's Court found 29 villagers guilty of resisting state authority. Two were sentenced to death, one to life imprisonment, and the rest to lesser terms. Not widely reported in the local media, the Dong Tam incident nevertheless received extensive coverage over social media, leading to international expression of concern for the rights of local communities displaced forcefully by seemingly arbitrary land confiscation.

**Duan, Le** (Vietnam) *see* **Le Duan**

**Dung, Nguyen Tan** (Vietnam) *see* **Nguyen Tan Dung**

**Duterte, Rodrigo** (Philippines)

Rodrigo Roa Duterte was elected president of the Philippines on May 2016 after winning with

a significant margin in the presidential election as a candidate of the **Partido Demokratiko Pilipino–Lakas ng Bayan** or *PDP-Laban*, which grew out of **Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino**. Duterte was born in Maasin, southern Leyte, in March 1945 but grew up in Davao City, in the southern island of Mindanao. He served a total of seven terms as mayor of Davao, and also previously served as congressman of the 1st District of Davao City and vice mayor of the city. During his term as mayor, he developed a reputation for a ‘hands on’ approach to the discharge of his duties, often joining in law enforcement patrols and raids against criminal activities. Through this, he gained a reputation for being a tough, no-nonsense leader. It was this populist reputation that catapulted him to the presidency.

The Duterte presidency has been identified foremost with a controversial effort to eradicate the problem of drug trafficking and consumption in the Philippines. Long plagued by this problem, the Philippines had become a transshipment point of choice for the global drug trade and home to almost two million drug users by the time Duterte assumed high office. Soon after coming to power, Duterte moved to his electoral commitment by launching a hardline anti-drugs campaign that, among other things, endorsed extra-judicial killings by the police as well as vigilantes. Duterte’s controversial ‘war on drugs’ has been marked by controversy. It has drawn vehement criticism from human rights groups, foreign governments, and the United Nations. The UN Human Rights Council called for a probe into the ‘war on drugs’ in July 2019 but it was rejected by Duterte on grounds of infringement of sovereignty.

Mid-term elections in May 2019 were cast on a referendum on the controversial president. In the event, Duterte campaigned nationwide for his slate of Senate candidates anchored by his *PDP-Laban* and secured a resounding victory in which the opposition failed to win a single Senate seat while independents won three. Similar results materialized in the House of Representatives election. As president, Duterte has also been known for his unconventional approach to foreign policy. He has been unapologetically anti-American, even though he claimed

to enjoy a good personal relationship with the president of the United States, Donald Trump. Duterte’s anti-Americanism has deep roots. As an avowed leftist and former student of **José María Sisón**, with whom he has no love lost, Duterte possesses an anti-colonial disposition that surfaces frequently even in official discussions about the US role in the Philippines and the region. On various occasions, Duterte has alleged that he had been denied entry into the United States by American immigration authorities. This anti-Americanism has also led him to publicly question the continued reliance on the **Philippines–US Security Treaty**. In February 2020, the Philippines notified the United States of its intention to terminate the **Visiting Forces Agreement** which facilitates the presence of American military personnel on Philippine soil. In the same vein, Duterte has alarmed his traditional foreign and security policy establishment as he made concessions to China over the **South China Sea** dispute, allowing Chinese fishermen to continue their activities in the Exclusive Economic Zone of the Philippines despite the fact that the 1987 Constitution reserved the use of the EEZ for Filipino citizens. Even his acquiescence to Chinese adventurism in the South China Sea was couched in anti-American language as he alleged that ‘America did nothing’. Constitutional stipulations prevent Rodrigo Duterte from seeking re-election when his presidential term expires. Concomitantly, he hinted at the possibility of a run for the vice-presidency but did not eventually pursue that office.

*see also: Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino (LDP); Partido Demokratiko Pilipino–Lakas ng Bayan (PDP-Laban); Philippines–US Security Treaty 1951; Sisón, José María; South China Sea; Visiting Forces Agreement.*

### **Dwi Fungsi** (Indonesia)

*Dwi Fungsi* translates as ‘Dual Function’ and was employed in Indonesia to explain and justify the prerogative position of the armed forces. The term originated in the critical role played by them during the national revolution, especially in the latter stage after the Dutch had captured its political leadership. After independence, that role first received doctrinal expression with the failure of parliamentary democracy

and the declaration of martial law in 1957. The army chief of staff, Major General **Abdul Haris Nasution**, devised the notion of a 'middle way', namely, that the armed forces would neither totally disengage from public life nor totally dominate it. In April 1965 at their first national seminar, the armed forces affirmed their dual role as both a military and a socio-political force. After General **Suharto** had established his **New Order** after March 1966, the concept of dual function became a central legitimizing device. The second armed forces seminar in August 1966 and a Ministry of Defence seminar in November gave content to the concept, which was adopted as part of military doctrine. It was accorded formal recognition by the **People's Consultative Assembly** (MPR) in 1978 and then enacted into law in 1982. The claim to a *Dwi Fungsi* has been asserted as a military

prerogative and was expressed in the right of the armed forces, **ABRI**, to hold 100 seats in the 500-member MPR in return for not voting in national elections. The reduction of that number to 75 seats by former president Suharto for the Parliament elected in May 1997 indicated his intention to limit the remit of dual function. Following Suharto's resignation in May 1998 and his succession by the interim president, **B. J. Habibie**, that number was further reduced to 38 for the Parliament elected in June 1999. By that juncture, the reputation and national standing of the armed forces had been diminished and the concept of *Dwi Fungsi* was in disrepute. In August 2000, however, the MPR resolved to extend military representation until 2009.

*see also:* ABRI; Habibie, B. J.; Nasution, General Abdul Haris; New Order; People's Consultative Assembly; Suharto.

## E

### **East Asia Summit 2005** – (Brunei/ Cambodia/Indonesia/Laos/Malaysia/ Myanmar/Philippines/Singapore/ Thailand/Vietnam)

On 14 December 2005, representatives from 16 countries gathered in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, for the inaugural session of the East Asia Summit (EAS). Participants at that first meeting comprised the ten members of **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)**, China, Japan, and South Korea, as well as Australia, New Zealand, and India. As had been the case with China, Japan, and Korea, the latter three states were dialogue partners of ASEAN and had either acceded or indicated their willingness to accede to ASEAN's **Treaty of Amity and Cooperation**, the principal document that has governed multilateral institutions such as ASEAN and the **ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF)** in the region. The United States and Russia officially participated in the EAS at the sixth iteration of the meeting in Indonesia in 2011.

Opinions differ, but many regional observers agree that the origins of this summit go back to the 1990 proposal for an East Asian Economic Grouping (EAEG) popularized by former Malaysian prime minister **Mahathir Mohamad**, but which met with stiff opposition from Japan and the United States. The project was later revived through the ASEAN Plus Three or APT (China, Japan, and South Korea) summit of heads of state and government that first met in Kuala Lumpur in December 1997, and eventually found further expression through the creation of the EAS in December 2005. The EAS grew out of the proposal of South Korean President Kim Dae Jung, made at the second APT meeting in Vietnam in November 1998, for the formation of an East Asian Vision Group (EAVG) to explore the prospects for the formation of an East Asian community. Comprising 26 civilian experts, the group was tasked to research and recommend concrete measures that the APT could take to increase East

Asian regional cooperation. In 2001, the EAVG released findings that proposed the establishment of an East Asia Summit to further regionalism in East Asia. To that end, the EAS was envisaged as a vehicle to build this community and pre-empt or resolve any future regional challenges that may arise.

Initial reactions to the proposal were cautious but positive. While states concerned broadly embraced the EAS idea as a further step to community building in the region, opinions differed over the channels through which this was to be actualized. Some states, such as China, remained inclined towards the APT, and thought the existing APT framework would provide the best means of bringing the EAS to fruition. Concern about Chinese dominance led ASEAN to press for a separate entity altogether. Eventually, a consensus was reached that the EAS would take the form of a separate institution complete with its own summit meeting.

Following the proposals of the EAVG, Prime Minister **Abdullah Badawi** of Malaysia proposed at the APT summit in 2004 to bring about the recommendations for the EAS and offered to host the first meeting in Kuala Lumpur the following year. In December 2005, the EAS comprising the ten members of ASEAN, China, Japan, South Korean, India, Australia, and New Zealand met for the first time alongside the annual ASEAN ministerial meeting in Kuala Lumpur, with Russia also present as observer at the invitation of the Malaysian hosts. At the conclusion of the meeting, the Chairman's Statement and Kuala Lumpur Declaration clarified that the EAS was to be an 'open' forum for dialogue on broad strategic, political, and economic issues of common interest and concern with the aim of promoting peace, stability, and economic prosperity in East Asia.

The 2006 meeting had to be rescheduled because of a typhoon that struck the Philippines, then the ASEAN chair, while the 2009 meeting was rescheduled because of political unrest in Thailand. Regardless of these disruptions, little

of substance has been achieved over seven summits. At the seventh meeting in Phnom Penh, high hopes for further progress in economic integration were dashed when discussions on the topic were sidetracked by differences over the **South China Sea**, while President Barack Obama's absence from the October 2013 Bandar Seri Begawan summit after the US government failed to avert the fiscal cliff proved to be the highlight of that meeting. In recent years, the stature of the EAS has suffered from diminished US representation. Following President Donald Trump's attendance of only the EAS luncheon and not the summit plenary in 2017, American representation at subsequent summits was gradually downgraded to the vice-president in 2018, and for the next two summits, the national security advisor.

On the occasion of its tenth anniversary, leaders reinforced their commitment to the further institutionalization of the EAS by way of the creation of an EAS unit in the ASEAN Secretariat and promotion of regularized meetings between EAS ambassadors based in Jakarta. Several other mechanisms covering economics, environment, and education have also been established, as has a foreign ministers' meeting platform. While the EAS remains a key summit level platform for regional states to discuss strategic developments, this position has come under strain both from a revived Quadrilateral security dialogue, which features the United States, Japan, Australia, and India, and its own institutional inertia in the face of recent challenges like **Covid-19** and the 2021 Myanmar coup.

see also: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) 1994–; Badawi, Tun Abdullah Ahmad; Covid-19; Mahathir Mohamad, Tun; South China Sea; Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (ASEAN) 1976.

### **EDSA (Epifanio de los Santos Avenue)** (Philippines)

Epifanio de los Santos Avenue is a major thoroughfare in Manila. From 23 to 25 February 1986 it was the setting for a remarkable display of popular opposition in support of a military revolt led by **Juan Ponce Enrile** and **Fidel Ramos** against the regime of President

**Ferdinand Marcos** in the wake of a fraudulently conducted snap election. Its acronym EDSA was taken as the name for the civilian-supported military revolt whose headquarters in Camp Crame bordered the avenue. After an appeal by Cardinal **Jaime Sin**, the revolt was sustained by an interposing human wall of passive resistance which prevented Marcos loyalists from crushing it by force. The episode, which was critical in **Corazón Aquino** becoming president of the Philippines, has passed into legend as '**People Power**'.

see also: Aquino, Corazón; Enrile, Juan Ponce; Marcos, Ferdinand; People Power; Reform the Armed Forces Movement; Sin, Cardinal Jaime.

### **EDSA II (Philippines)**

EDSA II, otherwise known as Edsa Dos or the EDSA revolution of 2001, refers to the second People's Power revolution that forced a transfer of presidential power in the Philippines. The event lasted for four days and included a peaceful rally at the **EDSA Shrine**, where calls for the overthrow of President **Joseph Estrada** reverberated in a replay of the demonstration of **People Power** that removed President **Ferdinand Marcos** a decade and a half earlier in the original EDSA revolution. Rallies soon broke out elsewhere across the Philippines when it became evident that the impeachment trial of Estrada following corruption charges was losing momentum. The movement led to the installation of the vice-president, **Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo**, as president of the Philippines. Although many critics and purists denounced the revolution as 'mobocracy', the point remains that it was still widely recognized and supported by civil society groups and the international community, thereby lending legitimacy to Macapagal-Arroyo's presidency.

see also: EDSA (Epifanio de los Santos Avenue); Estrada, Joseph Ejercito; Macapagal-Arroyo, Gloria; Marcos, Ferdinand; People Power.

### **Elysée Agreement 1949 (Vietnam)**

On 8 March 1949 an agreement was reached between the French government and **Bao Dai**, who had abdicated as emperor of Vietnam in August 1945 in favour of the

communist-controlled **Viet Minh**. The agreement provided for French recognition of the limited independence of the Associated State of Vietnam within the French Union and included the former colony and so-called Republic of Cochin China, which had been accorded a separate constitutional identity in 1946. The agreement took effect in Vietnam with a ceremony in Saigon on 14 June which led to the formal establishment of the Associated State on 1 July. It was ratified by the French National Assembly on 29 January 1950. The background to the agreement was France's attempt to engage the United States in its military struggle in the First Indochina War to retain its colonial domain in Indochina by representing it as a critical theatre in the global conflict against international communism. The United States had made its support dependent on France being willing to transfer power to nationalist figures who could provide a credible alternative to the communists. The result was the so-called Bao Dai solution, whereby the former emperor returned from exile to become head of state. It was no coincidence that on 4 February 1950, within days of the ratification by the French National Assembly, the United States extended formal diplomatic recognition to the Associated State of Vietnam as well as to Laos and Cambodia, to which corresponding commitments had been made: Laos on 19 July 1949 and Cambodia on 8 November 1949. A formal request from France for US military aid followed on 16 February 1950; this was approved by President Truman on 1 May to the sum of US\$15 million. That commitment marked the beginning of US intervention in what eventually became the **Vietnam War**.

see also: Bao Dai, Emperor; Indochina Wars; Viet Minh; Vietnam War.

### **Emergency 1948–60 (Malaya/Malaysia)**

The term 'Emergency' was employed to describe the insurrection mounted by the Communist Party of Malaya against the British colonial authorities from 1948. Emergency regulations were promulgated on 18 June 1948 in response to armed attacks against rubber plantations. Those regulations were not rescinded until 31 July 1960. A distinguishing feature of

the insurrection was the predominant support provided by the ethnic Chinese community, initially mobilized during the Japanese occupation. Although the colonial authorities were unprepared for the insurrection, the Communist Party was also less than fully ready for armed struggle, feeling obliged to respond to governmental action against its trade union representatives as well as to the call of the Cominform for national liberation revolution. The insurrection reached its peak in 1951 with the assassination of Britain's high commissioner, Sir Henry Gurney. By then, however, the party had admitted the failure of its policy to establish liberated areas and sought to change tack in an attempt to widen its popular base. But it was too late as the security forces had gained the initiative in both the armed struggle and in that for hearts and minds. The communist guerrillas were driven deeper into the rainforest and from the mid-1950s were obliged to retreat to redoubts along the border with Thailand. Although the Communist Party was able to engage in sporadic military operations after 1960, especially at the end of the Vietnam War in 1975, internal dissension and governmental action effectively confined the insurgency to a nuisance role. On 2 December 1989 in the southern Thai town of Hat Yai, the governments of Thailand and Malaysia and the Communist Party of Malaya issued a joint statement to mark the signing of two peace agreements whereby the three sides would terminate all armed activities. The agreement constituted an act of surrender by the Communist Party of Malaya; it was signed by the party's general secretary, **Chin Peng**, who had not been seen in public since the Baling Talks in 1955.

see also: Baling Talks 1955; Chin Peng.

### **Enhanced Defense Cooperation Act (EDCA) (Philippines)**

The United States and the Philippines signed the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Act (EDCA) in 2014 to reinvigorate the US–Philippines alliance that had assumed greater salience in the wake of Chinese assertiveness in the **South China Sea**. EDCA is underpinned by the **Visiting Forces Agreement** and the **Philippines–US Security Treaty 1951**. The Act provided



for the strengthening of interoperability of the defence forces of both parties, promoting the modernization of the Philippine armed forces, and also enhancing the maritime security and humanitarian and disaster relief capabilities of the Philippine navy. As opposed to a permanent presence, the agreement also paved the way for US forces to access and use agreed military facilities on a rotational basis. In return, the United States would bear the cost of upgrading the military infrastructure in the Philippines for both American and Filipino use. The intent of the rotational arrangements was to strengthen collective deterrence capability in the face of Chinese aggression against Philippine forces in the Spratly Islands, while side-stepping entrenched opposition on the part of domestic constituencies in the Philippines against a permanent American military presence.

EDCA was placed at risk after **Rodrigo Duterte** came to power. As president, Duterte distanced the Philippines from its longstanding treaty ally and reoriented his gaze towards China in the hope of securing Chinese soft loans and investments for development projects. The shift away from the United States was further expressed in Duterte's insistence on withdrawing from the Visiting Forces Agreement, a move that would render EDCA ineffectual. However, this view is not shared by the defence establishment in the Philippines, which is heavily invested in its security relationship with the United States.

see *also*: Duterte, Rodrigo; Philippines–US Security Treaty 1951; South China Sea; Visiting Forces Agreement.

### **Enrile, Juan Ponce** (Philippines)

Juan Ponce Enrile, as minister of defence, led a military mutiny against President **Ferdinand Marcos** on 22 February 1986 in the wake of fraudulently conducted elections. He was joined in revolt by the deputy chief of staff of the armed forces, **Fidel Ramos**, and encouraged by the head of the Catholic Church, Cardinal **Jaime Sin**. Cardinal Sin's appeal for popular support led to the remarkable political phenomenon of '**People Power**' whereby residents of Manila stood between the military dissidents based in Camp Crame and those units loyal to

President Marcos. President Marcos went into exile later that month, to be succeeded by his electoral rival, **Corazón Aquino**, who reappointed Enrile as minister of defence in her first cabinet.

Juan Ponce Enrile was born on 14 February 1924 in Cagayan Province, north of Manila. He had a legal education at the University of the Philippines and in the United States at Harvard University after the Pacific War and began his career as a corporation lawyer. He assumed political office as undersecretary of finance after Ferdinand Marcos became president in January 1966, rising to minister of defence by the turn of the decade. As a close confidant of President Marcos, he helped to mastermind the introduction and management of martial law from 1972. When the promise of Marcos's New Society Movement began to sour, he cultivated a coterie of young military officers, the **Reform the Armed Forces Movement**, ostensibly in the cause of reform but essentially to further his own political ambitions. His act of mutiny in February 1986 was precipitated by fear of his impending arrest.

His tenure as minister of defence under President Aquino was short-lived. Enrile was removed from office in November 1986 after coming into conflict with her over policy towards the insurgent Communist Party, which expressed his personal frustration that Corazón Aquino had been the political beneficiary of the mutiny which he had inspired. He stood as a successful candidate in elections for Senate in May 1987 and was subsequently linked to a series of abortive coups against President Aquino's administration. In February 1990 he was arrested on charges of murder, rebellion, and harbouring criminals. Released on bail in March, the charges were dismissed by the Supreme Court in June. Enrile then sought to pursue his presidential ambitions through the vehicle of the revived **Nacionalista Party** but his expectations were dashed with its fragmentation into rival factions. In elections in May 1992, he was successful in his bid for a seat in the House of Representatives on behalf of a Cagayan provincial constituency and then went on to win a Senate seat in May 1995. Enrile held his position as senator until 2001. During this

time, he ran as an independent candidate in the 1998 presidential elections, losing to the then vice-president, **Joseph Estrada**. In January 2001, Enrile was among those who voted against the opening of the 'second bank envelope', allegedly containing incriminating evidence against the president, and this vote led to the **EDSA II** movement that eventually ousted President Estrada. Enrile was re-elected to a fourth term as senator that year. In early 2012, Enrile served as the presiding officer of the impeachment of Chief Justice Renato Corona. He was one of 20 senators who voted for the impeachment. In 2013, Enrile was implicated in a pork-barrel case, was arrested and detained for a year but was allowed to post bail on account of his age. He contested the mid-term senatorial election in 2019 at the age of 95 but was defeated.

see also: Aquino, Corazón; EDSA II; Marcos, Ferdinand; *Nacionalista Party*; People Power; Ramos, Fidel; Reform the Armed Forces Movement; Sin, Cardinal Jaime.

### **Estrada, Joseph Ejercito** (Philippines)

Joseph Ejercito Estrada (known by the nickname *Erap*, a play on a Tagalog word *pare*, meaning friend) was elected 13th president of the Philippines in May 1998 with 39 per cent of the vote, which was a superior performance to that of his predecessor, **Fidel Ramos**, who had secured only 23 per cent in the previous election. In May 1992, Joseph Estrada had been elected vice-president but not on the same ticket as Ramos. He had entertained presidential ambitions since entering national politics in 1987 and had registered as a candidate on behalf of his own People's Filipino Party. In March 1992, however, Estrada agreed to stand as the vice-presidential running mate of Eduardo Cojuangco, an alienated cousin of President **Corazón Aquino**, on a ticket representing a combination of old **Nacionalista Party** and **Liberal Party** interests. In the event, Cojuangco came third to Ramos in the presidential contest, but Estrada secured 33 per cent of the vote to win the vice-presidential election. The constitutional limit of one six-year presidential term put him in an advantageous position to succeed Ramos.

Joseph Estrada was born on 19 April 1937 in the Tondo area of Manila. He became a national

celebrity as a young man through his success as a movie actor playing dashing action parts, while his private life mirrored his screen roles. He entered politics in August 1969 when he became mayor of San Juan, which is within the metropolitan limits of Manila, after a long legal battle in which he successfully challenged the initial outcome of the polls. Estrada was detained twice after President **Ferdinand Marcos** introduced martial law in 1972. He subsequently became a member of President Marcos's New Society Movement and secured support for social welfare in his municipality but was not politically disadvantaged by the president's fall from power. He was elected to the Senate in 1987 as one of only two opposition senators together with **Juan Ponce Enrile** and built a political reputation by playing on populist-nationalist issues. He was outspoken in his opposition to US military bases and also called for the repudiation of national debts incurred during Marcos's tenure. As vice-president, he enjoyed an uneasy relationship with President Ramos, with whom he had little in common. However, he was allocated the high-profile office of head of the presidential Anti-Crime Commission, which attracted extensive media coverage, particularly when he led police raids in virtual reruns of his former movie roles. A major asset in Joseph Estrada's successful presidential bid was his strong reputation as a champion of the interests of the poor. Within 18 months, however, his popularity declined significantly. Against a background of economic adversity attributed to inept management, he was accused of benefiting the rich and of returning Philippine politics to corruption and cronyism. Moreover, his abortive attempt to amend the 1987 Constitution to allow foreigners to purchase land and to own 100 per cent of investments was represented as having the hidden agenda of permitting himself a second term of office. He was also subject to domestic and international criticism for his hardline position against the **Moro Islamic Liberation Front** (MILF), which also prejudiced peace negotiations.

Estrada's tenure as president was as brief as it was controversial. He was impeached following a corruption scandal that erupted in

October 2000 when he was charged with receiving bribes worth millions in order to allow the continuation of an illegal lottery game (*jueteng*) operating throughout the Philippines. These charges were denied by Estrada, who insisted they were politically motivated. In November 2000, the Senate began an impeachment trial, but it was suspended after 11 senators allied with Estrada and blocked admission of evidence. However, this triggered mass demonstrations, known as **EDSA II**, demanding Estrada's resignation. Subsequently, Estrada's cabinet resigned *en masse*, and the security forces also withdrew their support. On 20 January 2001, Estrada was ousted from office by the Supreme Court, the first Philippine president to be impeached, and his vice-president, **Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo**, succeeded him. Estrada was subsequently arrested, initially detained in Quezón City, then later transferred to a military facility in Tanay, Rizal, and finally placed under house arrest until 2007. In September 2007, Estrada was convicted of the charges against him, and consequently sentenced to '*Reclusion Perpetua*' (permanent imprisonment). However, the following month he was granted executive clemency by President Macapagal-Arroyo and released from detention. Estrada re-emerged in October 2009 to announce his candidacy for the May 2010 presidential elections, with the Mayor of Makati City, Jejomar Binay, as his running mate. However, he was defeated by Senator **Benigno Aquino III**. Nevertheless, in 2013 Estrada managed to stage a successful return to politics, winning the election for the office of mayor of Manila. He went on to secure a second term in 2016, but lost in his attempt for a third in 2019.

see also: Aquino, Benigno Simeon Cojuangco, III; Aquino, Corazón; EDSA II; Enrile, Juan Ponce; Liberal Party; Macapagal-Arroyo, Gloria; Marcos, Ferdinand; Moro Islamic Liberation Front; *Nacionalista* Party; Ramos, Fidel.

### Exchange of Letters 2009 (Brunei/Malaysia)

The Exchange of Letters between Brunei Darussalam and Malaysia refers to the agreement

signed between Malaysian Prime Minister **Abdullah Badawi** and Brunei's **Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah** on 16 March 2009 that aims to resolve all outstanding bilateral issues, in particular maritime boundaries and border demarcation disputes. The March 2009 agreement was the culmination of 39 rounds of negotiations that began in 1995. Given stable and positive relations between both countries, the resolution of disputes has not been a matter of priority. Nevertheless, these issues acquired greater urgency after a near clash in the disputed maritime waters off Borneo in 2003 following the separate awarding of petroleum-production-sharing contracts by Malaysia and Brunei in the disputed areas.

While details of the agreement have not been made public, both governments have issued joint and individual statements on what the Exchange of Letters entails. There are four essential elements to the agreement. First, maritime boundaries, including the continental shelf and exclusive economic zones, were delimited in the disputed waters off Borneo. Importantly, the Exchange of Letters places two oil-rich blocks that were previously claimed by Malaysia within Brunei's maritime zone. According to the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), Brunei thus exercises sovereign jurisdiction over the area. Second, the agreement provides for the establishment of a Commercial Arrangement Area (CAA) within which joint development could be pursued and revenues from oil and gas resources shared. Third, the demarcation of the land boundary in **Limbang** district will be undertaken via a joint survey based on past agreements signed between 1920 and 1939. In areas not covered by previous agreements, the working group will adopt the watershed principle in determining the land boundary. Finally, the agreement assures that residents on both sides of the border enjoy transit rights and access through the maritime area to the north of Limbang.

At the time, Abdullah Badawi's predecessor, **Mahathir Mohamad**, openly criticized him for signing the agreement, arguing that the lucrative blocks L and M had been used as barter

in exchange for Limbang and that this would cost Malaysia a potential loss in earnings of at least US\$100 billion. Abdullah Badawi refuted the allegations and argued that the Exchange of Letters allowed for joint commercial development of oil and gas resources, while settling the

outstanding border and maritime sovereignty disputes, and hence marked major progress in bilateral relations between the two countries.

*see also:* Badawi, Tun Abdullah Ahmad; Bolkiah, Sultan Hassanal; Limbang Claim; Mahathir Mohamad, Tun.

## F

### **Five Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA) 1971–** (Malaysia/Singapore)

On 15–16 April 1971 representatives of Britain, Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia, and Singapore met in London to revise provision for the external defence of the two Southeast Asian states. A joint air defence council was established to manage an integrated air defence system. Agreement was reached also on deploying a joint ANZUK (Australian, New Zealand, and United Kingdom) ground force in Singapore and on an Australian air force contribution in Malaysia. Under these arrangements, an obligation to consult in the event of any form of external attack was substituted for the automatic commitment to respond in the **Anglo-Malaysian Defence Agreement**, which was superseded on 1 November 1971 when the arrangements came into effect. The defence arrangements, promoted by the British Conservative government which assumed office in June 1970, modified the decision of its Labour predecessor to disengage militarily from east of Suez by the end of 1971. The original tripartite military structure was denuded during the 1970s. Australia's battalion was withdrawn from Singapore by February 1974. Britain's ground troops left by the end of March 1976, its naval presence having been removed in September 1975. Joint military cooperation through exercises lapsed for a time but was revived from 1980 through an Australian initiative in the wake of Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. By 1986 Australia had withdrawn their Mirage fighter squadrons based at Butterworth in Malaysia, though Canberra committed itself to deploying F-18 fighter aircraft for a minimum of 16 weeks a year on joint exercises and maritime surveillance for a further five years. In December 1986 New Zealand's government gave notice that it would withdraw its military battalion from Singapore by the end of 1989.

The initial arrangements had been predicated on the indivisibility of the defence of  
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Malaysia and Singapore. They were intended as transitional to prevent a power vacuum in the wake of major military disengagement by Britain and to give Malaysia and Singapore time to develop their armed strength. Above all, they were intended to promote strategic confidence between Malaysia and Singapore. Limited military exercises have continued on an annual basis but the signatories have never been required to consult in response to the threat of an external attack against either Malaysia or Singapore. In August 1998, however, against the background of deteriorating relations with Singapore, Malaysia announced that it would not participate in that year's FPDA military exercises, but then resumed participation in April 1999. Also in August 1998, the FPDA Consultative Committee commissioned a policy working group to provide advice to the five defence ministers. While periodically dismissed as a strategic anachronism by its detractors, the FPDA has in recent years sought to maintain its relevance by shifting its focus to more immediate concerns about terrorism, after 2001, and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief after the Boxing Day **Tsunami of 2004**. Concomitantly, the evolution of FPDA exercises in relation to this new mandate has further enhanced interoperability of members' armed forces through exercises such as 'Bersama Shield' and 'Bersama Lima', although the different levels of technological capability, especially between the two Southeast Asian members, pose challenges.  
*see also:* Anglo-Malayan/Malaysian Defence Agreement 1957–71; Tsunami 2004.

### **Free Papua Movement** (Indonesia)

The Free Papua Movement (*Organisasi Papua Merdeka* – OPM) is the name of an indigenous Melanesian insurgency in **Irian Jaya**, the western half of the island of New Guinea. OPM has posed only a limited challenge to Indonesian authority since that authority was established under United Nations auspices in May 1963. Resistance to Indonesian rule had

been encouraged by the Dutch, who withheld the territory from the transfer of sovereignty over the Netherlands East Indies in 1949. They actively promoted local self-government until persuaded to give up their administration through Indonesian intimidation and US pressure. Violent opposition to Indonesian rule was triggered by its even more heavy-handed colonial nature and the clash of cultures involved.

The roots of organized opposition are to be found in a Papua Youth Movement established in late 1962 by a student, Jakob Prai, who was subsequently arrested but then escaped to join a small core of dissidents. An initial uprising in the central highlands in July 1965 among Dutch-trained militia was put down after two years, but sporadic armed resistance by poorly armed and trained irregulars was sustained with some support from across the border in Papua New Guinea after the eastern half of the island became independent in 1975. A declaration of independence took place under the name of *Seth Rum Korem* in 1971 but without any evidence of territorial control. The movement has been beset by factionalism through tribal divisions, and many of its leaders have been either killed or driven into exile. OPM has never attracted the kind of international support mobilized in the case of **Fretilin** in East Timor, while the government in Port Moresby has placed good relations with Jakarta before any sense of shared Melanesian identity.

A continuing source of local grievance and alienation sustaining separatist sentiment in Irian Jaya has been Indonesia's encouragement of migration from more densely populated islands, interpreted as an attempt to change the demographic character and political balance of the territory. In June 1995, a regional military commander admitted that elements of the so-called Security Disturbance Group were active along the border with Papua New Guinea. The arrest, torture, and murder of civilians near the Freeport–McMoran mining complex has attracted the condemnation of Indonesia's Human Rights Commission. In January 1996, a unit from the Free Papua Movement led by Kelly Kwalik seized and held hostage a group

of Westerners and Indonesians engaged on a scientific expedition, in an attempt to secure political recognition and a withdrawal of Indonesian forces. The hostages were not released until May in a military operation with fatalities among them and OPM. Popular support within Irian Jaya for OPM was stimulated by the political downfall of President **Suharto** in May 1998, with demonstrations and violent confrontations with security forces in the capital Jayapura in July as well as representations in Jakarta. More significant was the example of a referendum in East Timor in August 1999, in which the vast majority of voters opted for independence. In December 1999, in emulation of a popular protest in Aceh, around 10,000 supporters of OPM assembled in the provincial capital for a ceremonial hoisting of the flag of the separatist movement to mark the anniversary of its formation. While President **Abdurrahman Wahid** was amenable to granting autonomy to the region and to a name change from Irian Jaya to West Papua, the rebels demanded nothing less than complete independence via secession. To that end, they also rejected Jakarta's overtures and continue to sustain their low-intensity armed insurgency against the Indonesian military which includes the taking of foreign hostages. In the meantime, pro-Jakarta militias, including extremist organizations such as **Front Pembela Islam**, have also become actively involved even as the government of President **Joko Widodo** has attempted to address underlying grievances by introducing economic development to the region.

Plagued by factionalism, the Papuan resistance formed the United Liberation Movement for West Papua (ULMWP) in 2014 as an expressed attempt to unify disparate forces advocating for Papuan independence. ULMWP brought together the West Papua National Coalition for Liberation, the National Federal Republic of West Papua, and the National Parliament of West Papua. In 2019 a fake news report that circulated on social media alleging abuse of a Papuan student prompted widespread rioting and violence in several Papuan towns.

see also: *Fretilin*; *Front Pembela Islam*; Irian Jaya; Suharto; Wahid, Abdurrahman; Widodo, Joko.

**Fretilin** (Timor-Leste)

*Fretilin* is an acronym derived from *Frente Revolucionária do Timor-Leste Independente*, the Portuguese term for the Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor. This political movement was established in its original form in East Timor's administrative capital, Dili, in May 1974 in the wake of the revolutionary Armed Forces Movement in Lisbon which committed Portugal to independence for all of its overseas possessions. *Fretilin* was established by a seminary-trained mestizo elite of intellectuals and civil servants with links to left-wing groups in both Portugal and its African colonies. The title *Fretilin* was devised in August 1974 to replace that of the more innocuous Timorese Social Democratic Association. *Fretilin* possessed an intentional acronymic similarity to *Frelimo* in Mozambique, and the radical rhetoric of its leadership alarmed the military government in Indonesia, which ruled the western half of the island of Timor. Indonesia's sponsorship of competing political groups encouraged a seizure of power by its clients in August 1975, which was crushed by *Fretilin* loyalists among Timorese soldiers in the Portuguese garrison. By mid-September, *Fretilin* was in control of Dili and had eliminated all opposition except along the border with West Timor. An Indonesian attempt to intervene through the vehicle of a multinational force failed because of a lack of Australian and Portuguese cooperation. When Portugal conceded Indonesia's right to be a principal party to the conflict, *Fretilin* asserted a unilateral independence for the territory on 28 November 1975. Timorese clients of Indonesia then declared the integration of the territory into the republic. A brutal invasion by Indonesia, ostensibly by volunteers, followed on 7 December, delayed briefly by a visit to Jakarta by US President Gerald Ford. East Timor was formally integrated into Indonesia as the 27th province of the republic on 17 July 1976 after a bloody war in which an estimated 100,000 Timorese died.

Despite the lack of external military assistance and the repressive rule by Indonesia's army, *Fretilin*'s military arm sustained a sporadic resistance that appeared to have run its course by the end of the 1980s. A massacre of

its youthful supporters at a funeral demonstration at a cemetery in Dili in November 1991 aroused international outrage but also thinned the ranks of the movement. A further blow followed in November 1992 when, **José 'Xanana' Gusmão**, the commander of *Fretilin*'s military arm, *Falintil*, was captured on the outskirts of Dili. He was sentenced to life imprisonment in May 1993, which was commuted to 20 years in the following August. *Fretilin*'s cause received international backing in November 1996 when East Timor's most prominent dissidents, Bishop Carlos Belo of Dili and **José Ramos-Horta**, the movement's official observer at the United Nations, jointly received the Nobel Peace Prize. Resistance to Indonesia's rule intensified during 1997, culminating in Indonesian troops storming the campus of the university in Dili. A national convention of East Timorese exiles met in Portugal in April 1998 to establish a National Council of the Timorese Resistance and elected Gusmão as president and Ramos-Horta as vice-president of its political committee. In June 1998, in the wake of the resignation of President **Suharto**, interim-president **B. J. Habibie** offered the territory a special autonomous status within Indonesia; this was rejected by Gusmão, who called for a referendum on independence. In an unanticipated reversal of policy in January 1999, Indonesia offered East Timor the choice between independence and autonomy. The next month Gusmão was released from prison into house arrest and began to take part in negotiations that led to an agreement to hold a referendum under UN auspices in the following August. Despite brutal intimidation by local militia organized and armed by Indonesia's army, the outcome of the referendum was overwhelmingly in favour of independence. International pressure and domestic political change, rather than action by *Fretilin*, persuaded Indonesia to permit the deployment of an international peacekeeping force sanctioned by the UN and to endorse the result of the referendum that showed 78 per cent of voters favoured independence. Gusmão returned to East Timor in October and Ramos-Horta in December 1999. That month, the first meeting of the National Consultative Council convened in Dili with *Fretilin* representatives in the majority.

East Timor held its first parliamentary election in August 2001, where *Fretilin* won 55 seats of 88 in the Constitutional Assembly and **Francisco 'Lu'Olo' Guterres**, then newly elected as *Fretilin* president, assumed the position of president of the Assembly. Gusmão became president of East Timor on 14 April 2001 and was able to secure full independence on 19 May 2002. This, however, ushered in a period of chronic instability which culminated in bloody street battles following the dismissal of a third of military personnel by *Fretilin's* prime minister, **Mari Alkatiri**, in June 2006. Following this, Alkatiri himself was forced to resign but returned to contest the 2007 elections under the banner of *Fretilin*. Though *Fretilin* won the most seats held by a single party, it was forced into the position of opposition by a coalition led by Gusmão's **National Congress for Timorese Reconstruction** (CNRT). In 2015, Rui Maria de Araújo, Central Committee member of *Fretilin*, succeeded Gusmão as prime minister upon the latter's presumed retirement. The year 2017 proved significant for *Fretilin*, as it secured the presidency through Guterres and emerged from elections in July as the largest party as well. In the event, the coalition government it led subsequently fell apart, and *Fretilin* found itself out of power. Nevertheless, it returned as part of a new ruling coalition in 2020.

see also: Alkatiri, Mari; Gusmão, José 'Xanana'; Guterres, Francisco 'Lu'Olo'; Habibie, B. J.; National Congress for Timorese Reconstruction; Ramos-Horta, José; Suharto.

### Friendship Bridge (Laos/Thailand)

The Thai–Lao Friendship Bridge connects Nong Khai, Thailand, with Vientiane prefecture, Laos. The 1,170-metre bridge was opened in April 1994, making it the first bridge across the lower Mekong linking Thailand and Laos. The US\$30 million bridge was funded by Australian government development aid and built by Australian companies for Laos. The bridge marked a further normalizing of relations between Vientiane and Bangkok after almost two decades of animosity over ideology and border demarcation disputes, with the latter resulting in a brief **Thai–Lao Border War** in 1987–8. The bridge is part AH12 of the

Asia Highway Network linking China and Southeast Asia through Laos. A rail line was added to the bridge in 2010 connecting Laos with the Thai rail network but extending only 3.5 kilometres to the Tha Nalaeng Railway Station with plans to connect it to Vientiane nine kilometres away. The bridge was later joined by a second Friendship Bridge linking Savannakhet in southern Laos with Mukdahan in Thailand in January 2007, and a third Friendship Bridge linking Thakhek in the central Khammouane Province with Thailand's Nakhon Phanom Province in November 2011. A fourth bridge linking Houayxay in northern Bokeo Province with Chiang Khong in Thailand's northern Chiang Rai Province was completed in 2013. The bridges are important infrastructural support for the Lao economy, as they not only link it to the Thai economy but also position Laos at the crossroads of Thailand, Vietnam, and China. A direct result of these linkages was the lifting of most restrictions on foreign trade and investment in Laos. A proposed high-speed rail link from China to Thailand via Laos, however, threatens to make the bridge redundant.

see also: Thai–Lao Border War 1987–8.

### Front Pembela Islam (Indonesia)

*Front Pembela Islam* or the Islamic Defender's Front (FPI) is an Islamic vigilante group established in 1998 by Misbahul Alam, a preacher from **Nahdlatul Ulama**, and Muhammad Rizieq Syihab, a Jakarta-born, Saudi-educated Islamic scholar of Arab–Betawi descent.

FPI is based in Central Java, and since its formation has managed to build a network across the Indonesian archipelago. Although led by *habib* (preachers of prophetic lineage) who are well respected in their communities, the membership of FPI comprises mostly Muslims with little education and from the lower strata of society. Like many radical Muslim groups in Indonesia, FPI aspires to transform Indonesia into an Islamic state with *shari'a* as its centrepiece, and to oppose the influx of Western morals and values into the country. To that end, FPI's ideology is twofold: to revise the Indonesian constitution such that it would include references to *shari'a*, and to enjoin good and forbid



evil (based on scriptural edict of *Amr Ma'ruf Nahy Munkar*).

Since its formation, FPI has gained notoriety for its moral policing activities. In 1999, 4,000 FPI members broke into the regional government office of Jakarta demanding that all night-spots be shut down during the fasting month of Ramadhan. The fact that the police chief agreed to the FPI's terms further emboldened the organization, and from 1999 until late 2002 when its paramilitary wing was disbanded, FPI vigilantes launched frequent attacks on enterprises deemed 'un-Islamic', such as brothels, bars, gambling halls and massage parlours. Moreover, while its initial raids were limited to the Ramadhan period, they were later expanded to clashes with local residents, security officials, and the police.

The popularity of FPI has fluctuated, reaching its apex immediately after the September 11 attacks when it managed to mobilize 10,000 demonstrators to protest the American invasion of Afghanistan. The 2002 Bali bombings, however, diminished the popularity of radical Muslim groups in Indonesia considerably. Between October 2002 and November 2003, Rizieq was arrested and either jailed or placed under house arrest frequently, yet the organization's moral policing activities continued. In an attempt to improve organizational discipline, the leadership of FPI tightened its recruitment process in 2004 in order to weed out opportunists who used the organization's religious agenda for material gain. In December 2004, FPI was among the first groups to enter Aceh in the aftermath of the 2004 tsunami to provide humanitarian assistance. Its moral policing activities nevertheless picked up pace in 2008 when FPI members attacked members of the National Alliance for the Freedom of Faith in a confrontation that led to Rizieq being arrested yet again. In early 2011, FPI was involved in the brutalization of three **Ahmadiyah** followers who were beaten to death. This was followed by attacks on a *Shi'a* boarding school in East Java and churches in Aceh in 2012. In 2016, FPI was at the forefront instigating protests against the ethnic Chinese Christian candidate for the Jakarta gubernatorial elections, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama or 'Ahok', which ultimately led to

his defeat at the polls (see **Anti-Ahok Protests 2016**). On the pretext of performing the umrah (minor haj), Rizieq Syihab fled to Saudi Arabia in April 2017 to avoid criminal charges related to pornography. Although the charges were dropped in 2019, he returned only in November 2020 and immediately began criticizing the government of **Joko Widodo**, drawing large crowds in the process.

On 31 December 2020, the FPI was banned on grounds that it had violated the Indonesian constitution and ideology of *Pancasila*, that some of its members had been involved in extremist activities and vigilantism, and that its registration as a community organization had lapsed. In May 2021, Rizieq was himself charged and found guilty of breaching health protocols when he preached during the **Covid-19** pandemic upon his return from Saudi Arabia and was imprisoned for eight months.

see also: *Ahmadiyah*; Anti-Ahok Protests 2016;

**Covid-19**; *Nahdlatul Ulama*; *Pancasila*; Tsunami 2004; Widodo, Joko.

### **Fuad, Tun Mohammad (Donald Stephens)** (Malaysia)

Mohammad Fuad, who was born in Kudat in 1920 as Donald Stephens of an Australian father and a Kadazan ethnic group mother, was the first chief minister of Sabah on its incorporation into Malaysia in September 1963. A successful businessman who owned a local newspaper, he entered politics in the early 1960s, drawing on Kadazan support initially to oppose membership of the Federation of Malaysia. Converted to its cause, in part by the **Philippines' Claim to Sabah**, he became a defender of Sabah's rights as chief minister but was eased from office in December 1964 in exchange for the post of federal minister for Sabah affairs, which he held for only nine months, giving up political life shortly after. He became high commissioner to Australia in 1968 and in 1971 converted to Islam, taking the name Mohammad Fuad. He served as Sabah's head of state for nearly two years from September 1973 and then resigned in July 1975 to assume the leadership of a new intercommunal party *Berjaya* (Sabah People's Union), set up with federal support in June 1975 in challenge to the ruling **United Sabah**

**National Organization (USNO)** led by the chief minister, **Tun Mustapha Harun**. He led *Berjaya* to electoral victory in April 1976 and again became chief minister but held office for only 53 days. On 6 June he was killed, together with four of his ministers as well as his son, when the light aircraft in which he was travelling crashed into the sea on its approach to Kota Kinabalu airport.

see also: Mustapha bin Datuk Harun, Tun; Philippines' Claim to Sabah; United Sabah National Organization (USNO).

### **FUNCINPEC (Cambodia)**

FUNCINPEC is an acronym derived from *Front uni national pour un Cambodge indépendant, neutre, pacifique et coopératif*, the French term for the National United Front for an Independent, Neutral, Peaceful, and Cooperative Cambodia, which was established in March 1981 by Prince **Norodom Sihanouk** with a presence on the Thai border. This resistance movement to challenge Vietnam's occupation of Cambodia was encouraged in particular by **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** states which were concerned at the prominence of the **Khmer Rouge's** role. In June 1982 FUNCINPEC joined with another non-communist movement, the **Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF)**, and the Khmer Rouge in a so-called **Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea (CGDK)** with Prince Sihanouk as its head. That coalition maintained an uneasy coexistence until the **International Conference on Cambodia** in Paris reached agreement in October 1991. In the intra-Cambodian negotiations leading to the establishment of a symbolically sovereign **Supreme National Council**, Prince Sihanouk gave up his leadership of FUNCINPEC in order to head the new council, to be succeeded by his son Prince **Norodom Ranariddh**. Prince Ranariddh led FUNCINPEC in the elections conducted in Cambodia in May 1993 by the United Nations and secured a plurality of the seats in the Constituent Assembly. As leader of FUNCINPEC, Prince Ranariddh became first prime minister in the coalition government formed in Phnom Penh at the end of October 1993.

Tensions and cleavages emerged with FUNCINPEC, as the practice of coalition

government confirmed the political dominance of the **Cambodian People's Party (CPP)**, which had been put in power by the Vietnamese but had come second in the 1993 elections. Those tensions and cleavages were manifested openly with the dismissal of FUNCINPEC member **Sam Rainsy** as finance minister in October 1994 and from the National Assembly in June 1995. They were manifest also with the arrest and exile of former foreign minister Prince Norodom Sirivudh, who was the party's secretary-general, at the end of the year. In April 1996, four FUNCINPEC National Assembly members defected to CPP, overturning the former's narrow majority in the latter's favour. Tension between the two parties rose with competing negotiations with the Khmer Rouge. Those tensions came to a head when the second prime minister, **Hun Sen**, mounted a successful coup in July 1997 to oust Prince Ranariddh, who had fled abroad. Elections were held in July 1998, monitored by international observers, in which FUNCINPEC participated. In the event, it took second place behind CPP, which won a plurality of seats but not sufficient to form a government. After extensive negotiations, FUNCINPEC joined in a coalition government headed by Hun Sen in the following November. Prince Ranariddh accepted the post of chairman of the National Assembly and, by implication, the subordinate position of FUNCINPEC in Cambodian politics. Since then, FUNCINPEC's influence in Cambodian politics has diminished considerably. In July 2004, FUNCINPEC and the CPP concluded lengthy negotiations for a power-sharing agreement that again saw the former assuming a subordinate role. In March 2006, the National Assembly amended the constitution to enable the passing of bills with a simple majority, thereby negating the need for a two-thirds majority, and by extension, the utility of a coalition government. After Norodom Ranariddh was dismissed from the party leadership in October 2006 for dereliction of duties, he left to form the Norodom Ranariddh Party while Keo Puth Rasmey, son-in-law of Norodom Sihanouk, took over the reins of leadership in FUNCINPEC. Norodom Ranariddh and FUNCINPEC soon became embroiled in a legal

battle which proved an unnecessary distraction. Against this backdrop, FUNCINPEC performed poorly at the 2008 National Assembly elections, winning only two seats compared to CPP's landslide victory of 90 seats. FUNCINPEC was forced to concede its position as the second largest party in the National Assembly when the **Sam Rainsy Party** outperformed it by winning 26 seats on its way to becoming the main opposition party.

Following the 2008 elections, CPP and FUNCINPEC once again entered into a coalition government, though by then the latter had clearly lost any capacity to influence policy in any meaningful manner. In April 2010, FUNCINPEC and the Nationalist Party (formerly the Norodom Ranariddh Party) formally agreed to form a political alliance ahead of the 2012 commune elections and 2013 national elections. In March 2013, Princess Norodom Arun Reaksmei, youngest daughter of Norodom Sihanouk, was appointed party president. Even so, FUNCINPEC continued to be plagued by internal discord, with factions loyal to either Norodom Ranariddh or Hun Sen. In January 2008 ten FUNCINPEC officials holding ministerial and state secretarial rank defected to CPP. This was followed by another defection of six senior officials to CPP in February 2009. At the 2013 elections, FUNCINPEC failed to win any seats and was all but eclipsed by the newly formed **Cambodia National Rescue Party** as the opposition party of consequence. Ranariddh returned to the party in January 2015 and assumed leadership. In the 2018 election FUNCINPEC once again failed to win a single seat as it faded even further into irrelevance.

see also: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP); Cambodian People's Party (CPP); Democratic Kampuchea, Coalition Government of (CGDK) 1982–90; Hun Sen; International Conference on Cambodia, Paris 1991; Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF); Khmer Rouge; Ranariddh, Prince Norodom; Sam Rainsy; Sam Rainsy Party; Sihanouk, King Norodom; Supreme National Council.

### **Future Forward Party (Thailand)**

Barely two years old, the progressive, left-leaning Future Forward Party or '*Anakot Mai*' was touted as the vehicle of choice for a new generation of Thai voter disillusioned with traditional parties and keen to effect change in the country's politics. Future Forward was led by the 41-year-old charismatic billionaire **Thanathorn Juangroongruangkit** and Thammasat University scholar Piyabutr Saengkanokkul, with lofty objectives of ending the prevailing political chaos, eliminating military control over Thai politics, and restoring democracy. Policies proposed by Future Forward included the privatization of state-owned enterprises, introduction of a capital gains tax, creation of a more effective social welfare system and, perhaps most controversial given the prevailing role of the military in politics, reduction of the defence budget. To develop its base, Future Forward tapped into two primary constituencies: first-time voters and middle-class royalists who opposed the consolidation of power on the part of the military.

In the general election in March 2019, Future Forward won 30 constituency seats and 50 party-list seats in Parliament, a credible performance for a maiden foray into Thai politics. The impressive performance prompted Future Forward and six other anti-junta parties to put forward its leader Thanathorn as a prime ministerial candidate, although he eventually lost out to the incumbent, **Prayuth Chan-ocha**. A by-election victory in May that year in Chiang Mai gave Future Forward its 81st seat. These overnight achievements invited comparisons to the **Pheu Thai Party**. While the Future Forward Party was able to make headway among the middle-class, its popularity among rural voters and the working class was considerably less evident. The party has also been criticized for prioritizing issues that carry currency among the younger electorate, such as gender and alternative lifestyles, over the economic struggles of the poor.

Soon after the election, the party came under pressure on account of a host of legal challenges. The Thai constitutional court

eventually dissolved the party in February 2020 on grounds that an election loan of 191 million Thai baht taken from its own leader to finance its political campaign was in violation of the Political Party Organic Law of 2017. The decision also saw a ban imposed on 16 party members, including the party leader, from participation in politics for ten years. With the

dissolution of the party, its remaining 65 members of Parliament had to shift their memberships to other parties. Fifty-five eventually joined the **Move Forward Party**, its successor, while the rest shifted allegiances to the ruling coalition.

*see also:* *Pheu Thai Party*; Prayuth Chan-ocha, General; Thanathorn Juangroongruangkit.

## G

### **Geneva Agreements on Indochina 1954 (Cambodia/Laos/Vietnam)**

The Geneva Agreements on Indochina comprise a set of accords which were intended to restore peace and confirm the sovereign independence of Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam. They were concluded at an international conference between 8 May and 21 July in Geneva. Indochina had been subject to violent conflict from the end of the Pacific War when the **Viet Minh** took the lead in challenging the restoration of French colonial rule throughout the peninsula in the **August Revolution** of 1945. The Viet Minh, headed by **Ho Chi Minh**, had declared the independence of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in Hanoi on 2 September 1945. Limited political concessions by France as well as US military assistance failed to stem communist insurgent success. By the end of 1953, French political will had virtually drained away as the colonial conflict and its costs became matters of domestic political contention.

At a meeting of the foreign ministers of the United States, the Soviet Union, Britain, and France in Berlin in February 1954, it was agreed that Indochina would be placed on the agenda of a forthcoming international conference in Geneva which had been arranged to address the question of Korea. The Korean phase of the conference was inconclusive. Moreover, the negotiating position of the French was dramatically weakened by the fall of its military fortress in the **Battle of Dien Bien Phu** to Viet Minh forces on 7 May 1954, the day before the Indochina phase of the conference was due to begin. Representatives attended from France, the United States, the Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China, Britain, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the French-backed State of Vietnam, and the kingdoms of Laos and Cambodia. The conference was chaired jointly by Anthony Eden and Vyacheslav Molotov, the foreign ministers of Britain and the Soviet Union, who rejected a request by the democratic Republic of Vietnam that representatives from

self-styled Laotian and Cambodian resistance governments also be permitted to participate. That decision indicated Soviet and Chinese interest in avoiding contention with the United States. This consideration was also important in arriving at a line of demarcation in Vietnam which did not reflect the full extent of communist military success. The Viet Minh were thus constrained by their external allies into accepting an accommodation that compromised their political interests.

The Geneva Agreements took the principal form of three accords on the cessation of hostilities in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia and a final declaration on restoring peace in Indochina. The armistice agreements for Vietnam and Laos were signed between representatives of the French and Viet Minh high commands, while that for Cambodia was signed between military representatives of the royal government and the Viet Minh. A declaration by the French government affirmed a willingness to withdraw all its troops from Indochina at the request of the peninsular governments concerned. The provisions for Vietnam were the most important, and the failure to implement them led on to further conflict over the unification of the country which was not resolved until the end of the **Vietnam War** in 1975. A provisional line of demarcation was established along the 17th parallel of latitude, on either side of which the two contending sides were to withdraw and regroup their forces. After two years, elections were to be held to determine the political future of the country, conducted by an international commission for supervision and control comprising India, Poland, and Canada, with prior responsibility for overseeing the workings of the ceasefire agreements. The ceasefire agreements for Laos and Cambodia made provision for the withdrawal of foreign forces and recognized a single governmental authority in each case, but in the case of Laos it took account of the separate control by Viet Minh-stiffened insurgents of two provinces adjacent to Vietnam.

The Final Declaration of the Conference, which was not a signed document, encompassed provisions for ceasefire and political order for all three countries, spelling out their political and electoral obligations and the role of international supervision. A formal treaty commitment was not undertaken, only a series of expressions of assent and reservations by the nine representatives on all the accords, including the Final Declaration. One reason why the Final Declaration of the Conference was not signed was US resistance; the United States resented the confirmation of communist victory as well as the communist Chinese presence. The US secretary of state, John Foster Dulles, boycotted the conference proceedings after initial participation. The United States took note of the accords and promised to refrain from the threat of force to disturb them, but maintained that elections set for July 1956 should be supervised by the United Nations. That stand encouraged the Vietnamese government to the south of the 17th parallel to refuse to comply with the provision for national elections.

The Geneva Agreements provided, in effect, for an interlude between two phases of violent conflict in Indochina. They had the unintended consequence of dividing Vietnam into two parts, reflecting in international recognition the pattern of Cold War alignments. The cessation of hostilities broke down when the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (re-established in Hanoi after July 1954) revived its military challenge. In December 1960 the **National Liberation Front of South Vietnam** (NLF) was set up as a vehicle for reunifying Vietnam on communist terms. In the case of Laos, the two provinces under insurgent control were never integrated under the authority of a central government until the communists assumed power in December 1975 in the wake of the victory in April 1975 of their counterparts in Vietnam. It was only in Cambodia that the accord reached at Geneva was implemented with endorsement by the International Commission for Supervision and Control of the conduct and outcome of general elections in 1955. Prince **Norodom Sihanouk's** political order, established by those elections, was overthrown in 1970.

*see also:* August Revolution 1945; Dien Bien Phu, Battle of, 1954; Geneva Agreements on Laos 1962; Ho Chi Minh; Indochina Wars; National Liberation Front of South Vietnam; Sihanouk, King Norodom; Viet Minh; Vietnam War.

## Geneva Agreements on Laos 1962

(Laos)

On 23 July 1962 an international conference in Geneva attended by 14 governments reached agreements on political unity and neutralization for Laos. The earlier **Geneva Agreements on Indochina** of July 1954 had failed to bring peace to the country. Laos had not been subject to partition like Vietnam, but national integration had been frustrated because the communist **Pathet Lao**, stiffened by Vietnamese counterparts, had withheld the administration of Phong Saly and Sam Neua Provinces from the royal government in Vientiane. Polarization between Laotian factions aligned competitively with Vietnam, and with Thailand, and the United States prevented national unity by consensus during the rest of the 1950s. A coup in August 1960 by a young paratroop officer, Captain Kong Le, which established an ostensibly neutral government under Prince **Souvanna Phouma**, served only to extend political fragmentation. By this stage, the second phase of the **Indochina Wars** had begun with Vietnam as the main prize. Laos became of increasing importance to the resolution of that conflict because its eastern uplands made up the critical section of the **Ho Chi Minh Trail**.

By 1961, Laos existed as a state in international legal fiction only as three politico-military groupings with external supporters contended for power. At that juncture, a diplomatic initiative by the Soviet Union attracted US interest because of common fears that an escalation of internal conflict would lead to wider confrontation. Agreement on a ceasefire made possible the international conference which convened in Geneva in May 1961. It took until June 1962, however, for a preliminary accord to be concluded between the leaders of the contending factions. A formal agreement on establishing a tripartite coalition and on neutralizing Laos

was eventually signed on 23 July 1962. That settlement broke down beyond repair by 1964, and neutralization came to exist only on paper. In the event, competitive military intervention confirmed Laos' role as a subordinate theatre of the **Vietnam War** whose eventual outcome determined its political identity by the end of 1975.

see also: Geneva Agreements on Indochina 1954; Ho Chi Minh Trail; Indochina Wars; *Pathet Lao*; Souvanna Phouma, Prince; Vietnam War.

### **Gerakan Rakyat Malaysia** (Malaysia)

*Gerakan Rakyat Malaysia* translates from Malay as the Malaysian People's Movement and is most commonly known as *Gerakan*. The party was founded on the island of Penang on 25 March 1968 in the main by intellectually minded Chinese opposition politicians and university teachers as a multiracial and democratic socialist party. In the elections of May 1969, whose outcome provoked the **May 13 Racial Riots**, *Gerakan* won eight seats in the federal Parliament and secured control of the state government in Penang. After an internal split, the party began to cooperate politically with the **Alliance Party** coalition government, which became a formal arrangement in February 1972 further consolidated with the establishment of **Barisan Nasional** (National Front, BN) in June 1974. *Gerakan* has maintained its multiracial platform but gradually became a vehicle for urban middle-class Chinese who lack confidence in the **Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA)** to represent their interests within BN. This has frequently resulted in strained relations between the two Chinese-based parties, particularly in the Chinese-majority state of Penang.

In April 1995, *Gerakan* increased its share to seven seats compared to 30 won by MCA. In November 1999, it won 6 seats compared to 29 by MCA. Its share of seats increased to ten in the 2004 elections before taking a significant dent in the 2008 and 2013 elections, with only two and one seats respectively. The poor showing was a direct result of the erosion of its influence among its core constituency as well as the increased popularity of the **Democratic Action**

**Party** among Chinese voters. In 2018, the party failed to win a single seat for the first time in its history. It left BN and subsequently joined the **Perikatan Nasional** coalition.

see also: Alliance Party; *Barisan Nasional* (BN); Democratic Action Party (DAP); Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA); May 13 Racial Riots 1969; *Perikatan Nasional*.

### **Gerindra** (Indonesia)

*Gerakan Indonesia Raya* (*Gerindra* or the Great Indonesia Movement Party) is an Indonesian political party founded on 6 February 2008 and registered with the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights on 26 February 2008. On 16 October 2008, the party nominated **Prabowo Subianto**, who had earlier resigned from the **Golkar** party, as its presidential candidate for the 2009 presidential election. In possession of a strong personality and eloquent in English, Prabowo Subianto was a former army general with the special forces and was also married to President **Suharto's** daughter.

Among the most controversial figures in contemporary Indonesian politics, Prabowo's military career has come under immense scrutiny for allegations that he had sanctioned human rights abuses. His tour in East Timor in the late 1970s earned him accolades and swift promotion, but he also came under heavy criticism when soldiers from his special forces units were tried over a series of abductions and tortures during President Suharto's rule. In May 1998, Prabowo was dismissed by Indonesian military commander General Wiranto for his alleged involvement in the disappearance of pro-democracy activists. After leaving the military, Prabowo joined his brother and billionaire businessman, Hashim Djojohadikusumo, to build a lucrative business empire. Hashim was also among the early founders of *Gerindra*, coining the party's name and bankrolling its television and media campaigns that were aimed not only at providing visibility for the party, but also to influence public perceptions of Prabowo, which were often negative as a result of his alleged role in human rights violations during his service in the Indonesian military. *Gerindra* participated in its first legislative election on 9 April 2009 and won 4.5 per cent of the vote on the way to

securing 26 seats in the People's Representative Council. Prabowo Subianto subsequently joined former president **Megawati Sukarnoputri**, head of the **Partai Demokrasi Indonesia-Perjuangan** (Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle, PDI-P) as her vice-presidential running mate for the 2009 presidential elections on the understanding that she would support a future presidential bid. The pair gained 26.8 per cent of the vote against incumbent **Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono** and Boediono's 60.8 per cent victory and filed a rejection of the results on account of electoral violations.

In November 2011 Prabowo confirmed his intent to join the 2014 presidential race on the back of the increasing popularity of *Gerindra*. This was confirmed in March 2012 when *Gerindra* officially nominated Prabowo as its presidential candidate. Of the parties that contested the April 2014 elections, *Gerindra* registered the largest improvement when its share of the popular vote rose from under 5 per cent in 2009 to 12 per cent. It entered into coalition with *Golkar*, **Partai Keadilan Sejahtera** (PKS), **Partai Amanat Nasional** (PAN), and **Partai Persatuan Pembangunan** (PPP). In 2017 *Gerindra* backed Anies Baswedan in his successful effort to unseat incumbent Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, an ally of President **Joko Widodo**, for the gubernatorial elections. Bolstered by that victory, *Gerindra* put forward Prabowo Subianto again as their candidate to contest the April 2019 presidential election. The rerun of the 2014 election saw the same result, as Joko Widodo defeated Prabowo by ten percentage points. A legal challenge mounted by the latter soon after failed to alter the results. Nevertheless, in a demonstration of rapprochement, Widodo invited Prabowo to join his new cabinet in order to assume the defence portfolio while *Gerindra*, hitherto the largest opposition party in Parliament but the only one that had no experience in government, would join the ruling coalition led by PDI-P. In the event, Prabowo was joined in the cabinet by Edhy Prabowo, deputy chairman of *Gerindra*, who was invited to helm the maritime affairs and fisheries ministry. Edhy Prabowo's term in the cabinet was short-lived, however, as he was arrested in November 2020 for accepting bribes. The arrest was seen as a

major setback for *Gerindra*, given Prabowo Subianto's 2019 campaign promises that his party would be at the forefront of the fight against corruption. Nevertheless, the fact that the party exists primarily to serve as a vehicle for the personal ambitions of Prabowo was reaffirmed when he was chosen as chairman for another five-year tenure in 2020, which all but confirms his candidature for the presidential election scheduled to be held by 2025.

see also: *Golkar*; Megawati Sukarnoputri; *Partai Amanat Nasional*; *Partai Demokrasi Indonesia-Perjuangan*; *Partai Keadilan Sejahtera*; *Partai Persatuan Pembangunan*; Prabowo Subianto; Suharto; Widodo, Joko; Yudhoyono, Susilo Bambang.

### **Gestapu** (Indonesia)

*Gestapu* is an acronym in Indonesian taken from *Gerakan September Tiga Puluah* (Thirtieth of September Movement). The acronym represents a deliberate attempt to tar an abortive coup with the brush of Nazi-German symbolism. That abortive coup was mounted primarily in the capital Jakarta in the early hours of 1 October 1965 against a background of rising political tension. A group of dissident army and air force officers led nominally by a battalion commander from President **Sukarno's** palace guard arranged the abduction of six of the country's most senior generals, including the army commander, Lieutenant General Achmad Yani. They were taken to Halim Air Base outside the capital, where those not killed during their abduction were murdered at the Crocodile Hole and all the bodies thrown down a well. The coup group then broadcast the names of members of a Revolutionary Council set up ostensibly to forestall a plot by the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). The council announced that it would carry out the policies of President Sukarno, who was safe under its protection. Major General **Suharto**, then head of Kostrad, the army's strategic reserve based in West Java, was not on the abduction list. He assumed command and overcame the coup group within two days.

The Communist Party of Indonesia was implicated in the abortive coup, and its members and presumed supporters soon became the



object of physical attack by security forces and Muslim militants with at least 100,000 fatalities. Also, President Sukarno was politically discredited because of his patronage of the communists, his presence at the coup headquarters at Halim Air Base, his failure to denounce the murder of the generals, and his description of the coup attempt as an internal affair of the army. The outcome of the abortive coup was a fundamental change in the structure of the political system at the expense of the communists and President Sukarno and to the advantage of the armed forces as a corporate entity. Their political dominance was asserted on 11 March 1966 when President Sukarno was obliged to transfer executive authority to Suharto, by then promoted to lieutenant general (*see* **Supersemar**). The next day, the Communist Party of Indonesia was declared an illegal organization.

In August 2013, a critically acclaimed film, *The Act of Killing*, was released which detailed the role of gangsters mobilized by the Indonesian military to root out and massacre suspected communists and leftists in Medan, North Sumatra, during that troublesome period in 1965.

*see also:* Guided Democracy; Suharto; Sukarno; *Supersemar*.

### **Ghazalie Shafie, Tun Mohamad** (Malaysia)

Ghazali Shafie, popularly known as 'King Ghaz', transferred from a career in the civil service to political office in the wake of communal violence in the **May 13 Racial Riots** in 1969. He served in turn as minister for special functions and then concurrently as minister of information, minister of home affairs, and, finally, foreign minister of Malaysia. He held the last office from July 1981 until July 1984 in **Mahathir Mohamad's** first administration and then retired from active politics.

Ghazali Shafie was born in Kuala Lipis on 22 March 1922 and was educated at Raffles College in Singapore. During the Japanese occupation, he played a role in the British-inspired clandestine resistance. After the Pacific War, he studied law at the University of Wales in Aberystwyth and then spent a year at the London School of Economics. On his return to Malaya, he joined

the civil service and then went abroad for training to prepare for a senior position in the country's fledgling Foreign Ministry. On independence in August 1957, he became deputy secretary of the ministry of external affairs. In 1958 he assumed the office of permanent secretary, subsequently secretary-general, which he held without interruption until 1970. During that period, he played a key role in advising on foreign policy both over the formation of Malaysia and in countering Indonesia's **Confrontation** of the wider federation during 1963–6. As a flamboyant politician during the 1970s, he acquired a reputation as an ambitious man. After the death of the prime minister, **Tun Abdul Razak**, who was succeeded by **Tun Hussein Onn**, with Mahathir Mohamad becoming deputy prime minister, he used his powers of detention as minister of home affairs to assert his position against political rivals. Mahathir held on to office and when he became prime minister in July 1981, Ghazali Shafie was shifted to the less-powerful portfolio of foreign affairs. As foreign minister, he played an active part in ASEAN's collective diplomacy during the early years of the Cambodian conflict. 'King Ghaz' retired to a corporate career in 1984. He passed away in January 2010.

*see also:* ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Hussein Onn, Tun; Mahathir Mohamad, Tun; May 13 Racial Riots 1969; Razak, Tun Abdul.

### **Giap, General Vo Nguyen** (Vietnam) *see* **Vo Nguyen Giap**

### **Global Maritime Fulcrum** (Indonesia)

As an expression of Indonesia's identity as an archipelagic state and longstanding aspirations to be recognized as a regional maritime power, President **Joko Widodo** articulated a vision of Indonesia as a maritime hub during the **East Asia Summit** in Naypyidaw on 13 November 2014 when he announced the concept of the Global Maritime Fulcrum or GMF. Envisioned to accelerate economic development while also enhancing Indonesia's strategic influence in its maritime space, there were to be five pillars to the concept: (1) rebuilding Indonesia's maritime

culture; (2) better management of Indonesia's maritime resources; (3) development of Indonesia's maritime infrastructure and connectivity; (4) intensifying Indonesia's maritime diplomacy, and (5) strengthening Indonesia's maritime defence force.

Fanfare that surrounded its declaration was not followed with concrete action to make the potential of the GMF as a guiding strategic concept a reality. At issue was the creation of a capable naval capacity, which was impeded by the challenges inherent in the need to straddle the twin objectives of power projection on one hand, and the need to ensure the security of maritime resources within Indonesia's Exclusive Economic Zone on the other. While an Indonesian Ocean Policy was articulated several years later by the Coordinating Ministry for Maritime Affairs in an attempt to confer to the GMF some substance, it withered on the vine for want of attention despite some investments in the form of port upgrades and purchase of some naval vessels. The GMF also suffered from a lack of leadership. Rather than centralized coordination of the five pillars across the government, elements of the GMF were left to the respective bureaucracies to pursue based on their own interpretation. By the end of the first term of the Joko Widodo presidency, little was heard of the GMF; by the advent of the second term, it had all but disappeared from the lexicon.

*see also:* East Asia Summit 2005-; Widodo, Joko.

### **Goh Chok Tong** (Singapore)

Goh Chok Tong succeeded **Lee Kuan Yew** as prime minister of Singapore on 28 November 1990. Goh was born on 20 May 1941 in Singapore; he read economics at the University of Singapore and then entered the government's Economic Planning Unit. In 1969, after post-graduate studies at Williams College in the United States, he was seconded to Neptune Oriental Lines as planning and projects manager, rising to managing director in 1973. He was persuaded to enter politics by Finance Minister Hon Sui Sen, and stood successfully as a candidate for the ruling **People's Action Party** (PAP) in the parliamentary elections of December 1976. Goh was appointed senior minister of state in the Ministry of Defence in September

1977 and then minister for trade and industry in March 1979. As a leading member of the second generation of politicians whom Lee Kuan Yew was training to succeed the founding fathers of the republic, he was also given experience in the portfolios of health and defence.

After general elections in December 1984 in which there was a notable swing against the ruling party, Goh was made first deputy prime minister, having been picked by his cabinet colleagues, although Lee Kuan Yew let it be known that he had not been his first choice. Goh succeeded Lee in November 1990 after a long apprenticeship. His predecessor remained in the cabinet with the office of senior minister, also retaining initially the post of secretary-general of PAP. Goh was distinguished from Lee by his softer political style, more in tune with the aspirations of a younger, more affluent generation of Singaporeans. At the same time however, he represented a continuity of philosophy based on the shared conviction of the essential vulnerability of the island-state and the need to demonstrate resoluteness of mind and action. He led PAP to resounding electoral victories in 1991, 1997, and 2001, in which the party won 61 per cent, 65 per cent, and 75 per cent of the popular vote, respectively. Under his steady-handed leadership, Singapore weathered the storms of the **Asian Financial Crisis** of 1997-8 and the **Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)** outbreak in 2003.

Following the 2001 general election, Goh Chok Tong announced his intention to relinquish office, which he did on 12 August 2004. He was succeeded by **Lee Hsien Loong**, eldest son of Lee Kuan Yew. Shortly afterwards, Goh assumed the post of chairman of the Monetary Authority of Singapore, while concurrently serving as senior minister in the cabinet. In the 2006 election Goh was tasked with helping PAP win back the two opposition wards of Hougang and Potong Pasir. In the event, the effort was unsuccessful, and the seats were retained by opposition politicians **Low Thia Khiang** and **Chiam See Tong**. In January 2011, Goh announced that he would seek re-election to Parliament at the 2011 elections. However, the Marine Parade Group Representation Constituency (GRC) that he had helmed since

1988 proved one of the most hotly contested battlegrounds. Goh barely managed to avert an upset, eventually leading his team to victory with 56.6 per cent of the vote. In May that year, he announced his retirement from cabinet. He was nevertheless given the title emeritus senior minister, and he continues to play an active role especially in the area of foreign relations.

see also: Asian Financial Crisis 1997–8; Chiam See Tong; Lee Hsien Loong; Lee Kuan Yew; Low Thia Khiang; People's Action Party; Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS).

### Goh Keng Swee (Singapore)

Goh Keng Swee was active as a leading political figure in Singapore for 25 years, playing a key role in promoting both the island-state's economic development and its defence capability. He was born in Malacca on 6 October 1918 and was educated at Raffles College in Singapore and, after the Pacific War, in England at the London School of Economics, returning to join the local civil service. In London, he was a founder and first chairman of the nationalist Malayan Forum, whose alumni included **Lee Kuan Yew** and **Tun Abdul Razak**. He resigned from the civil service to stand as a candidate for the **People's Action Party** (PAP) in May 1959 and was appointed minister of finance in the government formed after its electoral victory. On Singapore's expulsion from the Federation of Malaysia in August 1965, Goh was the first defence minister in the independent state. He then became deputy prime minister in 1972, a post which he held until he retired from politics in 1984. He enjoyed the reputation of being one of the few intellectual peers of Lee Kuan Yew. In retirement, he served for a time as deputy chairman of the Monetary Authority of Singapore, an economic advisor to the government of China, head of the Racecourse Totalisator Board, and deputy chairman of the Government of Singapore Investment Corporation. Since suffering strokes in 1999 and 2000, Goh had been in ill health. He died on 14 May 2010 at the age of 91, and was laid to rest with a state funeral.

see also: Lee Kuan Yew; People's Action Party; Razak, Tun Abdul.

### **Golkar** (Indonesia)

*Golkar* is an acronym drawn from the Indonesian *Golongan Karya*, meaning Functional Groups. *Golkar* is a political organization, which was employed primarily to generate electoral support for the administration of President **Suharto**. It was established in October 1964 by senior army officers under the extended acronym of *Sekber Golkar* from *Sekretariat Bersama Golongan Karya* (Joint Secretariat of Functional Groups). Their object was to use the organization to counter the influence of the Communist Party within the National Front set up by President **Sukarno** as a vehicle for mass mobilization in his own political interest. *Sekber Golkar* failed to make any political showing and was then overtaken by events with the abortive coup (see **Gestapu**) of October 1965 and its far-reaching political consequences. Nothing was heard of the organization until 1971, when it was revived to serve the electoral interests of the Suharto administration, which had made a formal commitment to constitutionalism.

*Golkar* was rehabilitated in 1971 for the specific purpose of demonstrating electoral support for President Suharto's rule without risking a change of government. *Golkar* was first so employed in elections in July 1971 and secured 62.8 per cent of the vote with the evident support of the armed forces and the civil service. That figure was raised to 64.3 per cent in May 1977 and approximately held in May 1982. In April 1987 *Golkar* received a somewhat embarrassing 72.9 per cent of the vote, which was reduced to 68 per cent in elections in June 1992. In parliamentary elections in May 1997, it polled 74 per cent of the vote and secured 325 of the 425 elective seats. This overwhelming majority served to provide a mandate for President Suharto's successful bid for a seventh consecutive term of office in March 1998. *Golkar's* political fortunes waned dramatically with President Suharto's resignation in the following May against a background of economic crisis. Interim president **B. J. Habibie** led the much-discredited party into fresh parliamentary elections in June 1999 in which *Golkar* secured 20.9 per cent of the vote with 120 seats behind the **Partai Demokrasi Indonesia-Perjuangan** (PDI-P), which secured 37.4 per cent and 154

seats. Moreover, after a banking scandal over financing his campaign and resentment over his handling of East Timor and evident divisions within the party, Habibie withdrew from the presidential contest within the **People's Consultative Assembly** (MPR) in October 1999, which was won by **Abdurrahman Wahid**. However, a number of members of the liberal wing of *Golkar* were included in the new cabinet announced at the end of the month, while Akbar Tanjung became Parliament speaker. In 2001 *Golkar* was successful in its bid to have President Wahid replaced by **Megawati Sukarnoputri** through a special session of the MPR.

The party continues to be of political consequence in spite of its previous association with the **New Order** regime. *Golkar* has been represented in all cabinets since the fall of Suharto, and thus has never been in opposition since its founding. In 2004 *Golkar* won the biggest share of the vote in both the parliamentary and local elections. In September of the same year, **Yusuf Kalla** became vice-president to **Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono**, cementing for it a role as kingmaker. Following the 2014 legislative election, *Golkar* emerged as the second largest party in Parliament, behind PDI-P. Although the party had initially supported the presidential bid of **Prabowo Subianto**, it quickly shifted allegiance to **Joko Widodo** within two years of the latter assuming high office. Beneath this veneer of strength, however, lay a deeply factionalized party with camps revolving around former chairmen Akbar Tanjung and Abdulrizal Bakrie, former vice-chairman Agung Laksono, two-term vice-president **Yusuf Kalla**, and Luhut Pandjaitan, a close confidante of President Joko Widodo.

However, *Golkar* was thrown into crisis in May 2016 when its chairman Setya Novanto was implicated in a corruption case for receiving kickbacks for projects involving biometric identity cards. Setya was replaced by businessman and coordinating minister for economic affairs Airlangga Hatarto. Significantly, Airlangga is the first ethnic Javanese leader of the party since the collapse of the New Order. Meanwhile, *Golkar* emerged from the 2019 election as the third-largest party in Parliament after it polled slightly over 12 per cent of the vote.

see also: *Gestapu*; Habibie, B. J.; Kalla, Yusuf; Megawati Sukarnoputri; *Partai Demokrasi Indonesia-Perjuangan*; People's Consultative Assembly; Prabowo Subianto; Suharto; Sukarno; Wahid, Abdurrahman; Widodo, Joko; Yudhoyono, Susilo Bambang.

### **Guided Democracy** (Indonesia)

Guided Democracy is the name for the authoritarian political system inaugurated by decree by President **Sukarno** on 5 July 1959 when he dissolved the elected Constituent Assembly and reinstated the independence constitution of 1945. Known in Indonesian as *Demokrasi Terpimpin*, its inauguration marked the final failure of Indonesia to practise parliamentary democracy against a tempestuous background of political and military factionalism, religious and regional dissension, and economic decline. Guided Democracy gave rise to a myriad of radical and romantic political symbols which Sukarno wielded to his short-term advantage to the neglect of economic priorities. Although Guided Democracy was represented as an authentically Indonesian alternative to an alien political tradition, it was an intensely competitive system. The personal dominance of President Sukarno barely masked the bitter contention between the conservative armed forces and the radical Communist Party. Sukarno's political balancing act between the two rivals came to an end after an abortive coup (see *Gestapu*) in October 1965 which discredited him and the Communist Party. A military initiative in March 1966 led by Lieutenant General **Suharto** which removed Sukarno from effective power and also proscribed the Communist Party marked the dissolution of Guided Democracy and its replacement by a more constructive developmental authoritarianism.

see also: *Gestapu*; Suharto; Sukarno.

### **Gulf of Tonkin Incident 1964** (Vietnam) see **Tonkin Gulf Incident 1964**

### **Gusmão, José 'Xanana'** (Timor-Leste)

José 'Xanana' (Alexandre) Gusmão was leader of East Timorese resistance to Indonesian rule and occupied the offices of both president

as well as prime minister of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste on separate occasions before assuming the important position of minister of planning and strategic investment.

Gusmão was born in 1946 in Dili and was educated at a Jesuit seminary. He then worked in the Department of Forestry and Agriculture during Portuguese rule until 1974. After Indonesia's invasion in December 1975, he rose to prominence as a **Fretilin** resistance leader. He succeeded Nicolau Lobato as commander of its military wing, *Falintil*, in 1979 and helped to sustain its armed struggle against superior odds during the 1980s. He was captured in Dili in 1992 and sentenced to life imprisonment in the following year, which was subsequently commuted to 20 years. In April 1998, he was elected as president of the National Council for Maubere (East Timorese) Resistance at a convention of exiles in Portugal. After the overthrow of President **Suharto** in May 1998, he became the interlocutor for the East Timorese cause and was released into house arrest in February 1999 in the month after the decision by President **B. J. Habibie** to permit the East Timorese to choose between autonomy within Indonesia or full independence. He returned to East Timor in October 1999, after the UN-sanctioned International Force for East Timor had begun to restore order following the orchestrated anarchy in the wake of the UN-conducted referendum in which the vast majority of voters had opted for independence.

The National Council of Timorese Resistance, formerly known as the National Council of Maubere Resistance, elected Gusmão to lead the movement in 2000. Gusmão was also speaker of the National Council from November 2000 to April 2001. The National Council was a body comprising various groups ranging from political parties, civil society movements, and religious organizations that were involved in charting the future of East Timor during its transitional phase. Gusmão contested the country's first presidential elections as an independent candidate and won with a large majority. He was sworn in as president of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste on 20 May 2002 for a five-year term. When his

presidential term ended, Gusmão entered party politics as leader of the **National Congress for Timorese Reconstruction** (CNRT) party, campaigning in the 2007 legislative elections. Having performed significantly at the polls, CNRT was able to form an alliance with three other major parties, and collectively it was known as the Alliance with Parliamentary Majority (AMP). The AMP was able to secure more than half the seats in Parliament and on 8 August 2007 Gusmão was sworn in as the fourth prime minister of Timor-Leste, concurrently holding the defence portfolio as well. On 11 February 2008, Gusmão's motorcade was attacked just hours after rebels had shot and wounded President **José Ramos-Horta**, but Gusmão escaped unharmed. Throughout his tenure as prime minister and even after, Gusmão has been singularly focused on settling maritime boundary disputes with Australia to secure access to resource-rich offshore zones in the **Timor Gap** that he envisaged would drive industrialization policies for Timor-Leste. However, his efforts were periodically disrupted by the vicissitudes of coalition politics and an uneasy relationship with *Fretilin* secretary-general **Mari Alkatiri**. In 2015, Gusmão nominally stepped back from power when he relinquished his position as prime minister. He would go on to assume the powerful position of minister for planning and strategic investment, a position that allowed him to be the chief negotiator on maritime boundary discussions with Australia which led to the signing of the 2018 Timor Sea Treaty.

Gusmão is a mild-mannered man with a poetic disposition and considerable personal appeal. In May 2000, he published his autobiography entitled *To Resist Is to Win* and was also the main narrator of the film *A Hero's Journey*, also known as *Where the Sun Rises*. The film was a 2006 documentary detailing nearly two and a half years of East Timor's resistance against the occupying Indonesian forces and its subsequent tryst with independence and the challenges that lie ahead for this young country.

see also: Alkatiri, Mari; *Fretilin*; Habibie, B. J.; National Congress for Timorese Reconstruction; Ramos-Horta, José; Suharto; Timor Gap; United Nations: East Timor 1999–2002.

**Guterres, Francisco 'Lu'Olo'**

(Timor-Leste)

A former schoolteacher turned freedom fighter and eventually, politician, Francisco Lu'Olo Guterres is the current chairman of the **Fretilin** party and, concurrently, fourth president of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste. He was elected to office in May 2017 after two previous attempts at high office, and is the first president of Timor-Leste who retained a party affiliation.

Guterres was born in Ossú, in the district of Viqueque, in eastern Timor-Leste. He joined *Fretilin* in 1974, just before the Indonesian occupation of East Timor. A protégé of the late *Fretilin* co-founder Vicente 'Sahe' Reis, Guterres, like many of his contemporaries, would take up arms against Indonesian forces for 25 years while based in mountainous regions of Timor-Leste. In 1997, he rose to become the ranking *Fretilin* leader who was based in Timor-Leste when he was appointed secretary of the Directive Commission of *Fretilin* (CDF), which served as the command centre of the movement. The first person to hold that office was **José 'Xanana' Gusmão**. He would later go on to assume the position of general secretary of the *Fretilin* Presidential Council, which was created to replace the CDF. In July 2001, he was elected president of *Fretilin* at its first National Congress, and also president of the Constitutional Assembly. Following independence in 2002, Guterres became president of the National Parliament. He ran

for president in 2007 and 2012, losing on both occasions, first to José Ramos-Horta and later, to **Taur Matan Ruak**. In March 2017, Guterres made his third attempt at the presidency. With support from Gusmão and his party, the **National Congress for Timorese Reconstruction**, Guterres managed to secure a convincing victory that required only one round of ballot despite the fact that the presidential race in Timor-Leste was a two-round election.

Unlike his predecessors, Guterres appeared to more readily allow partisan considerations to shape his exercise of the full constitutional powers afforded his office under the Timorese system of semipresidentialism. This became evident soon after the May 2018 elections, when Guterres blocked the appointment of 12 nominees to cabinet posts for reasons of corruption and 'lack of the right moral profile', thereby creating an impasse which hamstrung the opposition of several major ministries. Guterres also failed in efforts to enlist support from other major parties for **Mari Alkatiri** and *Fretilin* to form a government, leading to the formation of a minority government between *Fretilin*, which emerged as the largest party following the election, and several smaller political parties.

see also: Alkatiri, Mari; *Fretilin*; Gusmão, José 'Xanana'; National Congress for Timorese Reconstruction; Ramos-Horta, José; Ruak, Taur Matan.

# H

## **Ha Tinh Fish Kill Incident 2016** (Vietnam)

On 4 April 2016, over a hundred tonnes of dead fish washed up ashore along the shoreline at Ha Tinh Province. It was believed that the environmental catastrophe was caused by the discharge of untreated waste containing cyanide, phenol, and iron hydroxides from the steel industry in the Vung Ang Economic Zone into the **South China Sea**. It was later admitted several weeks later that it was a Taiwanese-owned steel plant, Formosa Ha Tinh Steel Corporation, that was responsible for the episode. The Vietnamese government completed its investigations in late June and concluded that Formosa Ha Tinh was culpable and ordered to pay compensation of \$500 million.

The incident devastated local communities whose livelihood depended on this fishery resource. Perceptions that the Vietnamese government was trying to withhold information and protect Formosa Ha Tinh triggered mass protest, both online and on the streets. The authorities responded with arrests and harassment of activists, and blocked several websites including Facebook and Instagram. This was one of Vietnam's worst environmental disasters in its modern history. The premises of Formosa Ha Tinh was also the site of massive anti-China protests in May 2014 in response to China's deployment of an oil rig into the disputed South China Sea.

see *also*: **South China Sea**.

## **Habibie, B. J.** (Indonesia/Timor-Leste)

Dr B. J. Habibie became president of Indonesia on 21 May 1998 on the resignation of President **Suharto** against a background of economic crisis and political turbulence. As vice-president, elected by the **People's Consultative Assembly** (MPR) in the previous March, he succeeded to high office for the remainder of the presidential term under article 8 of Indonesia's constitution. As a protégé and close confidant of former

president Suharto, he represented political continuity as a symbol of a discredited order. Nonetheless, he did not abdicate presidential ambitions. He pursued them through promoting a liberal agenda whereby political prisoners were released and freedom of the press was restored. He authorized fresh parliamentary and presidential elections but failed to overcome the political taint of the Suharto era, which was demonstrated in the poor performance of **Golkar**, the government's party in parliamentary elections in June 1999. He lost the support of the armed forces through his seemingly precipitate willingness to countenance the independence of East Timor in an offer of a referendum made unexpectedly in January 1999. A scandal over campaign financing further diminished his presidential chances, while he was opposed by a liberal faction within his own party. In the event, he withdrew from the presidential contest and gave up office on 20 October 1999 when the MPR elected **Abdurrahman Wahid**.

Bacharuddin Jusuf Habibie was born on 25 June 1936 in Pare-Pare in south Sulawesi. He was educated at the Technical University in Bandung and then at the Technical University in Aachen, Germany, from which he graduated with a doctorate in engineering. He became a member of the faculty and then director for research and development for Messerschmitt, the German aircraft corporation. He was well known to President Suharto through a family connection established during a military posting in Sulawesi. Indeed, Suharto took the personal initiative to bring Habibie back to Indonesia in 1974, where he worked initially for Pertamina, the state oil corporation. In 1978, he was appointed minister of state for research and technology, holding that portfolio continuously until becoming vice-president in 1998. In that portfolio, he made a dubious mark by establishing an aircraft manufacturing industry in Bandung as part of a grand design to make Indonesia a regional centre of modern technology. In this costly and unsuccessful enterprise, he enjoyed

President Suharto's full backing. Habibie began to engage in political activities from December 1990 when, again with Suharto's support, he was instrumental in establishing ICMI (Association of Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals) as a counter to the influence of the armed forces. In 1998 he was hand-picked by President Suharto in a political initiative interpreted as an attempt to ensure that his running mate was not a credible successor. Habibie had by then secured a reputation for eccentricity in economic judgements as well as displaying an excessively egocentric disposition. When Suharto reluctantly resigned on 20 May 1998, Habibie as stipulated by the 1945 Constitution was sworn into the office of the president on 21 May 1998. Habibie courted controversy very early on in office when he was quoted in a newspaper article as describing Singapore as a 'little red dot', a term that is today an epithet for the country.

While he was expected to function as a reformist, Habibie's policies seemed to be an extension of the Suharto regime. The cabinet which he headed, while known as the Development Reform Cabinet, continued to seek the patronage of former members of Suharto's cabinet and the highly criticized Indonesian military. Habibie's only attempt at reform seemed to be in keeping the authority of the governor of the Central Bank independent and including **Hamzah Haz** of **Partai Persatuan Pembangunan** (United Development Party, PPP) in his cabinet. Hamzah Haz eventually served as the ninth vice-president of Indonesia under President **Megawati Sukarnoputri**. However, it was Habibie's initiative in suggesting the possibility of an independent East Timor – which materialized on 20 May 2002, ending nearly 27 years of Indonesian occupation – that had far-reaching consequences. Habibie was not just instrumental in the referendum that led to East Timor's independence but also in bringing about some form of stability in the chaotic economy of Indonesia that was greatly impaired by the **Asian Financial Crisis** and the political turmoil that gripped the country just before Suharto's resignation. After stepping down from office, Habibie contributed to Indonesian policy matters through his think tank, the Habibie Centre, and also supported **Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono** as

advisor during his presidency. The first Indonesian president to be born outside of Java, Habibie died of heart failure on 11 September 2019 at the age of 83.

see also: Asian Financial Crisis 1997–8; *Golkar*; Haz, Hamzah; Megawati Sukarnoputri; *Partai Persatuan Pembangunan*; People's Consultative Assembly; Suharto; Wahid, Abdurrahman; Yudhoyono, Susilo Bambang.

### Hadi Awang, Abdul (Malaysia)

The current president of **Parti Islam Se-Malaysia** (PAS), Abdul Hadi Awang, was born in 1947 in the northern Malay state of Terengganu. He holds bachelor and master's degrees in *shari'a* from the Islamic University of Madinah and Al-Azhar University, respectively.

Abdul Hadi's political activism began when he led the youth movement of PAS in his home state of Terengganu. In 1977, he was elected to the PAS Central Executive Committee. He was also concurrently leader of the Terengganu chapter of the Islamic Youth Movement of Malaysia (**ABIM**). Abdul Hadi is known to be a firebrand Islamic preacher and prolific author, and early in his political career he regularly criticized the religious credentials of the Muslim leaders of **UMNO (United Malays National Organization)**. Indeed, he gained notoriety in 1981 for his comments about UMNO, now famously known in Malaysia's lexicon of politics as the *Amanat Haji Hadi* (Edict of Haji Hadi), where he alleged that UMNO perpetuated un-Islamic rule and called for a *jihad* against them. At the same time, Abdul Hadi was equally critical of the leadership of the main PAS party in the late 1970s, which many from the youth movement saw to be drifting away from true Islamic teachings. In 1982, Abdul Hadi helped to usher in clerical rule in PAS, and in 1989 he became the party's deputy president. He was briefly chief minister of Terengganu when PAS managed to wrest the state assembly from UMNO at the 1999 general election. UMNO regained the state at the 2004 elections. Following the sudden death of Fadzil Noor in 2002, Abdul Hadi was appointed party president.

In PAS circles, Abdul Hadi is known to be an advocate of conservative interpretations and positions on religious matters, and was the chief



architect of the party's controversial Islamic State Document published at the end of 2003. He is frequently also associated with the issue of the implementation of *hudud* (the Islamic penal code) in Malaysia, which he has championed persistently. Political pragmatism and the growing fortunes of the opposition **Pakatan Rakyat** (People's Alliance) coalition, along with lobbying from progressives within the party, prompted him to temper his conservatism in pursuit of aspirations to national leadership. An attempt at opposition comity was pursued at the 2008 and 2013 elections but proved short-lived. In 2015 Abdul Hadi led PAS to break ties with allies in the **Democratic Action Party**. A move that led his party to fracture as progressives departed *en masse* to form **Parti Amanah Negara**. In a display of political opportunism, his characteristic belligerent tone towards UMNO underwent transformation as well. UMNO was now celebrated for their commitment to the Malay-Muslim cause, and this shift in tone eventually found concrete expression when Abdul Hadi formalized political collaboration with UMNO in the form of *Muafakat Nasional*. He was subsequently appointed special envoy to the Middle East by both the **Perikatan Nasional** and **Barisan Nasional** governments.

see also: ABIM; *Barisan Nasional* (BN); Democratic Action Party (DAP); *Pakatan Rakyat*; *Parti Amanah Negara*; *Parti Islam Se-Malaysia*; *Perikatan Nasional*; UMNO (United Malays National Organization).

### **Hambali (Riduan Isamuddin)** (Indonesia)

Riduan Isamuddin, better known as Hambali, was born on 4 April 1964 in Cianjur, West Java, in Indonesia. He is the former operational leader of the Indonesian terrorist organization **Jemaah Islamiyah** (JI) and had served as its main link to Al-Qaeda. From 2003 to 2005, Hambali was believed to have been third in command in Al-Qaeda. He has been detained in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, since September 2006 after previously being kept in CIA detention facilities in unknown locations.

Hambali joined the *jihad* against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan from 1987 to 1990, and

during this time he was believed to have met Osama bin Laden personally. Hambali remained in Afghanistan after the Soviet withdrawal and returned to Malaysia only in 1991, where he met the two co-founders of JI, **Abu Bakar Ba'asyir** and Abdullah Sungkar. During this time he travelled around Southeast Asia promoting militant extremism and cultivating relationships between JI and other Islamist groups. In mid-1991 he travelled from Malaysia to the Philippines as a Muslim missionary, and sojourned at Camp Abu Bakar, then the headquarters of the **Moro Islamic Liberation Front**. To covertly facilitate terrorist activities, Hambali formed *Konsojaya* in June 1994, purportedly a trading company involved in palm oil trade between Malaysia and Afghanistan but which in fact served as a conduit for the movement of funds. It was with Hambali's prompting that JI began entertaining a vision not only to transform Indonesia into an Islamic state governed by *shari'a*, but also the expansion of this vision across Southeast Asia towards the goal of the formation of a regional Islamic caliphate. Following the fall of President **Suharto** in 1998, Hambali returned to Indonesia, where he could organize more freely, and where brewing communal tensions offered opportunities for his followers to rise in the defence of Islam. In 1998, Hambali was appointed leader of JI's regional group which encompassed Malaysia and Singapore. Following the 2000 Christmas Eve bombings, Hambali became a fugitive and fled to Malaysia with his wife, Noralwizah Lee Abdullah.

In 2000, Hambali went underground and started a wave of church bombings in Indonesia. He is alleged to be responsible for several terrorist attacks, including the bombing of churches in December 2000 and subsequent bombings in the Philippines, as well as the Marriott Hotel attacks in Jakarta. Intelligence agencies and police from Indonesia, Malaysia, and the United States, as well as testimony by those arrested for the October 2002 bombings in Bali, identified Hambali as the mastermind behind those attacks and the one who secured US\$36,000 to finance the operation (see **Terrorism in Southeast Asia**). He was captured by a joint operation between the Thai police and the

CIA in Ayudhya, Thailand. At the time of his arrest, Hambali was the most wanted man in Southeast Asia. He was charged by a US military tribunal in 2017 for his involvement in the Bali bombings as well as the August 2003 bombing of the JW Marriott hotel in Jakarta. Further charges were levelled against him in February 2021, but the trials have been postponed for public health reasons because of the **Covid-19** pandemic.

*see also:* Ba'asyir, Abu Bakar; Covid-19; *Jemaah Islamiyah*; Moro Islamic Liberation Front; Terrorism in Southeast Asia.

### **Hanoi Summit (ASEAN) 1998** (Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/Laos/Malaysia/Myanmar/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand/Vietnam)

The sixth meeting of ASEAN's heads of government convened in the Vietnamese capital in mid-December 1998. The venue of the meeting was significant as further evidence of reconciliation between Vietnam and those founding members of **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)**, which had challenged its invasion and occupation of Cambodia. The declared purpose of the meeting was to devise a corporate strategy that would enable ASEAN's governments to address the regional economic crisis whose devastating impact had diminished the standing of the Association. To that end, a Hanoi Plan of Action was promulgated in an attempt to strengthen regional cooperation but without any tangible effect on economic circumstances. In the event, the main business of the meeting was the problem of Cambodia's membership, which had been postponed in July 1997 after a violent coup in Phnom Penh displacing the first prime minister, Prince **Norodom Ranariddh**, to the political advantage of the second prime minister, **Hun Sen**, who attended the Hanoi meeting as an observer. Vietnam used its position as host to press for Cambodia's immediate entry and was supported by Indonesia and Malaysia, while the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand insisted that its entry be delayed until the coalition government formed in the previous month headed by Hun Sen demonstrated its durability.

Vietnam's prime minister, **Phan Van Khai**, had his way in announcing that a consensus had been reached on Cambodia's membership and that a ceremony to mark its entry would take place in Hanoi at an unspecified date. That ceremony took place in April 1999.

*see also:* ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Hun Sen; Phan Van Khai; Ranariddh, Prince Norodom.

### **Hanoi Summit (ASEAN) April 2010** (Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/Laos/Malaysia/Myanmar/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand/Vietnam)

The 16th meeting of heads of government of **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** convened in the capital of Vietnam on 8 and 9 April 2010. The focus of the agenda revolved around the concept of ASEAN Connectivity, and in particular a Master Plan scheduled for submission at the next summit at the end of the year. ASEAN leaders agreed that while the importance of developing ASEAN's external relations should continue to be emphasized, it was nevertheless crucial to enhance intra-ASEAN connectivity and improve on existing communication and infrastructure frame works so as to deepen integration. Prior to the summit proper, attempts were made by the Vietnamese chair to push for a common approach in dealing with China on the **South China Sea** territorial disputes, where Vietnam was a claimant along with several other ASEAN states. Nevertheless, the issue was only mentioned in passing due to a lack of consensus, while the focus of the discussion remained very much on strengthening action in economic areas of cooperation.

*see also:* ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; South China Sea.

### **Hanoi Summit (ASEAN) October 2010** (Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/Laos/Malaysia/Myanmar/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand/Vietnam)

The 17th meeting of heads of government of **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** convened in the capital of Vietnam from 28 to 30 October 2010. The main business

of the meeting was to endorse the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity which aims to boost physical connectivity, institutional connectivity, and people-to-people connectivity within the region, thereby facilitating the building of the **ASEAN Community**. However, it remains to be seen whether this new concept of connectivity can bridge the growing division within the regional organization between the maritime Southeast Asia states (the original members) and those newer members in mainland Southeast Asia. The latter – Myanmar, Cambodia, Laos, and, to a lesser extent, Vietnam and Thailand – have, with their growing infrastructural linkages, investment and trade, and even political ties with China, developed into something of a greater Mekong region that threatens to diminish the relative importance of ASEAN and its community-building efforts. These long-term concerns notwithstanding, the Hanoi Summit was overshadowed by the China–Japan dispute over the Diaoyu/Senkaku Islands. A scheduled bilateral meeting between leaders of both countries on the sidelines of the summit was cancelled by China after it accused Japan of unilaterally raising the issue at the concurrent fifth **East Asia Summit** (EAS). ASEAN’s meetings with its dialogue partners in Hanoi also marked the first time that the United States and Russia participated in the EAS, where they were represented by their respective foreign ministers.

see *also*: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; ASEAN Community; East Asia Summit 2005–.

### **Hanoi Summit (ASEAN) June 2020**

(Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/Laos/Malaysia/Myanmar/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand/Vietnam)

Because of travel restrictions occasioned by the **Covid-19** pandemic, the 36th summit gathering of the heads of government of **ASEAN** was held virtually on 26 June 2020. The theme chosen for the year was ‘Cohesive and Responsive ASEAN’.

Hosted by Vietnam as ASEAN Chair, public health concerns dominated the discussion against the backdrop of the pandemic crisis

afflicting the region, with the communique of the meeting expressing that the Association ‘recognized the significant cost and unprecedented challenges to the region and the world caused by the coronavirus disease pandemic’. To that end, member states reiterated their commitment to cooperation to strengthen existing ASEAN mechanisms designed to enhance responsiveness to transnational health crises. This followed on the back of a special ASEAN and ASEAN Plus Three Summit on Covid-19, also held virtually, on 14 April. An ASEAN Covid-19 fund was established to help member states obtain medical supplies and protective suits. Contributions to this fund were made by not only member states but dialogue partners as well. The summit also witnessed the signing of the Hanoi Plan of Action on Strengthening ASEAN Economic Cooperation and Supply Chain Connectivity in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

In oblique reference to the escalating situation in the **South China Sea**, the Chairman’s Statement further reaffirmed the commitment of member states to promote and maintain regional stability in accordance to international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). The statement was significant for the fact that China has refused to acknowledge the jurisdiction of UNCLOS over its SCS claims. The salience of discussions on the South China Sea disputes were rendered more acute by developments that preceded the summit. In April, Vietnam protested after a Chinese coast guard ship rammed and sank a Vietnamese boat with eight fishermen aboard off the Paracel Islands.

see *also*: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Covid-19; South China Sea.

### **Hanoi Summit (ASEAN) November**

**2020** (Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/Laos/Malaysia/Myanmar/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand/Vietnam)

The 37th meeting of the heads of government of **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** opened on 12 November 2020 with the Vietnamese chair and prime minister, **Nguyen**

**Xuan Phuc**, warning that the intensification of Sino–US rivalry threatened regional stability even as Southeast Asia faced an unprecedented public health crisis. Alongside the summit proper, there were also the regular meetings with dialogue partners as well as the **East Asia Summit**.

Predictably, **Covid-19** featured prominently in discussions. To that end, it was agreed to take stock of the range of initiatives that had been introduced over the course of the year including the ASEAN Fund for Covid-19 Response, the ASEAN Reserve of Medical Supplies, the Standard Operation Procedures to Cope with Public Health Emergencies, and the ASEAN Centre for Emerging Diseases Response. Corresponding to this effort, the leaders also approved the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework designed to coordinate support for post-Covid-19 recovery efforts. The **South China Sea** dispute and the ongoing **Rohingya** crisis also featured prominently. The heads of government also embarked on a review of several signature initiatives, primarily the **ASEAN Community Vision 2025 Blueprints**, and also assessed the implementation of the **ASEAN Charter**.

Conspicuously missing from both the East Asia Summit and the ASEAN–US meeting was US President Donald Trump whose last appearance at an ASEAN event was in 2017. He was represented yet again by his national security advisor, whose participation was noted to be the lowest US representation since 2011 when they joined the East Asia Summit. In something of a replay of the **Bangkok Summit** in November 2019, only five heads of government attended the US–ASEAN meeting. Nevertheless, a high point was the landmark signing of the **Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership** which formally brought into being the largest trade agreement in the world. Likewise, the summit also saw adoption of the ASEAN Plus Three Leaders’ Statement on Strengthening ASEAN Plus Three Co-operation for Economic and Financial Resilience in the Face of Emerging Challenges as well as the Hanoi Declaration on the 15th Anniversary of the East Asia Summit. Meanwhile, ASEAN leaders had their first summit with Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga.

Like the June 2020 summit, the November 2020 iteration was also held virtually. This did not stop the summit from adopting more than 80 documents, the largest number ever in one ASEAN meeting.

*see also:* ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; ASEAN Charter (Charter of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations); ASEAN Community; Bangkok Summit (ASEAN) November 2019; Covid-19; East Asia Summit 2005–; Nguyen Xuan Phuc; Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership; Rohingya; South China Sea.

### **Harris Mohamad Salleh, Datuk** (Malaysia)

Datuk Harris Mohamad Salleh was chief minister of Sabah from June 1976 until April 1985. He had been instrumental in helping to form *Berjaya* (the Malay acronym for the Sabah People’s Union) in July 1975 as a challenge to the government of Chief Minister **Tun Mustapha Harun** but gave up the leadership to **Tun Mohammad Fuad** on his resignation as head of state. He became deputy chief minister to Tun Mohammad Fuad after *Berjaya* won the state elections in April 1976 but then succeeded Fuad after his death in an air crash in June. Datuk Harris was born in Brunei on 4 November 1930 and initially received only a secondary education. He worked as a teacher, a government clerk, and then as an assistant district officer, which gave him the opportunity to pursue a qualification in public administration at the University of Melbourne. His career blossomed as political opportunities opened up with decolonization and Sabah’s membership of Malaysia. He was vice-president of the **United Sabah National Organization (USNO)**, led by Tun Mustapha, and held a number of senior cabinet portfolios until his resignation in July 1975. His defection from USNO was encouraged by the federal government, which had become alarmed at Tun Mustapha’s separatist disposition. As chief minister, he failed to live up to expectations of good government generated by his initial criticism of Tun Mustapha’s administration and was neglectful of non-Muslim interests. In February 1985 a new party was formed in Sabah based on

an alliance of Christian Kadazans and Chinese. This **Parti Bersatu Sabah** (Sabah United Party) was carried to office by the same kind of popular wave which had benefited *Berjaya* nearly ten years previously. After his electoral defeat, Datuk Harris retired from political life.

see also: Fuad, Tun Mohammad (Donald Stephens); Mustapha bin Datuk Harun, Tun; *Parti Bersatu Sabah*; United Sabah National Organization (USNO).

### **Hatta, Mohammad** (Indonesia)

Mohammad Hatta, who proclaimed the independence of Indonesia jointly with **Sukarno** on 17 August 1945, was the republic's first vice-president. He played a critical role in the concurrent office of prime minister from January 1948 in guiding the embryonic state during the struggle for independence from the Dutch during which he also articulated the ideal of an 'independent and active' foreign policy for the republic. He led the Republic of Indonesia's delegation at the Round Table Conference in The Hague from August 1949, which concluded with an agreement on independence in the following December. After independence, he continued as prime minister of the United States of Indonesia until its replacement by a unitary republic in August 1950. His attempt to steer Indonesia in the direction of economic development was thwarted by the political radicalism of President Sukarno. He resigned as vice-president in July 1956 out of a sense of frustration. Although he continued to command wide respect, he never again held public office.

Mohammad Hatta was born in western Sumatra on 12 August 1902. As a young man, he was exposed to Islamic modernism, while as a student of economics in Rotterdam, he was attracted to Marxist ideas and became an active nationalist. On his return to the then Netherlands East Indies in 1932, he came into conflict with the colonial authorities who sent him into internal exile in West New Guinea and Banda. He cooperated with the Japanese during their occupation in the nationalist cause, advocating negotiation as the prime means of its fulfilment. Toward the end of his life, Mohammad Hatta was drawn into an abortive attempt by a Javanese mystic, Sawito Kartwibowo, to

persuade President **Suharto** to give up power on the ground that he had abused it. Mohammad Hatta, who died in 1980, was never able to translate his ideal role as the social and political conscience of Indonesia into practical politics. see also: Suharto; Sukarno.

### **Haz, Hamzah** (Indonesia)

Hamzah Haz served as the ninth vice-president of Indonesia from 2001 to 2004 under the government of **Megawati Sukarnoputri**. He is also the current leader of the **Partai Persatuan Pembangunan** (United Development Party, PPP).

Haz was born on 15 February 1940 in Ketapang, West Kalimantan. Prior to pursuing a political career, Haz worked as a newspaper journalist in Borneo and later taught economics at Tanjungpura University. His political career began in 1968 as a member of the West Kalimantan Provincial Parliament. Subsequently, he moved to Jakarta and in 1971 became a member of Parliament as a representative from **Nahdlatul Ulama**. In 1973 he joined PPP. Haz served as minister for investment from 1998 to 1999 in the **B. J. Habibie** government. He later resigned this post in order to lead the PPP in the 1999 presidential elections. In 1999 he ran for vice-president but was defeated by Megawati. Later that year he joined the cabinet of President **Abdurrahman Wahid** and was appointed minister for people's welfare, only to resign two months later amidst allegations of corruption and graft levelled at him by none other than the president himself. Following President Wahid's impeachment in 2001, Haz defeated **Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono** and Akbar Tanjung to become Megawati's vice-president despite having publicly announced several years earlier that a woman should not lead the world's largest Muslim nation. In 2004 Haz ran for the presidential elections as a PPP candidate, along with running mate Agum Gumelar. The pair received only 3 per cent of the total vote, and Haz finished last among five presidential candidates.

Haz is known to be close to Islamist groups in Indonesia which form his support base. In the past, he has publicly associated himself with **Abu Bakar Ba'asyir**, the spiritual leader of **Jemaah Islamiyah** who is currently serving

time for financing terrorist activities. Up until the 2002 Bali bombings, Haz had also consistently denied the presence of a terrorist network in Indonesia, or that Ba'asyir was party to terrorist activities. In line with Ba'asyir's rhetoric, Haz condemned the American invasion of Iraq on the grounds that it violated the human rights of Iraqis. For this, he was criticized as an opportunist who legitimized extremism in Indonesia in exchange for political support.

see also: Ba'asyir, Abu Bakar; Habibie, B. J.; *Jemaah Islamiyah*; Megawati Sukarnoputri; *Nahdlatul Ulama*; *Partai Persatuan Pembangunan*; Wahid, Abdurrahman; Yudhoyono, Susilo Bambang.

### Heng Samrin (Cambodia)

Heng Samrin came to international attention when he was appointed from obscurity as president of the National United Front for National Salvation in whose name Cambodia was invaded by Vietnam in December 1978. In January 1979 he became president of the ruling People's Revolutionary Council of the **People's Republic of Kampuchea** and in the following month, president of the Council of State. Heng Samrin served as a political frontman without a power base of his own. He was born to a farming family in a rural part of Ponhea Kraek district, Kampong Cham Province, in 1934 and entered the monkhood in 1949 before he became associated with the **Khmer Rouge** insurgency. Between 1976 and 1978 he was a political commissar and commander of the Khmer Rouge's fourth infantry division deployed in the eastern region. In May 1978 Heng Samrin was involved in that region's rebellion against **Pol Pot's** leadership, finding refuge in Vietnam where he was given a political role. He became general secretary of the ruling **Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Party's** Central Committee in December 1981 after Vietnam's initial nominee had proved unreliable. He remained in that position for nearly a decade until a political settlement came into sight, although real leadership was shared between Prime Minister **Hun Sen** and the speaker of Parliament, **Chea Sim**. With the adoption of the title State of Cambodia in place of People's Republic of Kampuchea in April 1989, Heng Samrin's role

began to diminish. In October 1991 the Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Party changed its name to the **Cambodian People's Party (CPP)**, dropping Heng Samrin as general secretary for Chea Sim. He was replaced as head of state by Prince **Norodom Sihanouk** when he returned to Cambodia in November 1991, enjoying no more than a nominal role as honorary president of CPP. Since 21 March 2006, Heng Samrin has been serving as president of the National Assembly.

see also: Cambodian People's Party (CPP); Chea Sim; Hun Sen; Kampuchea, People's Republic of (PRK); Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Party (KPRP); Khmer Rouge; Pol Pot; Sihanouk, King Norodom.

### Herzog Affair 1986 (Malaysia/Singapore)

An official visit to Singapore in November 1986 by President Chaim Herzog of Israel prompted diplomatic protests from the governments of Brunei, Indonesia, and Malaysia. In addition, Indonesia and Malaysia withdrew their heads of mission for the duration of the visit. Greatest strain occurred in the relationship between Singapore and Malaysia, whose prime minister, **Mahathir Mohamad**, interpreted the visit as a personal slight. It had been announced, without consultation or notice, coincident with his public denunciations of Zionism provoked by allegations in the *Asian Wall Street Journal* that his finance minister had been manipulating the stock market. Singapore's invitation was also resented because it touched Mahathir's political authority, then subject to challenge by rivals within **UMNO (United Malays National Organization)**.

Mahathir's evident displeasure provided an opportunity for an *ad hoc* coalition of political forces to agitate against the visit, with the ulterior motive of embarrassing Malaysia's prime minister. In Singapore, Malaysian ministerial and journalistic protests were treated as a test of national sovereignty, while the willingness of the Malay-Muslim community of Singapore to take their lead from Malaysia in opposing the Israeli president's visit caused serious concern. In the event, the domestic repercussions of the affair in both states brought home to

their respective prime ministers that they could not afford to allow the quarrel to fester. After an apology of a kind from Prime Minister **Lee Kuan Yew**, and despite a revival of tension because of a remark about the role of Malays in the republic's armed forces by their defence minister, **Lee Hsien Loong** (the prime minister's elder son), serious attempts were made to repair relations. Lee Kuan Yew and Mahathir talked in October 1987 at the Commonwealth heads of government meeting in Vancouver and set in train a process of reconciliation, expressed in subsequent agreements on the sale of water and gas by Malaysia to Singapore and in defence cooperation. Symbolic reconciliation was marked in July 1988 by the first official visit to Singapore by a reigning king of Malaysia. In October 1993 a brief visit to Singapore by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, which followed on a stopover in Indonesia, passed off without comment from Malaysia, while Lee Kuan Yew paid his first visit to Israel in May 1994.

see also: Lee Hsien Loong; Lee Kuan Yew; Mahathir Mohamad, Tun; UMNO (United Malays National Organization).

### **Hindraf (Hindu Rights Action Force)** (Malaysia)

The Hindu Rights Action Force, better known as Hindraf, is a loose coalition of some 30 Hindu-based non-governmental organizations with varying objectives and goals working largely among the Indian-Hindu minority population in Malaysia. Its leadership consists mostly of ethnic Indian lawyers such as the brothers Ponnusamy Uthayakumar and Ponnusamy Waythamoorthy. Established in early 2006, Hindraf's stated aims were to improve the socio-economic position of ethnic Indians and to protect their cultural practices.

The impetus for the creation of Hindraf came from increasing encroachment by the Muslim-dominated Malaysian government into ethnic Indian cultural and religious space. Foremost was the alarming acceleration of demolition of Hindu temples and shrines during the government of **Abdullah Badawi**. Many of these temples and shrines were built during the era of British colonial administration without permits

or licenses. In the course of redevelopment, the lands these religious sites were situated on were being requisitioned, and they were being demolished in the process. The Indian community had also been outraged at how the widow of a deceased decorated soldier was denied access to her husband's body and the right to give him a Hindu funeral after the *shari'a* court ruled that he had died a Muslim. Percolating beneath these tensions was a general dissatisfaction towards the **Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC)**, the ethnic Indian party in the ruling **Barisan Nasional** (National Front, BN) coalition, for failing to defend the community's interests or improve the socio-economic position of ethnic Indians.

While it was initially not regarded as a significant political movement, the widening support that Hindraf received for its campaigns against the demolition of Hindu temples across Malaysia increasingly placed it in the spotlight. Hindraf organized its biggest demonstration in Kuala Lumpur on 25 November 2007 after it was clear that its campaigns against the continued demolition of Hindu temples had been futile. Prior to the planned demonstration, Hindraf filed a first-of-its-kind class action suit against the British government in London on 31 August. The lawsuit demanded reparations amounting to £1 million for every Indian Malaysian on grounds that the then-colonial government had brought them to Malaya as contract labourers, 'exploited' them for 150 years, and then failed to accord them sufficient protection in the British-drafted federal constitution as an under-class ethnic minority in a Malay-Muslim-dominated Malaysia.

The aim of the demonstration in November was to deliver a 100,000-signature petition to the British high commissioner, asking that the queen of England appoint a Queen's Counsel to represent their case. The protest was met with tear gas and water cannons, with 136 individuals arrested, and the petition never got through to the high commissioner. In December, several prominent Hindraf activists were arrested on charges of sedition while five leaders were detained under the Internal Security Act. Nevertheless, together with the **Bersih** demonstrations, the Hindraf protest set in motion events

that culminated in the significant erosion of support for the incumbent BN coalition government at the 2008 polls. After repeated warnings, Hindraf was banned by the Malaysian government on 15 October 2008. The ban was lifted by Prime Minister **Najib Razak** in 2013, in anticipation of impending elections. By then, internal friction within Hindraf had become acrimonious factionalism. Waythamoorthy took his faction into the BN weeks prior to the 2013 election in a move condemned by his older brother, Uthayakumar. Sidelined within BN by MIC, Waythamoorthy resigned from his cabinet position in February 2014.

see also: Badawi, Tun Abdullah Ahmad; *Barisan Nasional* (BN); *Bersih*; Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC); Najib Tun Razak, Datuk Seri Mohamad.

### **Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia** (Indonesia)

The Indonesian Party of Liberation or *Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia* (HTI) is the Indonesian chapter of *Hizbut Tahrir*, a transnational Islamist movement founded in 1953 in Jerusalem by Taqiyyuddin Nabhani, an Azharite scholar who was once a judge in the Islamic court in Palestine. *Hizbut Tahrir's* main objective is to re-establish the Islamic caliphate system based on the principle of *Amr Ma'ruf Nahy Munkar* (enjoining the good and forbidding the evil). Unlike many other Muslim organizations who prioritize spiritual, social, educational, and welfare issues, *Hizbut Tahrir* is explicit in its political goals and views itself primarily as a political organization. It is, in its own words, 'political in activity, Islamic in ideology'. While *Hizbut Tahrir* is openly anti-Western and engages directly in very confrontational discourse and rhetoric, it publicly disavows violence and terrorism as a means to achieving its ends.

The HTI is by most accounts the largest national chapter of *Hizbut Tahrir*, claiming to cover all 33 provinces in Indonesia with a membership in the hundreds of thousands. While HTI subscribes to the ultimate objective of a global caliphate, it views the way forward in Indonesia to be the conversion of the country into an Islamic state. To that end, HTI has outlined a three-step process: education of cadre, community engagement and power acquisition

through *nusrah* (seeking assistance) from key stakeholders in the government, military, and judiciary. HTI mainly targets its recruitment at tertiary education students and professionals. HTI's roots in Indonesia can be traced to the *Al-Ghazali pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) run by Abdullah bin Nuh, where he hosted a *Hizbut Tahrir* leader from Australia in 1982. As HTI grew, it operated through a shadow structure behind a range of Muslim organizations and religious classes in mosques in Bogor. Such was the secrecy behind the movement in these early years that group leaders themselves did not know about the existence of HTI until 1987. Throughout the **New Order** period, HTI remained an underground organization, focusing its activities on study circles, youth programmes, and outreach events in selected mosques and private residences. The group produced *the Al-Islam Bulletin*, which was later renamed *As-Salam Bulletin* when its main meeting venue changed from the Standard Chartered building in Jakarta to the *As-Salam Waqf* Foundation, which served as the main vehicle for propagating the group's ideas. Following the end of the New Order, HTI came to the fore officially in 2000. That same year, it organized its inaugural Khilafah conference which was attended by 5,000 HTI activists. In July 2017, the government of President **Joko Widodo** revoked the legal status of HTI on grounds that it had been contradicting state ideology with its refusal to acknowledge **Pancasila** and was a threat to social stability, even though unlike other Islamic vigilante groups in Indonesia, there has been no record of HTI engaging in violence.

see also: New Order; *Pancasila*; Widodo, Joko.

### **Hmong** (Laos)

The Hmong are an ethnic minority identified with mountain settlement in Laos who were known at one time by the pejorative *Meo* (sav- age). Because of clan rivalries, Hmong were to be found on both sides of the internal conflict which afflicted Laos for three decades after the end of the Pacific War (see **Indochina Wars**; **Vietnam War**). The Hmong are not indigenous to Laos but migrated from southern China from the early 19th century; they have been



identified with slash-and-burn agriculture and the cultivation of opium. A French-inspired attempt to administer the Hmong in 1938 led to the split within the minority which enabled both the **Pathet Lao** and the Royal Lao government to recruit them for their military purposes. Many thousands of Hmong were recruited into a fighting force by General Vang Pao, who was funded by the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). The Hmong bore the brunt of US efforts in Laos to prevent the takeover of the country by the *Pathet Lao* and the interdiction of North Vietnamese supply lines to its forces in South Vietnam. As many as 20 per cent of the Hmong died as a result of the war. After the *Pathet Lao* achieved power in 1975, many Hmong fled the country to Thailand.

A Hmong resistance has festered since the 1970s, especially in the central province of Kiang Khouang. Almost forgotten in the west, small bands of Hmong fighters and their families have subsisted on assistance from exile groups in Thailand, France, Australia, and the United States. Many of these groups have aligned themselves to General Vang Pao, who lived in the United States until his death in January 2011. Vientiane has largely been unsympathetic to demands for Hmong political autonomy, instead seeking to assimilate them into mainstream Lao society along with the many Hmong who chose to side with the *Pathet Lao* during the war, including the chairwoman of the National Assembly and Politburo member, Pany Yathotu. In December 2009, Thailand repatriated the last of the Hmong refugees to Laos in a move aimed at putting an end to a remaining sticking point in Bangkok's relations with Vientiane.

see also: Indochina Wars; *Pathet Lao*; Vietnam War.

### **Ho Chi Minh** (Vietnam)

Ho Chi Minh is a legendary figure in Vietnamese and international communism. As a thinker, he combined an attachment to Marxist principles with a fervent nationalist commitment. As a revolutionary leader, he was distinguished as a practitioner rather than as a theoretician. In his later years, he was portrayed as an ascetic and benign father figure as a role model for the

Vietnamese people. For youthful dissenters in the west during the **Vietnam War**, he served as a symbol of revolutionary dedication to a just cause.

Ho Chi Minh was born Nguyen Tat Thanh in Nghe An Province in central Vietnam on 19 May 1890. His father was an official at the imperial court in Hue who had also worked as an itinerant teacher. Ho is believed to have been expelled from the French Lycée at Vinh as a teenager for nationalist activities. In September 1911 he worked as a mess boy on a French liner, beginning a long period of travel outside of Vietnam. During the First World War he settled in France, where he began to involve himself in the Vietnamese nationalist cause, taking the name Nguyen Ai Quoc (Nguyen the Patriot). In 1920, influenced by Lenin's writings, Ho became a founder member of the French Communist Party. He went to Moscow in the early 1920s and began to work for the Comintern, whose agent he became in Southeast Asia later in the decade. It was in this capacity that in 1930 he reconciled competing factions to establish the Communist Party of Indochina, whose direct lineal successor is the ruling Communist Party of Vietnam. In May 1941 he set up the **Viet Minh** (League of the Independence of Vietnam), a communist-led national united front which successfully challenged French colonial rule after the end of the Pacific War in the **August Revolution**. Ho Chi Minh took the full pseudonym (meaning Ho who brings enlightenment) to avoid arrest on entering China in 1942. Ho engaged in fruitless negotiations with France in 1946 and then led the Viet Minh to victory in the First **Indochina War**, which secured the country north of the 17th parallel for Communist Party rule in 1954. He inspired the insurgent challenge to the government in Saigon after 1960 but did not live to see Vietnam's unification. He died on 2 September 1969 at the age of 79. His party colleagues announced his death as having occurred a day later because they did not want it known that he had passed away on the anniversary of national independence, which he had declared in Hanoi on 2 September 1945.

see also: August Revolution 1945; Indochina Wars; Viet Minh; Vietnam War.

### Ho Chi Minh Trail (Vietnam)

The Ho Chi Minh Trail was the name given in the west to the network of infiltration routes extending from North Vietnam through southern Laos and eastern Cambodia into the highlands of South Vietnam which bypassed the effective political boundary of the 17th parallel of latitude created by the **Geneva Agreements on Indochina** in 1954. These routes were employed from the early 1960s during the **Vietnam War** by the People's Liberation Army to channel personnel and supplies first to the southern insurgency and then to the conventional military challenge to the government in Saigon, which was defeated in April 1975. The trail ran through mountainous and jungle terrain and took a heavy toll on the flow of North Vietnamese forces who were subjected to military interdiction on their way south. In February 2000, Prime Minister **Phan Van Khai** approved a plan to turn part of the trail into a 1,690-kilometre modern highway linking northern and southern parts of Vietnam.

see also: Geneva Agreements on Indochina 1954; Indochina Wars; Phan Van Khai; Vietnam War.

### Horsburgh Lighthouse (Malaysia/Singapore)

The Horsburgh Lighthouse is situated on the tiny island of Pedra Branca (White Rock), also known in Malay as Pulau Batu Puteh. The island is located at the eastern entrance to the **Singapore Strait** between the opposite coasts of Malaysia and Indonesia. The lighthouse was constructed by the British Straits Settlements colonial administration in 1850 and began operating a year later. The lighthouse has always been administered and maintained from Singapore, even though it is located some 18 nautical miles beyond the republic's territorial waters limit of three miles. The basis for the republic's jurisdiction over the island as well as adjacent waters and seabed is a series of treaties between the East India Company and the sultanate of Johor and an Anglo-Dutch Treaty of 1824 which demarcated colonial dominion.

Singapore's jurisdiction over Pedra Branca has been the subject of dispute by the government of Malaysia. A claim was first signalled

in December 1979 when Malaysia published a map including the island within its territorial waters. Singapore responded with a protest note. It has been argued in Kuala Lumpur that although the lighthouse had been built and operated from Singapore, it was not a sufficient basis for ownership of the island, which was part of the domain of Johor inherited by Malaysia. The dispute became a matter of public contention from the late 1980s when fishing vessels from Johor were discouraged from sailing close to the island. In September 1991 the chief minister of Johor endorsed the claim publicly. There was an abortive attempt in 1992 by members of the youth wing of the opposition **Parti Islam Se-Malaysia** to plant the Malaysian flag on the island. In September 1994 at a meeting in Malaysia, prime ministers **Mahathir Mohamad** and **Goh Chok Tong** agreed to resolve the dispute through reference to a third party, including the International Court of Justice (ICJ). In 1998, both states agreed on a Special Agreement that that was required in order to submit the dispute over Pedra Branca to the ICJ. This Special Agreement was subsequently signed in February 2003 and formally notified in July of the same year. The argument put forward by the Malaysian side was that Singapore's claim was at all times consistent with that of a lighthouse administrator littoral state, and not an exercise of sovereignty. The Foreign Counsel for Malaysia also opposed Singapore's claims that its conduct on the island went completely unopposed by arguing that there had been no open conduct of a *titre de souverain* to be opposed. The Singapore counsels defended this claim by pointing out the many other non-lighthouse-related activities that had been conducted, which included having reclamation plans for the island, installing military communication equipment, and investigating shipwrecks in the waters around the island from 1920 to 1979. Crucially, Singapore also produced a letter dated in 1953 from the sultanate of Johor which stated that that the island was not owned by Johor, but Malaysia refuted this evidence by denying the legal standing of the letter as it was sent by a minor official who had no authority to disown the island. On 23 May 2008 the ICJ announced its decision regarding

the dispute and awarded the island to Singapore, while sovereignty over the nearby cluster of features called Middle Rocks was awarded to Malaysia. The reasoning behind the judgement was that although the island of Pedra Branca was originally within the territorial domain of the sultanate of Johor, the 1953 letter demonstrated the relinquishment of sovereignty over the island to Singapore. The Court also decided that the activities conducted by Singapore around the island could be interpreted as conduct of a *titre de souverain*. Though the decision is binding, Malaysia signalled its intention to appeal. Though the ICJ had scheduled to hear arguments on 11 June 2018, Malaysia subsequently dropped the appeal to have the ruling reviewed.

see also: Goh Chok Tong; Mahathir Mohamad, Tun; *Parti Islam Se-Malaysia*; Singapore Strait.

### **Hua Hin Summit (ASEAN) February 2009** (Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/Laos/Malaysia/Myanmar/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand/Vietnam)

The 14th meeting of heads of government of **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** convened in Cha-am and Hua Hin, Thailand, from 26 February to 1 March 2009. The meeting was initially scheduled to be held in December 2008, but was postponed due to a political crisis in Thailand. This gathering marked the first summit under the new **ASEAN Charter**, which came into force on 15 December 2008. ASEAN leaders signed the Cha-am Hua Hin Declaration on the Roadmap for the ASEAN Community (2009–15) and adopted the ASEAN Political–Security Community (APSC) Blueprint. The APSC Blueprint emphasizes ASEAN’s commitment to the promotion of good governance, democracy, protection and promotion of human rights, humanitarian assistance, and development of confidence-building measures. It further stresses the continued importance of the **Treaty of Amity and Cooperation** and the implementation of the **Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea**.

While the ASEAN summit was held successfully, the subsequent ASEAN Plus Three and

East Asia summits hosted in the resort town of Pattaya in April were abruptly cancelled after protestors forced their way into the summit venue, demanding the resignation of Thai prime minister **Abhisit Vejjajiva**. Some of the ASEAN leaders at the meeting had to be evacuated from the site by helicopter, while the leaders of the Plus Three countries were obstructed from travelling to the summit venue. Abhisit declared a state of emergency in Chonburi Province where Pattaya is located, which was lifted only after all the ASEAN leaders and leaders of the dialogue partners had left Pattaya. The breach of security and subsequent cancellation of the meeting was an embarrassment for Abhisit’s government, which was locked in a political tussle with supporters of the ousted former prime minister, **Thaksin Shinawatra**. The deeply divided country had seen four prime ministers sworn in in just over 15 months, none of whom was able to bridge the bitter divide between Thailand’s military and business elite on the one hand, and the rural majority who formed the backbone of Thaksin’s support on the other.

see also: Abhisit Vejjajiva; ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; ASEAN Charter (Charter of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations); Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (ASEAN) 2002; Thaksin Shinawatra; Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (ASEAN) 1976.

### **Hua Hin Summit (ASEAN) October 2009** (Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/Laos/Malaysia/Myanmar/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand/Vietnam)

The 15th meeting of heads of government of **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** convened in Cha-am and Hua Hin, Thailand, from 23 to 25 October 2009. In view of what transpired in February, security measures were put in place around the meeting venues to ensure that there was no repeat of the mayhem which had caused the abrupt cancellation of the previous ASEAN summit.

During this meeting, ASEAN leaders formally inaugurated the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights as a new principal organ of ASEAN. They also endorsed

the Terms of Reference that had been drafted by the High-Level Panel on an ASEAN Human Rights Body and submitted to the ASEAN ministerial meeting in February 2009. Also on the agenda was the matter of how to enhance intra-regional connectivity that would facilitate and expedite the development of an **ASEAN Community** that was both competitive yet strongly linked to the rest of the world. To that end, the leaders agreed to a statement calling for the establishment of an ASEAN High Level Task Force (HLTF) to work out an ASEAN Master Plan on regional connectivity for submission at the 17th ASEAN summit. The summit also witnessed the accession of the United States to ASEAN's **Treaty of Amity and Cooperation**, which paved the way for Washington's participation in the **East Asia Summit**.

see also: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; ASEAN Community; East Asia Summit 2005–; Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (ASEAN) 1976.

### **Hukbalahap Movement** (Philippines)

*Hukbalahap* is a contraction of the Tagalog term *Hukbo ng Bayan laban sa Hapon*, which translates as People's Anti-Japanese Army. The *Huk* Movement, as it became known, had its origins in the establishment in March 1942 of an anti-Japanese resistance by a group of communist and socialist union leaders, who had organized armed uprisings by tenant farmers in central and south Luzón during the 1930s. Consolidating their position during the Pacific War, they sought to engage in electoral politics after its conclusion, backing the Democratic Alliance in opposition to established parties which had collaborated with the Japanese. Despite notable success in central and southern Luzón, the new congress elected in April 1946 refused to seat the Democratic Alliance candidates.

Frustrated in their attempt to act through the political process, the *Huk* Movement resorted to military action, confronting the private armies of landlords as well as government forces. Full-scale rebellion was signalled in February 1950, when the movement changed its name to *Hukbong Mapagpalaya ng Bayan* (People's Liberation Army) and called for the overthrow of the

government in Manila. At their peak, the *Huks* claimed a following of 30,000 armed insurgents and were able to take temporary charge of the provincial capitals in Central Luzón, giving the impression of imminent revolutionary success.

The revolutionary challenge from the *Huks* was ended after **Ramón Magsaysay** was appointed secretary of national defence in August 1950. The capture of the entire communist Politburo during raids in Manila in October was critical in this development. Magsaysay was able to revive the morale of a dispirited army with US backing as well as detaching peasant support from the insurgents through a skilful combination of personal public relations and governmental benefaction in the rural areas. Magsaysay, who went on to become president in 1953 with US assistance, conveyed a charismatic appeal which the urban intellectual leadership of the peasant insurgency could not match. By 1954 the *Huk* Movement had been crushed and reduced to a desultory banditry which remained until it was revived in a different form and with a different leadership from the late 1960s.

see also: Magsaysay, Ramón.

### **Hun Sen** (Cambodia)

Hun Sen has been prime minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia since October 1998, when he was elected as head of a revamped coalition government dominated by his **Cambodian People's Party (CPP)**, which had secured a plurality of seats in elections in the previous July. Hun Sen's assumption of high office reflected the effective balance of power in the country at the time, which had been evident from July 1997 when he had mounted a violent coup displacing his senior partner in a coalition government established in October 1993.

Hun Sen was born on 4 April 1952 in Kampong Cham Province into a peasant family. He joined the **Khmer Rouge** in 1970 after Prince **Norodom Sihanouk** had been overthrown by a right-wing coup. With their seizure of power in April 1975, he rose in the military hierarchy of the country's eastern zone to become a deputy regimental commander but defected to Vietnam in 1977 as an internecine purge spread

within the Cambodian revolutionary party. He became a member of the Central Committee of the Kampuchean National Front for National Salvation, which served as Vietnam's vehicle for invading Cambodia in December 1978. Hun Sen was made foreign minister of the **People's Republic of Kampuchea** on its establishment in January 1979, and deputy prime minister in June 1981. From an untutored base, Hun Sen demonstrated a growing aptitude for political organization but also became involved in factional rivalries with an older generation of party cadres. He was appointed prime minister in January 1985 but gave up his concurrent office of foreign minister between December 1986 and December 1987. He then resumed the additional foreign affairs portfolio to lead negotiations with Prince Norodom Sihanouk, which paved the way to the **International Conference on Cambodia** in Paris in 1989 and then to an eventual settlement of the Cambodian conflict, also in Paris, in October 1991. In April 1989, the **People's Republic of Kampuchea** had been renamed the State of Cambodia with Hun Sen continuing as prime minister. Early in October 1991, the ruling **Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Party** was renamed CPP and Hun Sen led its campaign in UN-supervised elections in May 1993. The party was bitterly disappointed at coming second in those elections to **FUNCINPEC** (the National United Front for an Independent, Neutral, Peaceful, and Cooperative Cambodia) headed by Prince **Norodom Ranariddh**. A threat of force served to give CPP a place in a coalition government in which Hun Sen became second prime minister to Prince Ranariddh. The political partnership was strained from the outset over the issue of power-sharing, while Hun Sen displayed great skill in marginalizing Prince Ranariddh and his allies as well as considerable ruthlessness in deploying intimidating violence against all opponents. On becoming sole prime minister in 1998, he also assumed the office of president of the Throne Council, which has the responsibility for authorizing monarchical succession.

An adroit politician, Hun Sen employed strategies of both co-option and coercion to consolidate power. To that end, he managed to divide and factionalize the royalist **FUNCINPEC**,

resulting in the collapse of the royalist vote in 1998 which has been in decline since. At the same time, Hun Sen could also connect with ordinary citizens, a skill his political opponent **Sam Rainsy** could not match. He led CPP to victory in the July 2003 general elections and was re-elected as prime minister by the National Assembly following the coalition government formed in mid-2004 by CPP and **FUNCINPEC**. He was re-elected in July 2008 following a landslide victory. The tide appeared to turn by 2013 when he saw his majority reduced significantly by a reinvigorated opposition that coalesced in the form of the **Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP)**, which managed to win 55 seats on the back of widespread public discontent. This was followed by popular demonstrations calling for his resignation. Hun Sen responded by initiating a dialogue with Sam Rainsy, but that lacklustre effort soon broke down and opposition politicians and activists were jailed. Crackdowns on dissidents continued in 2016 and 2017, and in response to some strong performances by opposition parties in the commune council elections of 2017, Hun Sen moved decisively against CPP, arresting its new leader, **Khem Sokha**, on charges of treason and eventually outlawing CPP in 2018. Under Hun Sen, Cambodian foreign policy demonstrates a proclivity of genuflection towards the People's Republic of China on whom it relies for much of its economic assistance and development.

As one of the longest-serving leaders in the world and the longest-serving elected leader in Southeast Asia, Hun Sen continues to demonstrate sharp political instincts and a keen sense of self-preservation as he wields unparalleled power in Cambodian politics. Nevertheless, as talks of political succession gather momentum, much attention has been given to Hun Sen's oldest son, Hun Manet, who was elevated to the standing committee of CPP in 2018 in a signal that the West Point graduate is being groomed to play a greater role in national politics. This was further reinforced when the CPP congress voted unanimously in 2021 for Hun Manet to succeed his father.

*see also:* Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP); Cambodian People's Party (CPP); **FUNCINPEC**; International Conference on

Cambodia, Paris 1989; Kampuchea, People's Republic of (PRK); Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Party (KPRP); Khem Sokha; Khmer Rouge; Ranariddh, Prince Norodom; Sam Rainsy; Sihanouk, King Norodom.

### **Hussein Onn, Tun** (Malaysia)

Hussein Onn was Malaysia's third prime minister and held office from January 1976 until July 1981. He was a reluctant politician who was persuaded to return to public life by his brother-in-law, **Tun Abdul Razak**, whom he succeeded into high office following Razak's death from leukaemia. Hussein Onn was born on 12 February 1922, the son of a Johor state official. Trained as a soldier, he served in the Indian army during the Second World War. After the hostilities, he joined with his father, Dato Onn bin Ja'afar, then chief minister of Johor, in founding **UMNO (United Malays National Organization)** to challenge Britain's **Malayan Union Proposal**. When his father was rejected by UMNO for attempting to make it multiracial, Hussein Onn

withdrew from active politics out of a sense of filial piety and took up the study and practice of law. He returned to public life after the **May 13 Racial Riots 1969**, when Malaysia had experienced unprecedented racial violence, and held ministerial office for only five years before becoming prime minister. His tenure was not marked by strong government or imaginative leadership. He was responsible for appointing **Mahathir Mohamad** as his deputy prime minister, which precipitated a period of intra-party strife. He gave up office in July 1981 because of ill health but regretted his successor's style of government and openly indicated his support for an alternative splinter party which challenged UMNO for the leadership of the Malay community. He died on 28 May 1990 at the age of 68, retaining intact his reputation as an honest politician.

see *also*: Mahathir Mohamad, Tun; Malayan Union Proposal 1946; May 13 Racial Riots 1969; Razak, Tun Abdul; UMNO (United Malays National Organization).

## Ieng Sary (Cambodia)

Ieng Sary was a deputy prime minister in the government of **Democratic Kampuchea** between 1975 and 1978. He had been a leading figure in the **Khmer Rouge** until the withdrawal of Chinese support after the **International Conference on Cambodia in Paris** in October 1991 led to his political demotion.

Ieng Sary was born on 25 October 1925 in the village of Loeng Va in Tra Vinh Province, southern Vietnam. He is believed to have befriended Saloth Sar, later **Pol Pot**, when they were both students at the Lycée Sisowath in Phnom Penh at the end of the war. Like Pol Pot, he secured a government scholarship to study in France, where he arrived in October 1950 and where formative social bonding and political commitment took place. His wife, Ieng Thirith, was the sister of Pol Pot's wife, Khieu Ponnary. On his return to Cambodia in the mid-1950s, Ieng Sary became a teacher and an active participant in clandestine revolutionary activity. In September 1960 he was present at a secret meeting of the Communist Party of Cambodia, which set it on the road to revolutionary struggle and at which he was elected to its Central Committee. In May 1963, after his name had been included in a list of subversives announced by Prince **Norodom Sihanouk**, together with Pol Pot he left the capital for the forests of eastern Cambodia. His movements until 1971 are not well known, but he is believed to have assumed responsibility for contacts with both Vietnamese and Chinese communist parties. In August 1971 his presence was announced in Beijing, ostensibly as special envoy from the liberated area of Cambodia, but he acted as watchdog to Norodom Sihanouk, who was then head of a government in exile. He accompanied Prince Sihanouk on visits abroad, in particular to the Non-Aligned Conference in Algeria and to the liberated area of Cambodia in 1973. Known as 'Brother Three' in the Khmer Rouge hierarchy, he held high office with responsibility for foreign affairs during the period of Khmer Rouge rule; in the negotiations

with Thailand he demonstrated a clear preference for the finer qualities of life, including expensive cigars and brandy. He escaped from Phnom Penh by train to Thailand before the city was occupied by the Vietnamese in January 1979. He travelled on to Beijing and was subsequently for a time a member of the Democratic Kampuchean delegation at the United Nations, being confirmed as deputy prime minister in charge of foreign affairs for the government in exile at the end of 1979. After the formation of the tripartite **Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea (CGDK)** in June 1982, he gave up formal responsibility for foreign affairs to his Khmer Rouge colleague, **Khieu Samphan**. He ceased to hold any official position within the Khmer Rouge hierarchy but established a personal stronghold in the gem-rich Pailin district in western Cambodia.

In August 1996, Ieng Sary defected to the government in Phnom Penh and was granted an amnesty by King Norodom Sihanouk in the following month from the death sentence passed on him *in absentia* in August 1979 for his complicity in mass murder. His defection, together with the forces under his command, marked the effective disintegration of the Khmer Rouge. He integrated those forces nominally into the Cambodian army in November 1996 and returned to Phnom Penh in November 1997 for a meeting with the second prime minister, **Hun Sen**, which was his first visit to the capital for nearly 18 years. He continued to run Pailin like a private fiefdom, generating a substantial income from gambling, prostitution, and the sale of precious stones and hardwoods.

In November 2007, Ieng Sary was arrested in Phnom Penh following a warrant from the Cambodia Tribunal for war crimes and crimes against humanity. Upon his arrest, Ieng Sary refused to cooperate with the court, insisting that he had been pardoned by King Norodom Sihanouk. However, the UN tribunal ruled that the pardon did not override its indictment against him. His wife Ieng Thirith was

also arrested alongside him for crimes against humanity, but was later judged mentally unfit to stand trial. On 16 December 2009, the tribunal officially charged Ieng Sary with genocide for his involvement in the activities of the Pol Pot regime. He was tried in 2011 alongside **Nuon Chea**, the Khmer Rouge's chief ideologist, and Khieu Samphan, an ex-head of state, by the Extraordinary Chambers in the Court of Cambodia (see **Khmer Rouge Trials**). Ieng Sary denied any wrongdoing and claimed that Pol Pot was the sole architect of the party's strategy and tactics. On 4 March 2013, Ieng Sary was removed from his holding cell for health reasons. On 14 March, he passed away at the age of 87 in Phnom Penh, before his trial for involvement in the Khmer Rouge could be brought to a verdict.

see also: Democratic Kampuchea; Democratic Kampuchea, Coalition Government of (CGDK) 1982–90; Hun Sen; International Conference on Cambodia, Paris 1991; Khieu Samphan; Khmer Rouge; Khmer Rouge Trials; Nuon Chea; Pol Pot; Sihanouk, King Norodom.

### Indochina Wars (Cambodia/Laos/Vietnam)

Three successive wars of international significance have afflicted the three states of Indochina – Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam – between 1946 and 1991.

*The First Indochina War* took place primarily between French forces seeking to restore colonial dominion and the insurgent Democratic Republic of Vietnam, which had been declared an independent state by the legendary communist leader **Ho Chi Minh** on 2 September 1945 following the **August Revolution**. It was triggered by a dispute over control of customs in the port of Haiphong in November 1946 following the failure of a conference in Fontainebleau in the previous summer to resolve political differences. The escalating violence which spread to Laos and Cambodia became a major factor in the Cold War, with the formation in October 1949 of the People's Republic of China, seen by the United States as the aggressive ally of the Soviet Union. China provided military support for the fraternal communist

movement across a common border, while corresponding assistance for France came from the United States. The war culminated in France's defeat in May 1954 in the **Battle of Dien Bien Phu**, which destroyed the political will of the government in Paris. The communist victory coincided with the opening of an international conference on Indochina, which resulted in the **Geneva Agreements on Indochina** (July 1954) to demarcate Vietnam provisionally along the line of the 17th parallel of latitude prior to countrywide elections two years later. The Communist Democratic Republic of Vietnam assumed power north of that line; the residual state of Vietnam to its south came under the control of an anti-communist government headed by a returned exile, **Ngo Dinh Diem**, who enjoyed US support for his decision not to take part in countrywide elections.

Both Laos and Cambodia were accorded an intact independence under royal governments, although two Laotian provinces bordering Vietnam remained effectively under the control of the insurgent **Pathet Lao** which was, in effect, a branch of the Vietnamese communist movement.

*The Second Indochina War* was very much a continuation of the first. At issue was the unity and political identity of a divided Vietnam, but again Laos and Cambodia were drawn into the fray. Although a northern-inspired insurgency had revived in the south from the late 1950s, the lines of conflict became clearly drawn from 20 December 1960 with the establishment of the **National Liberation Front of South Vietnam** (NLF), which was the irredentist vehicle of the northern communist government. Cold War considerations dominated the conflict. The United States, committed to containing international communism, became increasingly involved in military support of the government in Saigon from the mid to late 1960s until its forces were shouldering the main responsibility for the war. Aerial bombardment of the north and the deployment of half a million combat troops failed to break a military stalemate. The ability of the Vietnamese communists to launch a series of coordinated attacks on urban centres at the end of January 1968 produced a devastating political impact within the United States.



The historic **Tet Offensive** demonstrated to an American public sickened by continuing heavy casualties in the **Vietnam War** that a military solution was unlikely, which convinced President Lyndon Johnson of the need to enter into negotiations, which began formally in Paris in January 1969. By this juncture, Laos and Cambodia had become part of the theatre of war as the Vietnamese communists used their territories to transship troops and supplies along the **Ho Chi Minh Trail** from the north to battlefields in the south. Johnson's successor, President Richard Nixon, began a process of military disengagement facilitated by a rapprochement with China.

After the failure of a major offensive by the communist forces across the 17th parallel of latitude in March 1972 in an abortive attempt to break the military stalemate, negotiations led to the **Paris Peace Agreements** in January 1973. The United States agreed to withdraw all of its forces in return for the repatriation of prisoners of war but without removing the Saigon government, which had been a long-standing demand of the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam (NLF). A weakened southern government resisted for just over two years until overwhelmed by a northern military attack, the Ban Me Thuot Offensive, launched in March 1975, which culminated in the seizure of Saigon at the end of April and the effective unification of the country under communist rule. Formal unification as the Socialist Republic of Vietnam occurred in July 1976. A corresponding peace agreement for Laos, the **Vientiane Agreement on the Restoration of Peace and Reconciliation in Laos**, was concluded in February 1973. The military victory in Saigon at the end of April 1975, however, led to the political collapse of the ostensibly neutral government in Vientiane, with the communist *Pathet Lao* removing the monarchy to establish the Laotian People's Democratic Republic at the end of the year. In Cambodia, the head of state, Prince **Norodom Sihanouk**, had been removed in a right-wing coup in March 1970 which received US support. A civil war followed in which Vietnamese military intervention to protect lines of communication served as the initial vanguard for the eventual victory

in mid-April 1975 of the politically fundamentalist **Khmer Rouge** insurgents. Their state of so-called **Democratic Kampuchea**, headed by the notorious **Pol Pot**, rejected the concept of a special relationship with Vietnam and subsequently engaged it in armed confrontation, which provoked a full-scale war from the end of 1978.

*The Third Indochina War* began in December 1978 when Vietnamese forces invaded and occupied Cambodia. The conflict registered the radical revision of international alignments arising from Sino-Soviet antagonism and Sino-US rapprochement. Relations between former allies Vietnam and China had deteriorated, with the former resentful of the act of betrayal of the latter in coming to terms with their US adversary. For its part, China came to view Vietnam as the willing proxy for the interests of its Soviet antagonist, to which Vietnam had turned through a **Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation** in November 1978 for countervailing support. The paranoid Khmer Rouge regime had earlier aligned itself with China, which convinced the government in Hanoi that Vietnam was being trapped in a strategic vice from which it had to break free. Vietnam overwhelmed Khmer Rouge military resistance, driving their forces to the Thai border. A **People's Republic of Kampuchea** was established in January 1979 but failed to attract international recognition other than from the Soviet Union and its allies. Moreover, China launched a punitive military expedition into northern Vietnam in February 1979. Vietnam's stalwart military defence was not sufficient to diminish the political significance of China's action, which pointed up the permanent geopolitical relationship between the two neighbouring countries. Vietnam was then obliged to face an international alignment comprising China, the United States, and the members of **ASEAN (Association of South-east Asian Nations)**, which together brought military, economic, and diplomatic pressure to bear on Vietnam. The alignment was also responsible for mobilizing Cambodian military resistance to Vietnam's occupation and the government in Phnom Penh, making it possible in particular for the Khmer Rouge to regenerate as a fighting machine.

The failure to crush an externally supported Cambodian insurgency together with economic failure and the loss of Soviet patronage eventually obliged Vietnam to accept a UN political settlement endorsed at the **International Conference on Cambodia, Paris 1991** (October). It had withdrawn its main force units from Cambodia by September 1989 and had left the government implanted there to fend for itself in part through a reversion in nomenclature to the state of Cambodia. Vietnam's military intervention in Cambodia was of major international significance in the context of the so-called Second Cold War, which reached its peak with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The settlement of the Cambodian conflict as an international problem was a direct consequence of the end of the Cold War, which required Vietnam to come to terms with China in the absence of access to any credible source of external countervailing power. Within Cambodia, the United Nations was able to conduct countrywide elections which produced a coalition government in October 1993.

see also: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; August Revolution 1945; Democratic Kampuchea; Dien Bien Phu, Battle of, 1954; Geneva Agreements on Indochina 1954; Geneva Agreements on Laos 1962; Ho Chi Minh; Ho Chi Minh Trail; International Conference on Cambodia, New York 1981; International Conference on Cambodia, Paris 1989; International Conference on Cambodia, Paris 1991; Kampuchea, People's Republic of (PRK); Khmer Rouge; National Liberation Front of South Vietnam; Ngo Dinh Diem; Paris Peace Agreements 1973; *Pathet Lao*; Pol Pot; Sihanouk, King Norodom; Tet Offensive 1968; Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation 1978; Vientiane Agreement on the Restoration of Peace and Reconciliation in Laos 1973; Vietnam War.

### **Insurgencies, Myanmar** (Myanmar)

Civil war, both ethnically based and ideological, afflicted Myanmar (Burma) soon after independence in January 1948 and remains an important issue in Myanmar politics. On 31 January 1949, the **Karen** under the Karen National Union (KNU) rebelled against the government

of Prime Minister **U Nu** and were soon joined by Karen soldiers, who mutinied *en masse*, and a number of other ethnic armed political organizations representing Mon, **Kachin**, Karenni, and Pa-O minorities. U Nu was already fighting a civil war against demobilized members of the Burma Independence Army (BIA) known as the People's Volunteer Organization (PVO) and armed elements of the Burmese Communist Party (BCP) in central Burma, as well as the 'Red Flag' faction of BCP, Rakhine nationalists, and Muslim **Rohingya** in the west. Three battalions of the Burmese army also mutinied and joined the insurgency. The ethnic insurgencies were fuelled in part by disaffection due to harsh retaliation against their communities by largely Burman military formations for their assistance to the Allies during the Pacific War and fears of fair treatment in an independent Burma. By 1950 the Karen, occasionally in cooperation with BCP and PVO, had seized most of lower Burma and had very nearly taken Rangoon (Yangon). Although the Karen were pushed back, that they had almost seized the capital made sure counterinsurgency remained at the forefront of policy during the U Nu years and later under military rule.

U Nu's government, however, was able to secure foreign assistance, which allowed for the reorganization and expansion of the army under the ambitious general **Ne Win** to deal with the myriad threats. The insurgents were hampered by their diverse causes and ideologies, and the personalities of some of their leaders made it difficult to organize a common front. Several attempts were made, but each alliance proved temporary. The reformed Burmese army under General Ne Win's direction began to slowly push the insurgents back from Yangon and other major population centres throughout the 1950s into areas along the northern and eastern borders. The chronic lack of unity even within insurgent groups became apparent when in 1958 several groups split, with some returning to the legal fold while others continued to resist.

Other forces, however, were causing discontent among ethnic groups that had hitherto remained loyal to the government, particularly in the northern **Shan** States which had largely remained under the authority of local leaders,

or *sawbwa*, following independence. An invasion out of southern China by the Kuomintang (KMT) in 1950 retreating from the victorious Communist People's Liberation Army forced the army to enter the Shan States, declare martial law, and place Shan leaders under military administration. In 1958–9, the traditional *sawbwa* handed their formal power over to the government, giving central authorities much greater sway in the region. Dissatisfaction with expanding central rule, in contradiction, some saw, to the spirit of the 1947 **Panglong Agreement**, together with discontent over the army's behaviour in Shan State, prompted Shan politicians to agitate for a new formally federal system of government. In 1961, a combined operation by the Burmese military and units of the Chinese People's Liberation Army forced KMT out of Shan State and into Thailand, where they set up enclaves along the border. The largely Christian Kachin were also becoming increasingly uncomfortable with U Nu's attempts in 1960–1 to have Buddhism declared the state religion. A June 1961 majority vote by delegates from several ethnic groups for federalism sparked resistance from Burman political parties, especially the ruling **Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League** (AFPFL), but U Nu announced it would be considered if proposed democratically and agreed to formally discuss a new federal constitution with Shan leaders. This became the declared reason for the military coup of 2 March 1962 that installed Ne Win as leader of the country and eventually installed the **Burma Socialist Programme Party** (BSPP). Since then, prevention of the breakup of the Union became paramount in military thought.

During the 1960s numerous new ethnic insurgencies broke out across the country, particularly in the north. The Kachin, already upset by U Nu's attempts to have Buddhism declared the state religion, became alarmed at Ne Win's rejection of their right to secede, and rose up under the leadership of the Kachin Independence Organization (KIO). The Shan too rebelled and formed several different insurgent organizations that fought each other almost as much as the Burmese Army, many of which also became involved in the opium and heroin trade in the Burma–Laos–Thailand tri-border

region that became known as the Golden Triangle. The narcotics trade would become a highly lucrative business through which groups could buy weapons and supplies to fight, but it also amplified corruption in ethnic political organizations as well as the government. Many of the local militias set up by the government in Shan State in the 1960s to fight the insurgents were allowed to trade in opium, with several, most notably Khun Sa and Lo Hsing Han, turning on the regime and forming their own ostensibly nationalist organizations that concentrated more on the opium business than fighting the government.

During the 1960s China began to provide covert aid to Burma's communist movement, especially after 1966 and the Cultural Revolution in China. BCP was suffering at the time from leadership disputes which resulted in a major purge of pro-Soviet members. At the same time that BCP seemed to be imploding, the Burmese army launched a new offensive against the group's base areas in central Myanmar using a new doctrine – 'The Four Cuts' – to cut off supplies, funds, intelligence, and recruits needed by the insurgents. Following the defeat of BCP in central Burma, this strategy would be used to evict KNU from the Irrawaddy Delta region and would remain a core counterinsurgency doctrine for Myanmar's military to the present day. While BCP was imploding inside the country, China's stepped-up support for BCP leaders in southwest China in the 1960s led to the organization's re-organization which culminated in an 'invasion' of Burma by BCP's new army on New Year's Day 1968. Equipped with new Chinese weapons and advised by a number of Chinese Red Guard volunteers, BCP's sizeable military managed to seize an area in Myanmar's northern Shan State that it would largely maintain until 1989, when ethnic tensions within BCP exploded in a mutiny that would split the organization into three different insurgent organizations along ethnic lines, the largest of which would become the United Wa State Army (UWSA).

In eastern Myanmar, a loose stalemate existed throughout much of the 1970s and into the early 1980s. Fighting settled down to a seasonal affair, with campaigns in the dry season followed

by relative calm during the rainy season. The Karen and Mon were funding their insurgencies through the taxation of the large black market trade between Thailand and Myanmar that flourished because of BSPP's isolationist policies. An ethnic alliance was finally achieved in 1976 with the establishment of the National Democratic Front (NDF) under the leadership of KNU chairman Saw Bo Mya and based at KNU headquarters at Manerplaw near the Thai border. Under Bo Mya, KNU, and to an extent the 13-member NDF, would become anti-communist in outlook, although an alliance was eventually agreed with the BCP in the mid-1980s. NDF, however, lacked outside support and there was little cooperation militarily, but the alliance did result in the abandonment of demands for independence in favour of a federal union as a common goal. In 1984, the Burmese army paid renewed attention to the war in eastern Burma, launching several successful offensives against KNU's tax gates and cutting much of its financial support. At the same time attitudes in Thailand began to change from seeing the insurgencies as a useful buffer against a traditional enemy, to a desire for increased economic interaction that became **Chatichai Choonhavan's 1991 Constructive Engagement** policy. This resulted in dwindling support for KNU and other ethnic insurgencies on the kingdom's western border and a further loss of revenue and logistic support. During the 1988 demonstrations the ethnic groups surprisingly failed to seize the initiative allowing the army to reinforce units in population centres that would later put down the uprisings. Following the crackdown, tens of thousands of Burmese fled to the border areas, especially to the area under KNU where some were supplied with weapons and given military training, coalescing into the All-Burma Students Democratic Front (ABSDF). Although their numbers would dwindle in ensuing years, ABSDF continued to operate in eastern Myanmar until they signed a ceasefire agreement with the government in 2013. From 1988 to 1994, Manerplaw became the headquarters of not only KNU and NDF, but also much of the pro-democracy political opposition.

Facing not only ethnic insurgencies but also an internationally supported democracy

movement by 1989, the regime sought to buttress its strength. In 1989–90, General **Khin Nyunt** went to northeastern Myanmar to negotiate with the new groups formed following the collapse of BCP. He was able to negotiate ceasefire agreements with former BCP groups by offering business concessions while holding out the promise of a political solution sometime in the future after a new constitution was implemented. In the same way, a ceasefire was agreed with the powerful KIO in 1994. The ceasefire broke down in June 2011, however, and conflict resumed between the KIO military wing, the Kachin Independence Army (KIA), and the *Tatmadaw*. Disaffection between Karen Buddhist rank and file and their largely Christian leadership was exploited by Khin Nyunt's intelligence apparatus, resulting in a mutiny in KNU's armed wing and the formation of the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA). With their new allies in DKBA, the *Tatmadaw* forced KNU to abandon Manerplaw in January 1995, a move that also dispersed NDF and the democratic political forces based there. In January 1996, the **State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC)** were also able to convince Khun Sa to surrender his forces in Shan State, though several more nationalist-inclined officers split off to continue the fight as the Shan State Army. In 2009, as the country gravitated towards political openness, the **State Peace and Development Council (SPDC)** demanded that all ceasefire groups convert their armed wings into Border Guard Forces (BGF) as a component of the Myanmar army; their political wings would be allowed to form political parties. Ethnic leaders opposed the idea, believing that without their weapons they would have no leverage over the regime. While several smaller groups were compelled to join BGF, the only sizeable participant was DKBA. This led to rising tensions between the central government and ceasefire groups, most of whom were based along the border with China. One group, the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army of Ethnic Kokang (MNDAA) along the China border, was almost eliminated through a rapid offensive in 2009 that not only reinforced the government's demands, but also resulted in increased tensions with China over a possible

renewed civil war. UWSA and its allies, however, steadfastly refused to join the scheme.

Still, KNU fought on, waging a guerrilla war that continued until a peace process was begun with the democratically elected government in 2012, although it would issue a call to arms again after the February 2021 coup, against the **State Administration Council** of the junta. The Shan State Army also entered into peace negotiations with the government in 2012, although one other Shan group, the Shan State Army (North) continued to resist by means of arms. Fighting between the *Tatmadaw* and Shan State militia – and among the Shan State militia groups as well – escalated in January 2018, in part because of the exponential growth of the lucrative crystal methamphetamine market, for which Shan State is a chief supplier. Meanwhile, UWSA and other former BCP groups continued to refuse to join the BGF after the elections, but agreed to work together with the new government to resolve differences, although little progress has been made. In October 2015, the National Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) was signed by President **Thein Sein** with 8 out of 15 ethnic armed organizations invited to be signatories. The NCA stipulated terms of ceasefires, their implementation and monitoring, and also purported to provide a roadmap for political dialogue and lasting peace. In reality, it barely moved the needle on peace.

One reason accounting for why ceasefire and peace agreements attempted over the last two decades persistently collapsed was the government's aversion to addressing the core political and identity issues at stake in a committed manner. Rather, most of these agreements have focused chiefly on economic development, which is often little more than a euphemism for the sharing of largesse derived from natural resource extraction. In the event, the insurgency landscape has since been rendered even more complicated after the February 2021, when ethnic armies and militia including the Chinland Defence Force, KIA, and KNU have escalated attacks on the *Tatmadaw* while also providing sanctuary and refuge for anti-junta rebels. KNU has issued a widely publicized statement that called for an end to violence against protestors, release of all political prisoners, an

immediate ceasefire, and observance of the moribund NCA. Meanwhile its military, the Karen National Liberation Army, has overrun *Tatmadaw* outposts, as has KIA. These operations have elicited swift reprisals from the *Tatmadaw*, which has used helicopter gunships and airstrikes against rebel-held territories. Not all ethnic armed organizations have entered the fray, though. UWSA remained on the sidelines, restrained by their Chinese patrons, and others such as the Restoration Council of Shan State, the Arakan Army, and MNDAA have mostly kept silent except for the occasional call for restraint that in any event has not been followed up with action on their part.

see also: Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL); Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP); Chatichai Choonhavan, General; Constructive Engagement; Kachin; Karen; Khin Nyunt, General; Ne Win, General; Panglong Agreement; Rohingya; Shan; State Administration Council; State Law and Order Restoration Council; State Peace and Development Council; Thein Sein; U Nu.

## **Insurgency, Southern Provinces** (Thailand)

Thailand's southernmost region has experienced continuous violence of varied intensity since the 1960s. Most of the violence has been the result of political alienation and a feeling among local Malay-Muslims of persecution by the majority Thai Buddhist government. The three southernmost provinces of Yala, Pattani, and Narathiwat together with four bordering districts of Songkhla Province have Malay-Muslim majority populations. Muslims constitute 4–8 per cent of Thailand's population. More than half of their number live in the four southern provinces of Pattani, Narathiwat, Satun, and Yala, where their ancestors had been converted to Islam from the end of the 12th century before coming under Thai domination from the early 17th century. That domination had extended to the four northern provinces of present-day peninsular Malaysia which were incorporated within the British colonial domain in a treaty of 1909. The Muslims of southern Thailand were therefore separated from their

coreligionists by a political boundary not of their own making.

Muslim political alienation in Thailand dates from the late 1930s. A policy of Buddhist cultural assimilation pursued from Bangkok by the government of **Phibul Songkram** generated a flow of refugees into Malaya. Ironically, the four northern provinces of the Malay Peninsula were reincorporated into Thailand by Japan for the duration of the Pacific War. Muslim separatist sentiment was stirred after the war by the success of Malay nationalism to the south. Muslim organizations were set up both in southern Thailand and northern Malaya to promote separatism. A revolt of a kind was launched in southern Thailand in 1948, but it was effectively crushed, especially given Anglo-Thai cooperation prompted by the insurgency waged by the Communist Party of Malaya. Muslim cultural alienation was sustained as a result of both administrative heavy-handedness and neglect, especially in lack of provision of economic opportunity. Throughout the 1970s and into the 1980s, the preeminent militant organization was the **Patani United Liberation Organization** (PULO). Established in 1968, its formation represented the frustration of a younger generation of Thai Muslims. International support for PULO took the form of Syrian and Libyan sympathies in the United Nations as well as informal representation before the Organization of the Islamic Conference. Popular support within Thailand for separatism has tended to vary with the administrative competence of local military commanders in the south but has never posed a major challenge to the authority of the government in Bangkok. While PULO claimed responsibility for sporadic attacks in the 1990s, including the bombing of a railway station in the southern town of Hat Yai in 1992, a string of arson attacks on schools in the south in 1993, and the bombing of a bridge between Hat Yai and Chana railway stations in 1994, the government's amnesty policy significantly eroded its support base during this period. The emergence of opportunities for Muslim political representation in the form of the *Santiparb* (Peace) Party and the Wadah faction of the **Thai Rak Thai Party** further undermined the credibility of PULO.

In the early 2000s there were indications that the accommodation reached with Muslim elites was fraying and the violence that had been largely reduced to manageable levels of banditry was growing and becoming more sophisticated. Still, Thailand was unprepared for the January 2004 attack on an army camp and theft of weapons that signalled the insurgency had been rekindled. Instead of the largely secular PULO, the new insurgents employed religious rhetoric. The new generation of insurgents had their origins in a largely secretive movement with no readily identifiable senior leadership, nor any specific demands. It soon emerged that much of the new violence was linked to *Barisan Revolusi Nasional-Coordinate* (BRN-C; see **Barisan Revolusi Nasional**), an organization that had only a small presence during the 1970s and 1980s but that had slowly grown through the years. Solutions to the violence remain elusive as negotiations between the government and the insurgents are hampered by unclear lines of responsibility on the insurgent side, as well as conflicting intentions of the civil and military parts of the Thai government. This was exacerbated following the 2006 coup when the military took on a much more prominent but less conciliatory role in the negotiations. Early missteps by the government of **Thaksin Shinawatra** were reversed somewhat by an influx of troops, and large-scale cordon and search operations by the Thai army in 2008 reduced the number of violent incidents. The insurgents have adapted, however, and the number of incidents as well as their lethality began to climb again in the last decade as conciliatory gestures have been met with studied hostility.

Overall, the latest wave of insurgency has seen much more serious levels of violence and far wider support from the populace than earlier periods of unrest. While several attempts have been made at initiating dialogue towards a resolution of the conflict, including a process facilitated by the Malaysian government, these have been hampered by the questionable authority of insurgent 'representatives' and the doubtful commitment of the Thai security officials involved in these processes, not to mention the lack of coordination among the Thai government agencies involved. Meanwhile,

the political turmoil that has seized Thailand since the 2014 coup only pushed the security problems of the southern provinces further down the list of priorities, where it has remained.

see also: *Barisan Revolusi Nasional*; Patani United Liberation Organization; Phibul Songkram, Field Marshal; *Thai Rak Thai* Party; Thaksin Shinawatra.

### **International Conference on Cambodia, New York 1981** (Cambodia)

In July 1981 an international conference on Kampuchea (as Cambodia was then known) convened in New York under the auspices of the secretary-general of the United Nations. The meeting was a diplomatic success of a kind for **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)**, which had pressed for it from 1979 in the wake of Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia (see **Indochina Wars**). That success was one of form rather than of substance, however, because of the absence in particular of representation from Vietnam and the Soviet Union. Their governments had objected to the ousted **Khmer Rouge** regime occupying the Cambodian seat in the world organization in place of the incumbent administration in Phnom Penh. The conference convened, therefore, as a group of states opposed to Vietnam's position rather than as a forum for negotiations. Moreover, its sessions exposed major differences of interest between ASEAN and the People's Republic of China over terms for a political settlement. An ASEAN proposal for an interim administration before elections to be conducted under UN supervision foundered on the rock of Chinese opposition with tacit US support. In the event, the conference reiterated bland General Assembly resolutions, while a semblance of institutional continuity was maintained through the mediatory role of its Austrian chairman, but without any tangible result. A decade would have to pass together with a change in strategic context before the Cambodian conflict became susceptible to solution through an international conference. Ironically, the formula adopted for a political settlement at the **International Conference on Cambodia** in Paris in October 1991

was much the same as that rejected in New York in July 1981.

see also: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Indochina Wars; International Conference on Cambodia, Paris 1989; International Conference on Cambodia, Paris 1991; Khmer Rouge.

### **International Conference on Cambodia, Paris 1989** (Cambodia)

At French initiative, a second international conference on Cambodia convened in Paris at the end of July 1989 with Indonesia as co-chairman. Unlike the **International Conference on Cambodia** held in New York in July 1981, it was attended by all the internal and external parties to the conflict as well as the foreign ministers of all permanent members of the UN Security Council and a representative of the secretary-general. The conference had been preceded by a series of abortive negotiations among Cambodian and regional parties in the previous year. The incentive for organizing a meeting in Paris had been the announcement in April 1989 by the governments of Hanoi, Vientiane, and Phnom Penh that all Vietnamese troops would be withdrawn from Cambodia by the end of September that year, irrespective of a political solution.

The conference devolved into four working committees. The first was charged with drawing up ceasefire terms and defining the mandate of an international control mechanism or institution to oversee a settlement. The second was required to construct a system of guarantees for the neutrality and independence of Cambodia. The third was to set the task of working out arrangements for repatriating refugees from the Thai border. Finally, an *ad hoc* committee consisting of France, Indonesia, and the four Cambodian factions was established to address the internal aspects of the conflict, including provision for power-sharing prior to internationally supervised elections, which would mark the final stage of political settlement. The four committees concluded their deliberations on 28 August without constructive outcome and the conference suspended its deliberations in the absence of the foreign ministers of

the permanent members of the UN Security Council (with the exception of France). Several problems obstructed a successful outcome, including the role of the UN in supervision and control of the process of settlement. Primarily at issue, however, was the failure of the Cambodian parties and their external patrons to reach an accord on the status and composition of an interim administration for the period between a political accord and the outcome of general elections to decide the future of the country. The incumbent administration in Phnom Penh refused to be dismantled and to tolerate the **Khmer Rouge** as a legitimate party to a settlement. The failure in August 1989 indicated that those changes in international relations marking the end of the Cold War had not had sufficient regional effect to enable the Cambodian conflict to be resolved.

see *also*: Indochina Wars; International Conference on Cambodia, New York 1981; International Conference on Cambodia, Paris 1991; Khmer Rouge.

### International Conference on Cambodia, Paris 1991 (Cambodia)

The International Conference on Cambodia in Paris, which had suspended its deliberations in August 1989, reconvened in Paris on 21 October 1991 and two days later approved a comprehensive political settlement which was signed by 19 governments as well as by four Cambodian factions. The Final Act of the conference comprised three documents:

- 1 An Agreement on a Comprehensive Political Settlement of the Cambodia Conflict together with five annexes dealing with (a) the mandate of **UNTAC (United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia)**; (b) withdrawal, ceasefire, and related measures; (c) elections; (d) repatriation of Cambodian refugees and displaced persons; and (e) principles for a new constitution for Cambodia.
- 2 An Agreement concerning the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity, and inviolability, neutrality, and national unity of Cambodia.

- 3 A Declaration on rehabilitation and reconstruction of Cambodia.

The road back to Paris following the abortive conference in 1989 had been pioneered through an initiative by US Congressman Stephen Solarz to overcome the persisting obstacle of power-sharing through having the United Nations assume the transitional administration of Cambodia before the outcome of general elections. The government of Australia took up this proposal and commissioned a feasibility study of the peacekeeping exercise. The plan then attracted the serious attention of the permanent members of the UN Security Council, whose officials drafted a framework agreement which was adopted at the end of August 1990. The persisting deadlock over power-sharing was addressed through the vehicle of a **Supreme National Council** on which all Cambodian factions would be represented. The Council, envisaged as a symbol and repository of Cambodian sovereignty rather than as a government, would authorize a ring-holding role for the United Nations. Executive powers would be delegated to UNTAC comprising civilian and military components with responsibility for supervising key ministries and conducting elections in a secure and neutral environment. This framework agreement provided the basis for the accord reached in October 1991.

The course of preliminary negotiations was chequered. **Khmer Rouge** participation in a political settlement was accepted at the first meeting of the Supreme National Council in Indonesia in September 1990. However, serious disagreement persisted over the role of UNTAC, the status of the incumbent government in Phnom Penh, provision for demobilization and disarmament of contending Cambodian forces, and the chair of the Council. A political breakthrough occurred at the end of June 1991 as a direct consequence of an improvement in relations between the People's Republic of China and Vietnam, whose antagonism had been at the heart of the Cambodian conflict from the outset. In effect, an enfeebled and vulnerable Vietnam had been obliged to defer to Chinese priorities in Indochina, and



it withdrew its longstanding patronage of the government which it had imposed by its force of arms in January 1979. As a result of an initiative by Prince **Norodom Sihanouk**, sanctioned by China, the process of negotiations was accelerated. Within less than four months, outstanding issues such as a ceasefire, demobilization, and disarmament of contending forces were resolved, making possible the final accord in Paris. Although the incumbent government in Phnom Penh was not dismantled in advance of general elections, a power-sharing arrangement of a kind was worked out in cooperation between the Supreme National Council chaired by Prince Sihanouk and the UN preliminary to general elections scheduled for early 1993. At the time, the peacekeeping operation was the most ambitious and difficult undertaken since the UN's formation in 1945. It ran into major difficulty from June 1992, when the Khmer Rouge refused to cooperate in the critical second phase which required the warring factions to regroup their forces into cantonments for disarmament. Elections were conducted, nonetheless, in May 1993 without notable disruption and were endorsed by the UN Security Council as free and fair. A new constitution was ratified on 21 September which ended, in effect, the UN mandate as recommended by the Paris conference.

see also: Indochina Wars; International Conference on Cambodia, New York 1981; International Conference on Cambodia, Paris 1989; Khmer Rouge; Sihanouk, King Norodom; Supreme National Council; United Nations: Cambodia 1991–3; UNTAC (United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia).

### Irian Jaya (Indonesia)

Irian Jaya is the Indonesian name for the western half of the island of New Guinea. This mountainous territory with a population of less than two million became an object of contention between Indonesia and the Netherlands for more than a decade after the republic attained independence in 1949. Indonesia's administration has been in place since May 1963 but has been resisted by a local insurgency known as the **Free Papua Movement** or OPM (*Organisasi Papua Merdeka*). Although of limited military

significance, it has attracted sympathy and support from fellow Melanesians in neighbouring Papua New Guinea.

At the time of Indonesia's proclamation of independence, the western half of New Guinea was part of the Netherlands East Indies. During negotiations at The Hague in 1949 over the transfer of sovereignty, the Dutch insisted on retaining control of the territory, subject to further talks within a year. These talks proved to be inconclusive, and the dispute which followed strained the post-colonial relationship. President **Sukarno** took the major initiative in prosecuting the nationalist claim through a practice of coercive diplomacy self-styled as **Confrontation**. The dispute was resolved eventually through US diplomatic intervention from a concern that further denial of Indonesia's claim would provoke its adherence to the communist camp. An agreement between Indonesia and the Netherlands was concluded on 15 August 1962. It provided for an initial transfer of administration to UN authority from 1 October 1962 and then an ultimate transfer to Indonesia from 1 May 1963. In addition, it was stipulated that an 'act of free choice' with UN advice, assistance, and participation would take place before the end of 1969 in order to determine whether or not the inhabitants wished to remain subject to Indonesian jurisdiction. That exercise took place in July and August 1969 but was conspicuously a form of political stage management.

Nonetheless, the United Nations endorsed the transfer of the territory, which was incorporated into the republic as its 26th province on 17 September 1968. Indonesia's jurisdiction has not been matched by popular acceptance. Indigenous resentment of its rule has been aggravated by Jakarta's policy of transmigration, whereby around 200,000 settlers, primarily from overcrowded Java, have been dispatched to the province, while the local population has felt discriminated against in employment opportunities. Moreover, human rights abuses by the armed forces have also alienated the indigenous people. Organized resistance has been mounted by the OPM but with limited effect. The momentum of separatism revived with the political downfall of President **Suharto**

in May 1998. Demonstrations in favour of independence were mounted in Jakarta as well as within Irian Jaya, where violent clashes with security forces occurred. Developments in East Timor, where a referendum offering a choice between autonomy and independence was held in August 1999, encouraged demands for comparable treatment. In December 1999, over 10,000 pro-independence supporters demonstrated in the central square of the province's capital Jayapura, where they raised the separatist Morning Star flag. Such protests have not brought any substantive concessions from the government in Jakarta concerned to uphold the integrity of Indonesia, after East Timor, as well as to retain control of Irian Jaya's rich natural resources. During a visit to the province in January 2000, President **Abdurrahman Wahid** was prepared to offer only autonomous status and a change in the name of the province to West Papua. He reiterated that position at a meeting in Jakarta with members of a delegation from the province in May 2000. In June 2000, a people's congress in Jayapura resolved that West Papua was sovereign and independent but without formally declaring independence. On 1 January 2002, the government of **Megawati Sukarnoputri** allocated a set of unprecedented autonomy measures to Irian Jaya. Its name was changed to Papua, and the provincial flag was allowed to fly alongside, but lower than, the Indonesian national flag. A key concession according to Jakarta was that the Papuan provincial government would be allowed to retain 70 per cent of revenue from oil and gas production and 80 per cent from other mineral and forestry activity, which is worth hundreds of millions of dollars annually. However, while there would be greater autonomy at multiple levels, defence, foreign affairs, finance, and internal and judicial affairs would remain in Jakarta's jurisdiction. This gesture was rejected by the Papuan Presidium Council (PDP) and OPM on grounds that it did not deal with issues of human rights violations, and Papuans were not consulted. The day after, PDP leader Theys Eluay was found dead. Indonesian soldiers were eventually tried and convicted of his murder, though it was unclear who issued the instructions.

In February 2003, the province was split into two. The Indonesian government declared the westernmost part of the island to be a separate province and named it West Irian Jaya (*Irian Jaya Barat*) whilst the rest of the province retained the name Irian Jaya. However, in November 2004, the Indonesian judiciary came to a consensus that the split violated Papua's autonomy and declared the move unconstitutional. In April 2007 Irian Jaya was renamed Papua and West Irian Jaya came to be known as West Papua. The change in name was both a symbolic and a political move by the Indonesian government, which had always preferred the name Irian. In September 2007 representatives from Papua's indigenous political organizations, including the OPM, established an umbrella body known as the West Papua National Coalition for Liberation (WPNCL) to pressure Jakarta to renegotiate the terms of the 2001 special autonomy provisions. In October 2011 the vice-president's office established the Unit to Accelerate Development in Papua and West Papua, to focus on economic development. The committee includes members who were previously involved in the peace talks over Aceh.

Papua continues to suffer not just political marginalization but also economic hardship. In October 2011, 8,000 workers at a copper and gold mine owned by US company Freeport-McMoran in the eastern province of Papua went on a three-month strike for better salaries. Even as the government of **Joko Widodo** has attempted to build infrastructure in the region, these efforts have been met with suspicion by the local population, who view it as an attempt to facilitate the deployment of larger numbers of Indonesian security personnel. Papuans have also been victims of Indonesian police and military brutality. The military closely monitors activists and politicians, and any form of dissidence has never been tolerated. In 2010 the military was forced to admit that men caught on video torturing Papuan villagers were members of its special forces. In October 2011 security forces clamped down on a Papuan Congress meeting, resulting in the arrest of more than 300 Papuans. At the end of the violent crackdown three men were killed and

more than 90 were injured, while some Papuan leaders were charged with treason. Since 2018, violence has escalated as low-intensity military engagements between West Papuan resistance fighters and Indonesian security forces have steadily increased, accompanied by intensification of vocal calls for a referendum on West Papuan independence. Sentiments were further flamed in August 2019 when a group of Papuan students were arrested in Surabaya, Indonesia, following reports that an Indonesian flag was damaged outside the building where they lived. The situation rapidly escalated into street protests by both Indonesians and West Papuans. Despite an internet blackout, clips of Indonesian security personnel firing on crowds in West Papua were released on social media. On 26 April 2021, Indonesian Brigadier-General Gusti Putu Danny Nugraha, head of Indonesian intelligence for the region, was killed in an ambush by the West Papuan National Liberation Army, leading to the deployment of more Indonesian military personnel to the region.

see also: Confrontation; Free Papua Movement; Megawati Sukarnoputri; Suharto; Sukarno; United Nations: Irian Jaya 1962–9; Wahid, Abdurrahman; Widodo, Joko.

## Iskandar Development Region (Malaysia/Singapore)

The Iskandar Development Region or IDR (also known as Iskandar Development Zone and Iskandar Malaysia) is Malaysia's largest growth corridor and measures 2,217 square kilometres. It is located in the southern Malaysian state of Johor. Mooted in 2005 and launched in 2006, the idea behind the project was to turn the area into a southern development region, contributing to the goal of raising the per capita income in Malaysia to US\$15,000 by the year 2020. Named after the late sultan of Johor, Sultan Iskandar, the region also houses Johor's new administrative capital in Nusajaya. Aside from Nusajaya, other flagship zones are Johor Bahru City which forms the central business district as well as the state capital of Johor, Western Gate Development which focuses on logistics, production, and manufacturing, Eastern Gate Development which emphasizes heavy industries and

logistics, and Senai-Skudai where the airport is located. The region is also home to several international schools, as well as medical facilities, theme parks, and residences. As of 2020, the government of Malaysia has committed M\$32 billion into IDR. IDR has also drawn significant foreign direct investment into the country, particularly from Singapore which borders it, and this is seen as a major avenue through which sound bilateral relations between Malaysia and Singapore have been sustained through business and investment synergies and mutual economic interests. In 2019, the Malaysian government took the decision to expand the size of IDR to 4,749 square kilometres.

## Islam (Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/ Malaysia/Myanmar/Philippines/ Singapore/Thailand)

The Islamic faith requires complete submission to the will and obedience to the law of a single god. Its adherents believe that the precepts of their faith were revealed in the seventh century AD to his messenger, the Prophet Muhammad, who incorporated them into the *Qur'an* to provide a comprehensive and superior way of life. Islam did not take root within Southeast Asia until around the beginning of the 14th century, when port cities began to adopt the *Sunni* faith of Arab and Indian maritime traders. This conversion extended northwards through the Malay Peninsula into southern Thailand and south and east through the northern coasts of the Indonesian archipelago and then northwards from Borneo to the island of Luzón in the Philippines. In the case of Myanmar, Islam spread to the Arakan region overland from India.

Islam became identified with state power in Southeast Asia from the 15th century shortly after the foundation of the trading empire of Malacca based on the west coast of the Malay Peninsula. But after the fall of Malacca to the Portuguese in the early 16th century, its adherents dispersed to other parts of the Indonesian archipelago where their faith became most deeply accepted among coastal trading communities. In Java, Islam was later adopted by local princes to underpin their mystical power

but primarily as a cultural veneer on entrenched animist and Hindu–Buddhist beliefs whose syncretic legacy is to be found in eastern and central parts of the island. The Islamic faith was also employed to mobilize opposition to Dutch colonial control.

Within Southeast Asia, the most significant Islamic communities are to be found in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Brunei.

In Indonesia, Muslims number around 87 per cent of a population of some 273 million but do not constitute a homogeneous community. A division between devout (**Santri**) and nominal (**Abangan**) adherents of the faith is a consequence of the uneven pattern of conversion. Islam played an important part in the rise of nationalism against the Dutch, but attempts to promote an Islamic state were denied before the proclamation of independence in August 1945. The authorized state philosophy **Pancasila** enjoins all Indonesians to believe in a single deity but accords them the right to believe in any god of their own choosing. It was conceived in June 1945 by President **Sukarno** to prevent the political pretensions of Islam from provoking civil strife and was accorded an even greater political sanctity by President **Suharto**. From independence, Islam was not accorded a special status but has been one of several recognized faiths under the auspices of the ministry of religious affairs.

After independence, the government of Jakarta faced insurgent challenge from the **Darul Islam** movement based primarily in northern Sumatra and western Java. The movement appeared to have been quelled by the 1960s, yet its factions have managed to resurface over the years in various guises, including as clandestine militant organizations such as **Jemaah Islamiyah**. Under the rule of President Suharto, a policy of draining Islam of political content was pursued, especially after its global resurgence had been highlighted by the revolution in Iran. All Muslim political parties were grouped within one umbrella organization, the **Partai Persatuan Pembangunan** (United Development Party, PPP), which has been obliged to acknowledge *Pancasila* as its sole ideology. Personal devotion to Islam has increased, however, in response to the materialism unleashed by

successful economic development. President Suharto encouraged the formation of the Association of Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals or ICMI as an instrument to counter the influence of the armed forces and to generate greater support for his retention of high office. Under the leadership of **B. J. Habibie**, ICMI served as the political vehicle of modern Islam with a nationalist economic agenda. Islam took on a more conspicuous, albeit diverse, political expression after Habibie, as vice-president, succeeded Suharto in May 1998. In the event, a so-called central axis of Muslim-based parties collaborated to deny the presidency to **Megawati Sukarnoputri**, regarded as a representative of Christian and secular forces. The beneficiary of this manoeuvre was **Abdurrahman Wahid**, the leader of the Muslim-based **Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa** (National Awakening Party, PKB) and also of the **Nahdlatul Ulama**, whose commitment to religious pluralism and opposition to an Islamic state made him the natural political partner of Megawati, who became vice-president. He has sought to keep political Islam to the margins of public life. However, sectarian violence between Muslims and Christians caused considerable loss of life and devastation in the Moluccan Islands and also in Sulawesi and Lombok. In Aceh, in north Sumatra, an independence movement driven by Islamic priorities has long been engaged in insurgency but concluded a ceasefire with the government in Jakarta in May 2000.

The 2004 general election saw the participation of several political parties that rallied around the banner of Islam. These included the **Partai Bulan Bintang** (Crescent Star Party, PBB), which won 2.6 per cent of the vote, and **Partai Keadilan Sejahtera** (Prosperous Justice Party, PKS), which won a commendable 7.3 per cent. Collectively, Muslim-based parties captured about 30 per cent of the overall vote. By 2009 however, the support for Muslim parties plummeted, with only PKS registering a small increase in its vote share to 7.9 per cent. Heavy losses suffered by the other Islamic parties illustrated the fact that while personal piety was on the rise in Indonesia, most Indonesian Muslims preferred either secular or more moderate Islamic parties. Nevertheless, Islamic

parties enjoyed a surprising upsurge of support at the 2014 polls, when all but PKS improved their share of the popular vote. This upturn in support however, had less to do with the ideological appeal of these parties than their ability to tailor their campaigns to appeal to specific constituencies. Likewise, Islamic parties and civil society movements managed to mobilize in a successful effort to block the re-election bid of Jakarta governor Basuki Tjahaja Purnama in 2017 (see **Anti-Ahok Protests 2016**). He was later charged and convicted of blasphemy. Beyond party politics, Islam continues to play an important role in the civil society sphere. This is evident from the growing influence of groups such as **Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia**, **Front Pembela Islam**, and **Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia** at one end of the spectrum, and *Jaringan Islam Liberal* (Liberal Islam Network) at the other.

In Malaysia, Islam provides a common orthodoxy for more than half of the population of around 32.5 million. Adherents are concentrated mainly in the Malay Peninsula, with only a minority position in Sarawak and Sabah. Islam has been the official religion since independence and is an essential criterion for defining identity on the part of indigenous Malays, who have long felt their political birthright threatened by the large and commercially successful ethnic-Chinese community of migrant origin. Malay and not Islamic symbolism, however, served as the vehicle for nationalist assertion after the Pacific War in response to a British attempt to create a common citizenship to include Chinese and Indians and to dethrone the Malay sultans.

In political life, Islam has been associated primarily with Malay opposition to **UMNO (United Malays National Organization)**, which has governed in coalition with Chinese- and Indian-based parties since before independence. Malaysia also experienced the effects of Islamic resurgence from the 1970s as economic modernization disturbed the values and orientation of a younger generation of Malays, especially from a rural environment. UMNO has sought to harness Islam by championing its virtues and causes and for a time accommodating the opposition **Parti Islam Se-Malaysia**

(PAS) within the ruling coalition. Over time, Islam has become central to national political and cultural life because of the need of UMNO to compensate for a vulnerability arising from its longstanding practice of intercommunal coalition politics. The revivalist *Al-Arqam* movement was banned in Malaysia in August 1994 and disbanded formally in the following November. PAS was able to mount a political challenge to UMNO in the wake of the political crisis generated by the dismissal from office, detention, trial, and imprisonment of former deputy prime minister **Anwar Ibrahim**. It demonstrated its electoral appeal in November 1999 not only on the basis of its Islamic credentials among the rural Malays, but also from the example of probity in the public and personal lives of its leadership. Although PAS is committed to establishing an Islamic state, it found it politic to enter into an opposition alliance with the primarily ethnic-Chinese **Democratic Action Party** in recognition of the fact that to achieve political power in Malaysia, the support of the non-Malay and non-Islamic communities is required. In July 2000, members of an Islamic cult, **Al-Ma'unah** (Brotherhood of Inner Power) raided two military arms depots and seized heavy weapons. Anti-terrorist commandos then overran their jungle camp. It was around this time that Malaysian security forces uncovered another organization, **Kumpulan Militan Malaysia**, which purportedly was planning terrorist attacks in the country.

Within the political sphere, PAS performed poorly in the 2004 elections. Nevertheless, Prime Minister **Abdullah Badawi's** inability to capitalize on this mandate and PAS's own internal shift towards a more inclusivist and reformist register led to the turning of tables in 2008, when PAS joined in the **Pakatan Rakyat** (People's Alliance) coalition to severely dent the ruling coalition's legitimacy. Among the issues for which PAS won accolades from non-Muslims was the party's support for minority rights and opposition to attempts by the Malaysian government to ban the use of the word *Allah* in Malay translations of the Bible. Nevertheless, in the wake of the party's failure to improve its performance in the 2013 polls, conservative leaders within PAS have reversed their

position on the matter and subsequently withdrew from the coalition in 2015. Despite their historical animosity towards each other, PAS and UMNO made common cause in the form of *Muafakat Nasional* for the expressed purpose of 'defending' the interests of Islam and Malay dominance.

In Brunei, Islam is the faith of some 350,000 Malays out of a population of around 440,000. Brunei is unique in Southeast Asia as the sole ruling monarchy. Sultan **Hassanal Bolkiah** is the head of the faith combining temporal and spiritual powers in one person in the classical Muslim tradition. The authoritarian system which pivots on a materially self-indulgent royal family has been rationalized as a **Melayu Islam Beraja** (Malay Islamic Monarchy) in an attempt to perpetuate a regional political anachronism. In a conscious attempt also to fend off external Islamic influences, the government rules on the basis of *shari'a* and has introduced a superficial austerity by banning the sale of alcohol and preventing the celebration of the religious festivals of other faiths, such as Christmas. Proselytization has also been curtailed, leading to some measure of disquiet among follows of minority religions in the country. Unlike the experience of Indonesia and Malaysia, Brunei has never faced political challenge through the vehicle of Islam. In recent years however, the sultanate has found itself in the international spotlight for its efforts to introduce **shari'a law**.

Islam is in a minority position in Cambodia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand. With the exceptions of Cambodia and Singapore, heightened ethno-religious identity in the face of discrimination by the dominant culture has led to abortive separatist violence which has been met with repressive reaction.

The **Cham** Muslim minority in Cambodia are the displaced survivors of the Kingdom of Champa (once located in central Vietnam), which was extinguished by the drive southwards of the Vietnamese in the 15th century. They enjoyed a tolerated existence after independence until they became victims of civil war and the bestiality of the **Khmer Rouge** during the 1970s. A significant number escaped as refugees to Malaysia; since the downfall of the Khmer Rouge regime in 1979, the Cambodian

Cham have virtually disappeared as a separate community. Today, Cham Muslims are able to practice their religion openly and have similar voting rights to all other Khmer citizens. However, after the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States, authorities have become more wary of foreign groups such as the Wahhabi from Saudi Arabia and Tablighi Jamaat from South Asia. The arrest of three foreign Muslims in Cambodia on terrorism charges in May 2003 has reinforced fears within the Cambodian leadership about the threat of terrorism.

Muslim separatist activity has not enjoyed any success in Myanmar despite participation in challenges to the central government with other ethnic minority groups after independence in 1948. Since the advent of rule by the military **State Law and Order Restoration Council** (SLORC) in September 1988, the **Rohingya** minority in Arakan has been driven in the tens of thousands as refugees into neighbouring Bangladesh. For generations, the Rohingya minority group has demanded recognition of citizenship, as currently they are trapped in camps on the borders of Myanmar with no rights to travel nor access to education or other privileges accorded to a citizen. Most of them claim to have lived in the country for generations but have no proper documentation to support their claim. In June 2012, violence between majority Rakhine Buddhists and minority Rohingya Muslims left thousands of homes destroyed, 200 people killed, and more than 115,000 people displaced. Violence escalated again between August and September 2017, leading to widespread international condemnation of the government of **Aung San Suu Kyi**, who remained defiant.

In Thailand, Muslims number around five to six million out of a population of 70 million. The vast majority are concentrated in the four southern provinces of Narathiwat, Pattani, Satun, and Yala, close to the northern border of Malaysia which was determined by Anglo-Thai agreement in 1909. Muslim alienation had been generated by a policy of Buddhist cultural assimilation by Bangkok in the late 1930s and then the success of Malay nationalism across the southern border after the Pacific War, while malign administration also made a continuous

contribution. Armed separatism has been a recurrent activity from the late 1940s with the best-known exponent being the **Patani United Liberation Organization** (PULO). Apart from sporadic bombings in Bangkok and the south of the country, the challenge to central government had hitherto been limited. This changed when a new cycle of violence erupted in the early 2000s that severely undermined the credibility of the central government. Policy missteps by the government of **Thaksin Shinawatra** in response to renewed violence, including the killing of more than 80 Muslims after a demonstration in the southern province of Narathiwat in October 2004, further compounded the crisis in legitimacy, as trust between the Muslim community in the southern provinces and the central government eroded considerably. Armed groups such as *Barisan Revolusi Nasional-Coordinate* (see **Barisan Revolusi Nasional**) took advantage of the situation and mobilized further armed resistance using religious language and metaphors. In March 2005, a National Reconciliation Commission was set up for discussions with Muslim leaders to end conflict but to no avail. Despite several further attempts at dialogue, the violence continues unabated.

In the Philippines, Muslims number around nine million out of a population of some 110 million. They are concentrated in the southern islands of Basilan, Mindanao, Palawan, Sulu, and Tawi Tawi. Subject to religious and administrative discrimination under Spanish colonial rule, the Muslims have long been a deprived community. Political alienation became acute after the Pacific War. Christian settlers moved south to appropriate Muslim land and transformed the demographic pattern. Political alienation was expressed organizationally by the **Moro National Liberation Front** (MNLF) which began armed struggle against the government of President **Ferdinand Marcos** in 1972 after it had declared martial law. Violent conflict reached a peak in the mid-1970s, but it has diminished ever since a provisional settlement was negotiated through the good offices of Colonel Gaddafi of Libya in 1976 and the Marcos government began to play on tribal divisions within the Muslim community. A political solution remained elusive for two decades, while a

split developed in the Muslim separatist movement, giving rise to the **Moro Islamic Liberation Front** (MILF). In 1996, with Indonesia in the role of broker, the MNLF agreed to a cessation of armed struggle in return for the establishment of an Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao with its leader, **Nur Misuari**, as its governor together with a key role in a Southern Philippines Council for Peace and Development. The MILF together with the insurgent **Abu Sayyaf Group** continued with Islamic rebellion in support of a separate state. The Abu Sayyaf Group has degenerated, however, into a criminal organization noted for armed abduction of hostages for ransom, especially after the seizure of tourists from Malaysian Borneo in April 2000. The Philippines became an important front in regional counterterrorism efforts after camps in the southern Philippines were found to be training *Jemaah Islamiyah* operatives. With the assistance of the United States, many these camps were eradicated by 2005. More recently, a **Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro** between the Philippines government and MILF was signed, leading to the creation of an autonomous political entity known as Bangsamoro. Nevertheless, political violence has continued as fringe groups have resisted rapprochement with the Philippines government.

In Singapore, with an overwhelming Chinese majority, many among the Muslim community of around 800,000 have close kinship links with peninsular Malaysia. Their political orientation was pointed up by reaction to the visit to the republic by Israel's president, Chaim Herzog, in 1986 (see **Herzog Affair 1986**). At one time, they were excluded from national service, but greater efforts have been made by the government to promote their integration. In Singapore, Muslim affairs are governed by the Administration of Muslim Law Act (AMLA) which led to the formation of MUIS, the Islamic body of Muslims in Singapore. Although the government is secular, there are religious bodies like *shari'a* courts to handle Muslim affairs under the Islamic laws. Although relations between the government and the Muslim community soured in the early 2000s due to disagreement over the management of madrasahs and a ban

on the headscarf in schools, relations have improved. Most Muslim organizations have steered away from politics and have worked closely with the government to improve the lives of Muslims in the country.

While the vast majority of Muslims in South-east Asia are of *Sunni* persuasion, numbers of *Shi'a* Muslims have gradually increased, in part as a result of the successful outreach undertaken by numerous Iranian cultural centres established in the region's capitals, with the possible exception of Malaysia, where adherence to the *Shi'a* schools is officially illegal.

see also: *Abangan*; Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG); *Al-Ma'unah*; Anti-Ahok Protests 2016; Anwar Ibrahim; Aung San Suu Kyi; Badawi, Tun Abdullah Ahmad; *Barisan Revolusi Nasional*; Bolkihah, Sultan Hassanah; Cham; Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB); *Darul Islam*; Democratic Action Party (DAP); *Front Pembela Islam*; Habibie, B. J.; Herzog Affair 1986; *Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia*; *Jemaah Islamiyah*; Khmer Rouge; *Kumpulan Militan Malaysia*; *Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia*; Marcos, Ferdinand; Megawati Sukarnoputri; *Melayu Islam Beraja*; Misuari, Nur; Moro Islamic Liberation Front; Moro National Liberation Front; *Nahdlatul Ulama*; *Pakatan Rakyat*; *Pancasila*; *Partai Bulan Bintang*; *Partai Keadilan Sejahtera*; *Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa*; *Partai Persatuan Pembangunan*; *Parti Islam Se-Malaysia*; Patani United Liberation Organization; Rohingya; *Santri*; *Shari'a* Law; State Law and Order Restoration Council; Suharto; Sukarno; Thaksin Shinawatra; UMNO (United Malays National Organization); Wahid, Abdurrahman.

## Ismail Sabri Yaakob, Datuk Seri

(Malaysia)

Following the resignation of **Muhyiddin Yassin** on 16 August 2021, Ismail Sabri Yaakob was appointed to the office of prime minister of Malaysia by the **Yang di-Pertuan Agong** four days later, on 20 August, and sworn in a day later. In lieu of a general election which would have been a considerable public health risk given rising **Covid-19** infection numbers in Malaysia, the low-key, affable vice-president

of **UMNO (United Malays National Organization)** was appointed after the *Agong* was persuaded that he commanded the majority of legislators in Parliament.

Ismail Sabri was born in Temerloh, in the state of Pahang, the home state of the current *Agong*, Sultan Abdullah, and former prime minister **Najib Tun Razak**, on 18 January 1960. A lawyer by training, Ismail Sabri graduated from the Faculty of Law at the University of Malaya and began his legal career in 1985. He entered politics in 1987, when he became a local district council member in his hometown. In 2004, he became head of the UMNO division in Temerloh and was elected to Parliament as representative for the seat in Bera. He has held that position ever since. In 2018, he garnered the highest number of votes to secure one of the three UMNO vice-president posts. He also served briefly as deputy president of UMNO between December 2018 and June 2019, when **Zahid Hamidi** took leave from the presidency of the party and the sitting deputy president, Mohamad Hassan, took on the position of acting president for the six months. At the national level, Ismail Sabri accumulated a wealth of experience in a variety of cabinet portfolios and served under the **Barisan Nasional** governments of **Abdullah Badawi** and **Najib Tun Razak**. The portfolios he held during this time included youth and sports, domestic trade, cooperatives, and consumerism, agriculture, and rural and regional development. Ismail Sabri returned to the cabinet after **Perikatan Nasional** was ushered into power and served as Defence Minister and Senior Minister for the security cluster. In that more prominent position, he was thrust into the spotlight and placed in charge of coordinating the Covid-19 response. To that end, the disastrous response, which saw infection rates rise despite the implementation of several movement control orders as well as a state of emergency, has cast a pale shadow over his credibility. In July 2021, Muhyiddin Yassin appointed Ismail Sabri deputy prime minister after UMNO expressed discontent at being denied key positions under the *Perikatan Nasional* government.

Considering the number of candidates for the position following Muhyiddin's resignation, an



important impetus behind his appointment as prime minister was the fact that Ismail Sabri is widely seen as an acceptable candidate to all factions within UMNO. But as a politician, his career has not been without controversy. During his term as minister of domestic trade in 2015, Ismail Sabri stoked political sensitivities with a Facebook post that urged Malay consumers to boycott profiteering Chinese businesses. In 2019, He alleged that the **Pakatan Harapan** government, then in power, was 'anti-Islam' and proceeded to call on Muslims to wage *jihād*

against it. His term as prime minister began inauspiciously, however, when a public petition against his appointment was launched and very quickly garnered more than 300,000 signatures. Ismail Sabri remains the only Malaysian prime minister who was never concurrently leader of his own political party.

*see also:* Badawi, Tun Abdullah Ahmad; *Barisan Nasional* (BN); Covid-19; Muhyiddin Yassin, Tan Sri; Najib Tun Razak, Datuk Seri; *Pakatan Harapan*; *Perikatan Nasional*; *Yang di-Pertuan Agong*; Zahid Hamidi, Ahmad.

## Jakarta Conference on Cambodia 1970 (Cambodia/Indonesia)

The government of Indonesia convened an international conference on Cambodia in Jakarta on 16 May 1970. It acted out of concern for the possible impact on national security of the extension of the **Vietnam War** to Cambodia after the deposition of its head of state, Prince **Norodom Sihanouk**, in March 1970. The motivation was complex, however. Some military officers sought to exploit the conflict by transferring a stock of outmoded rifles to Cambodia in return for the United States replacing them with modern weapons. In addition, a proposal to dispatch an expeditionary force to help the vulnerable **Lon Nol** government was put to President **Suharto**. Suharto had a special interest in Cambodia, viewed previously as a model non-aligned state which he had visited for that very reason during his first overseas tour in 1968. However, his foreign minister, **Adam Malik**, persuaded Suharto of the risks of any military involvement and of the greater political utility of a conference which could demonstrate Indonesia's resumption of an independent and active foreign policy.

The conference, which was called with the approval of the secretary-general of the United Nations, was intended as a representative Asian diplomatic gathering. A major obstacle was Indonesia being identified with demands for the withdrawal of foreign troops and the restoration of Cambodia's neutrality, which appeared to endorse the authority of Lon Nol. In the event, the Jakarta Conference convened as a partisan assembly, attended only by Western-aligned states. Communist invitees refused to participate, as did notable Asian neutrals such as India and Burma. Moreover, military incursions into Cambodia at the beginning of May by combined US and South Vietnamese units constituted a major political embarrassment. The conference was called 'to find a constructive formula on how to stop the deteriorating situation in Cambodia and restore peace and

security to that country' but failed to accomplish anything. A pious resolution calling for the withdrawal of all foreign troops was placed in the charge of a three-man mission from Indonesia, Malaysia, and Japan, which then engaged in a fruitless perambulation to solicit cooperation from members of the UN Security Council. *see also*: Lon Nol; Malik, Adam; Sihanouk, King Norodom; Suharto; Vietnam War.

## Jakarta Summit (ASEAN) 2011 (Brunei/ Cambodia/Indonesia/Laos/Malaysia/ Myanmar/Philippines/Singapore/ Thailand/Vietnam)

The 18th meeting of heads of government of **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** convened in the capital of Indonesia on 7–8 May 2011. The leaders gathered to deliberate an agenda focused on efforts to expedite and strengthen economic integration. Most importantly, a joint statement was issued on an 'ASEAN Community in a Global Community of Nations', where members agreed to work towards achieving a common platform and position on global issues and challenges beyond 2015. The leaders directed their foreign ministers to work out a declaration, which would be endorsed at the 19th ASEAN summit in Bali later in the year. Also on the agenda was Myanmar's bid for the grouping's chairmanship in 2014, a request that put the regional grouping under an uncomfortable spotlight given widespread criticism from ASEAN's US and EU dialogue partners of Myanmar's human rights record. Also at issue at the summit was Timor-Leste's application for ASEAN membership. The leaders postponed the decision to later in the year while the ASEAN Coordinating Council made up of foreign ministers was given the responsibility of evaluating the issue and providing recommendations. Nevertheless, it was clear that Timor-Leste's membership application would not enjoy unanimous support within ASEAN.

The summit was overshadowed, however, by the ongoing border conflict between Cambodia and Thailand. Thailand's prime minister, **Abhisit Vejjajiva**, and his Cambodian counterpart, **Hun Sen**, exchanged sharp remarks and issued separate press statements that indicated little progress had been made towards resolution of the dispute. The summit ended without resolving the border skirmishes around the **Preah Vihear Temple** that had by then cost 18 lives. As ASEAN chair, Indonesia agreed to mediate talks between Thailand and Cambodia. The dispute worryingly highlighted the apparent inability of ASEAN to deal with internal conflicts and disagreements despite its lofty declaratory goals. Other ASEAN members expressed concern that such incidents and disunity would undermine the region's potential and derail efforts to achieve an **ASEAN Community** by 2015.

see also: Abhisit Vejjajiva; ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; ASEAN Community; Hun Sen; Preah Vihear Temple Dispute.

### **Jatuporn Prompan** (Thailand)

Jatuporn Prompan was one of the key leaders of the **United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship** (UDD) and a former member of Parliament for the **Pheu Thai Party**. Born in Surat Thani on 5 October 1965, Jatuporn studied at Ramkhamhaeng University in Bangkok, graduating with a bachelor's degree in political science. While at university he was politically active during the May 1992 pro-democracy uprising that followed the crackdown on demonstrators at the Democracy Monument in central Bangkok. In 1996, Jatuporn joined the **Palang Dharma** Party, but defected to the **Thai Rak Thai Party** (TRT) two years later. As he was not a party executive, Jatuporn was not banned from politics after the dissolution of TRT following the 2006 coup. During the 2007 parliamentary elections, Jatuporn ran for a seat under the **People's Power Party** (PPP). He retained his parliamentary seat after the 2008 dissolution of PPP, moving to *Pheu Thai*. At the same time, he became an active member of UDD and quickly became a key leader of the movement. Jatuporn helped lead the 'red shirts' through the protests

in April 2009 and later during their occupation of the Democracy Monument area and the central commercial district in March through May 2010. Jatuporn surrendered together with other 'red shirt' leaders when the military cracked down on protests on 19 May 2010, and was subsequently jailed on terrorism charges. He stood for election as a *Pheu Thai* candidate in the July 2011 elections, and although he won a seat, was disqualified as he was still incarcerated. The Election Commission eventually endorsed his status as a member of Parliament and he was released on bail in August 2011. The Commission then revised its approval in November 2011, and in May 2012, the Constitutional Court ruled that Jatuporn was ineligible. In July 2017, he was convicted for defaming **Abhisit Vejjajiva** when he was prime minister and sentenced to imprisonment for a year. In May 2021, Jatuporn signed a letter calling for the resignation of Prime Minister **Prayuth Chan-ocha** for the political conflicts in the country and his mishandling of the **Covid-19** crisis.

see also: Abhisit Vejjajiva; Covid-19; People's Power Party; *Pheu Thai* Party; Prayuth Chan-ocha; *Thai Rak Thai* Party; United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship.

### **Jemaah Islamiyah** (Indonesia/Malaysia/Philippines/Singapore)

*Jemaah Islamiyah* (JI) is an Islamic organization which was responsible for a number of terrorist attacks in Indonesia. JI was formed in Malaysia in January 1993 by two Indonesian clerics, Abdullah Sungkar and **Abu Bakar Ba'asyir**. The organization's ideology is Salafist and extremist in that it believes national governments to be illegitimate, and that their violent overthrow is necessary towards the ultimate objective of reviving a pristine form of Islam and establishing a regional Islamic state or caliphate in Southeast Asia.

JI's roots can be traced to the **Darul Islam** (DI), a separatist Islamist organization that waged an armed insurgency in Indonesia in the 1950s and 1960s with the objective of establishing an Islamic state in the country. JI was formed when Sungkar and Ba'asyir broke away from DI as a result of differences with Ajengan Masduki, then chief of DI. While in

Malaysia, where they had gone to escape persecution from Indonesian authorities, Sungkar and Ba'asyir expanded their network of like-minded activists from Malaysia, Singapore, and the Philippines through the establishment of training camps and some Islamic boarding schools. Following the demise of the **New Order** and advent of democratization in Indonesia, both returned to Indonesia to capitalize on new opportunities afforded by the expanded political space. Sungkar died in 1999, however, and was succeeded by Ba'asyir as JI's spiritual head. The ideology of JI is captured in its handbook, PUPJI or *Pedoman Umum Perjuangan Al-Jama'ah Al-Islamiyah*, which translates to *The General Guide for the Struggle of Al-Jama'ah Al-Islamiyah*. Ba'asyir has always denied the existence of JI, or his position within the organization, despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary provided in the testimony of numerous JI members, including defectors.

Though Sungkar was believed to have communicated with Osama bin Laden, it is Ba'asyir who is seen to be the ideologue behind the ideas of suicide bombings and attacks on the 'far enemy', which echo Al-Qaeda ideology. The organization's activities were initially limited to Indonesia, but after September 11, the focus shifted to attacking Western interests in the region. While plans to conduct violent operations in Singapore were foiled, JI succeeded in gaining a foothold in the southern Philippines through collaboration with like-minded groups, and was behind several attacks in Indonesia. The first attack linked back to JI was the Medan church bombings in May 2000. That same year, JI also attempted to assassinate the Philippine ambassador to Indonesia as well as President **Megawati Sukarnoputri**. This was followed by its most lethal attack, the bombings in Bali in October 2002. Other attacks traceable to JI or JI splinter groups are the JW Marriott Hotel bombing in 2003, the Australian Embassy bombing in 2004, the second Bali bombing in 2005 and the twin attacks on the JW Marriott Hotel and Ritz-Carlton Hotel in 2009 (see **Terrorism in Southeast Asia**). The 2002 bombings in Bali, however, sowed the seeds of schism within JI, between hardliners who believed that violence was the only means to achieve their

objectives, and others who were increasingly alarmed at the cost in Muslim casualties. This schism eventually manifested itself in the emergence of hardline splinter groups on the one hand, and the intensification of proselytization and outreach on the other, on the part of those more reticent towards indiscriminate violence.

At the same time, JI has also come under increasing pressure from the Indonesian police. Prominent figures such as **Hambali**, Abu Dujana, Azahari Husin, Noordin Top, and Dulmatin have either been killed or captured. The ideological underpinnings of the group have also been crippled by outspoken defectors such as Nasir Abas, who has written a series of books refuting JI's extremist ideology, and Abu Rusydan. Abu Bakar Ba'asyir was sentenced to a 15-year prison sentence for supporting a training camp for violent extremism. He was released in January 2021.

see also: Ba'asyir, Abu Bakar; *Darul Islam*; Hambali (Riduan Isamuddin); Megawati Sukarnoputri; New Order; Terrorism in Southeast Asia.

### **Jeyaretnam, J. B.** (Singapore)

Benjamin Jeyaretnam became the first opposition member of Parliament in Singapore for over a decade when, standing for the **Workers' Party** (WP), he defeated the **People's Action Party** (PAP) candidate in a by-election on 31 October 1981. Jeyaretnam was born in 1926 in Jaffna, Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), and trained as a lawyer in London. As a loquacious opposition member of Parliament, he became a thorn in the flesh of Prime Minister **Lee Kuan Yew**, who appeared determined to drive him from political life. Jeyaretnam was returned to Parliament in 1984, but in 1986 he was found guilty of making a false declaration of his party's accounts and fined a sum which disqualified him from holding a legislative seat until November 1991. He was also disbarred from legal practice. In October 1988 the judicial committee of the Privy Council ruled that he had been wrongly disbarred and that the court decision was 'a grievous injustice'. WP won a single seat in the general election in August 1991, but Jeyaretnam did not take the opportunity to stand in a by-election in December

1992 after his disqualification had expired, and he lost political credibility as a consequence. However, in January 1997, he stood again for election, this time with party colleagues in the five-member group representation constituency of Cheng San. WP ran PAP sufficiently close for Jeyaretnam, as its secretary-general, to assume the third opposition seat in the Parliament as a Non-Constituency Member of Parliament (NCMP) without voting rights. In the following August, he was tried before the High Court on the charge of having defamed Prime Minister **Goh Chok Tong** and ten other senior members of the PAP in remarks made at an election rally for fellow WP candidate Tang Liang Hong, who subsequently fled Singapore. In September, the court found in favour of the prime minister but awarded damages of S\$20,000, only one-tenth of that demanded, and imposed only 60 per cent of the costs on Jeyaretnam. On appeal in July 1998, the damages were increased to S\$100,000 and full costs imposed. In the following October, Jeyaretnam agreed to pay the damages in instalments to avoid bankruptcy proceedings and prejudicing his parliamentary status. In his declining years, and despite attracting a measure of public sympathy, he has ceased to be a thorn in the flesh of the government. In May 2000, he was declared bankrupt by the High Court for failing to keep up payments for damages in another libel case.

Since undischarged bankrupts are banned from serving in Parliament, he was stripped of his NCMP seat in 2001 and was also disbarred. He was not eligible to take part in an election until he had cleared all his debts and was therefore unable to stand as a candidate in the 2001 general elections. Subsequently, in October 2001, Jeyaretnam resigned from his position of secretary-general of WP and was replaced by **Low Thia Khiang**. Tensions between Jeyaretnam and Low emerged as the former accused the latter and the party of not helping him pay off his debts, and shortly afterwards, Jeyaretnam left WP. In May 2004, Jeyaretnam was sued for libel and defamation by Prime Minister **Lee Hsien Loong** and other prominent PAP politicians. In October 2004, Jeyaretnam appealed

for an early discharge from bankruptcy so as to contest the next general election, on the grounds that he wanted another chance to contribute to society. Jeyaretnam was discharged from bankruptcy in May 2007 after paying S\$233,255.78 and was reinstated to the bar in September that year. In June 2008, Jeyaretnam founded the Reform Party of which he became the secretary-general. In September 2008 Jeyaretnam passed away due to heart failure at the age of 82. Following his death, his son Kenneth Jeyaretnam took over the leadership of the Reform Party, which has been a marginal player on the political landscape.

see also: Goh Chok Tong; Lee Hsien Loong; Lee Kuan Yew; Low Thia Khiang; People's Action Party; Workers' Party.

### **Johor, Strait of** (Malaysia/Singapore)

The Strait of Johor separates peninsular Malaysia from Singapore. Maritime traffic cannot pass through it because of the road and rail links across a causeway linking the two states. The strait varies in width from between three-quarters of a mile to two miles; the boundary between the two states has its origins in a treaty of 1824 between the British East India Company and the sultan of Johor from whom Sir Stamford Raffles acquired Singapore in 1819. That treaty ceded to the company and its successors 'the island of Singapore, situated in the **Straits of Malacca**, together with the adjacent seas, straits and islets, to the extent of ten geographical miles from the coast'. A subsequent treaty of 1828 retroceded some islets and areas of territorial water within three nautical miles of the Johor coast and also employed the principle of an imaginary line following the centre of the deep-water channel in the strait to establish the maritime boundary still in effect today. In March 1994 the governments of Singapore and Malaysia signed an agreement to build a second land-link to the west of the existing causeway. That bridge was opened in April 1998.

In 2003, Malaysia sought to build a bridge across the strait in order to replace the existing causeway to ease congestion in Johor Bahru, and allow free flow of water between both

sides of the strait which would consequently allow ships to pass. However, negotiations with Singapore regarding this were not successful. In August 2003, Malaysia announced that it was going ahead with a plan to build a bridge that would join up with Singapore's half of the

existing causeway. However, plans to build this bridge were called off in 2006. For a time the area was also a source of contention due to Singapore's land reclamation projects on its north-eastern islands.

*see also:* Malacca Strait; Singapore Strait.

# K

## **Kachin** (Myanmar)

The Kachin are a minority tribal group of Tibeto-Burman linguistic affiliation who inhabit the northeastern uplands of Myanmar, home to some of the richest jade mines in the world, adjacent to India and the People's Republic of China. They have been party to rebellion against the Myanmar central government since the early 1960s. Before independence, their sense of separate cultural identity was reinforced by the influence of Christian missionaries and by recruitment into the colonial army. Their leaders agreed to join the Burmese state through the **Panglong Agreement** in 1947 and supported the central government for the first ten years of independence. However, after the first assumption of power by the military led by General **Ne Win**, they launched a rebellion under the auspices of the Kachin Independence Organization which in time forged cooperative links with 11 other dissident ethnic minorities within a National Democratic Front. The Kachin rebellion was sustained over three decades but lost its momentum when the central government was able to interdict their sources of material support.

On 1 October 1993 a peace agreement was signed between the Kachin leader, Major General Zau Mai, and Myanmar's intelligence chief, Lieutenant General **Khin Nyunt**. The agreement was reinforced at a further meeting in 1994, seemingly bringing to an end to this insurgent challenge to the government. After 17 years, the ceasefire was broken when government forces attacked a Kachin Independence Army (KIA) post in 2011. The attack presaged a sustained offensive by the Myanmar army in Kachin State, including the use of air strikes for this first time in Myanmar's history of internal conflicts, resulting in countless deaths and the displacement of more than 75,000 Kachin from their homelands as the military advanced towards the KIA headquarters in Laiza, bordering China. The KIA, the armed wing of the Kachin Independence Organization (KIO) and

the largest rebel army in Myanmar, continued to wage insurgency even as other ethnic armed organizations entered into ceasefire agreements with the government. Following the February 2021 coup, the KIO has emerged as an ardent supporter of anti-junta rebels and democracy activists even as it escalates its military confrontation with the *Tatmadaw*, whose reprisals have caused the displacement of large segments of the Kachin community.

see also: Insurgencies, Myanmar; Khin Nyunt, General; Ne Win, General; Panglong Agreement.

## **Kalla, Yusuf** (Indonesia)

Yusuf Kalla is an Indonesian politician and businessman who served two terms as vice-president of Indonesia under two presidents, from 2004 to 2009, and again from 2014 to 2019. Kalla was born on 15 May 1942 in Wantampone, South Sulawesi. He attended the University of Hasanuddin in Makassar and in 1967 graduated from its economics faculty. In 1977 he graduated from INSEAD in Fontainebleau, France. Prior to embarking on a political career, Kalla was a prominent student activist. He served as chair of the South Sulawesi branch of the Indonesian Muslim Students' Association, KAMMI, and later headed the Makassar branch of the Islamic Students' Association (HMI) from 1965 to 1966.

Kalla's early political career began with membership in the Regional People's Representative Council. With the establishment of **Golkar** in 1965, he joined the party and chaired the youth division of its Makassar branch. In 1968 he left politics to become CEO of his family's business, NV Hadji Kalla. He returned to politics in 1982 as a member of *Golkar's* advisory board and of the **People's Consultative Assembly** until 1987.

In 1999 Kalla became the minister of industry and trade in the government of President **Abdurrahman Wahid**. However, he was removed from this position within six months over charges of corruption. Following

Wahid's dismissal in 2001, President **Megawati Sukarnoputri** appointed Kalla coordinating minister of people's welfare. Kalla was also involved in conflict resolution in Sulawesi. He facilitated negotiations which culminated in the signing of the Malino Declaration in December 2001, which ended a three-year interreligious conflict in Poso. In 2002 he oversaw the resolution of the **Maluku Violence** with the signing of the Malino II Declaration. In 2003 Kalla was announced as *Golkar's* candidate for the 2004 presidential election, but he later withdrew to accept the offer to become running mate of **Partai Demokrat** leader and presidential candidate **Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono**. Kalla's non-Javanese background was seen as an electoral asset for the Javanese Yudhoyono, allowing him to diversify his appeal. On 20 September 2004, the pair won with 60 per cent of the vote, and Kalla was appointed vice-president. On the back of this success, Kalla ran for the position of chairman of *Golkar*, which he secured via election on 19 December 2004. Kalla contested the 2009 presidential elections under *Golkar's* banner and finished with 12.4 per cent of the vote. Touted as an effective administrator, Kalla was chosen by presidential hopeful **Joko Widodo** to be his running mate for the July 2014 presidential election. At the time, the experience and deep networks that Kalla provided complemented Widodo's credentials and played a pivotal role in securing victory.

As vice-president, Kalla caused something of a minor diplomatic crisis with Singapore and Malaysia when, during the height of the haze crisis, he opined that the two neighbours should be grateful for 11 months of 'nice air from Indonesia' rather than focus on one month of haze. He stoked another controversy several years later with Singapore when he accused the island-state of avoiding Indonesian requests to sign an extradition treaty, when in fact a treaty was already signed between Indonesia and Singapore in 2007 but remained unratified by Indonesia. Rumours of a rift with President Widodo surfaced when Kalla backed Anies Baswedan to challenge incumbent and Widodo ally Basuki Tjahaja Purnama in the Jakarta gubernatorial election in 2017. Be that as it may, Kalla was seen as the ideal running mate for Joko Widodo

as the latter planned his re-election campaign. However, constitutional stipulations that both presidents and vice-presidents could not serve more than two terms in office meant that Kalla was ineligible.

see also: *Golkar*; Maluku Violence 1999–2002; Megawati Sukarnoputri; *Partai Demokrat*; People's Consultative Assembly; Wahid, Abdurrahman; Widodo, Joko; Yudhoyono, Susilo Bambang.

### Kampuchea, People's Republic of (PRK) (Cambodia)

The People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK) was proclaimed on 8 January 1979, the day after Phnom Penh fell to Vietnamese forces acting on behalf of a so-called Kampuchean National United Front for National Salvation (KNUFNS). The new state was very much a Vietnamese creation. Its leading personnel comprised a mixture of **Khmer Rouge** defectors, survivors of the terror between 1975 and 1978 who had served both the **Lon Nol** and **Norodom Sihanouk** regimes, as well as Cambodian communists long in political communion with Vietnam. A constitution was promulgated in June 1981 in which PRK was described as an independent sovereign state moving step by step towards socialism. Elections were held only once, in May 1981, when 117 seats in the National Assembly were contested by 148 KNUFNS members. Power was exercised by the leadership of the **Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Party (KPRP)**, the only political organization permitted. The administration was built up with Vietnamese advisors, but by the end of the 1980s with the withdrawal of Vietnam's main force units, PRK had become relatively autonomous, albeit politically isolated and fragile. It enjoyed very limited diplomatic recognition, primarily from Vietnam and its political friends, and failed to secure UN endorsement. In April 1989, in an attempt to attract international sympathy, the name of the PRK was changed to the State of Kampuchea, readily transliterated as Cambodia. The country's national flag, national anthem, and coat of arms were altered to remove any offending political symbolism, while Buddhism was



re-established as the national religion. In October 1991 the ruling party changed its name to the **Cambodian People's Party (CPP)** and also discarded its Marxist political identity. The People's Republic of Kampuchea was effectively superseded on 21 September 1993 when a new constitution was ratified which re-established the Kingdom of Cambodia.

see also: **Cambodian People's Party (CPP)**; **Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Party (KPRP)**; **Khmer Rouge**; **Lon Nol**; **Sihanouk**, **King Norodom**.

### **Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Party (KPRP) (Cambodia)**

The **Kampuchean People's Revolutionary Party (KPRP)** was the ruling and sole legal party in the **People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK)** established on 8 January 1979. The party's existence was revealed only at its claimed fourth Congress in May 1981. The date of its foundation was given as 1951 in order to demonstrate a direct lineal descent from the Vietnamese-dominated Communist Party of Indochina founded by **Ho Chi Minh** in 1930. Its first secretary-general was **Pen Sovan**, who was replaced by **Heng Samrin** in December 1981. His role (held concurrently with that of head of state) was primarily ceremonial. Two dominant political figures have been Politburo members, **Hun Sen** and **Chea Sim**, who were, respectively, prime minister and chairman of the National Assembly.

On 17–18 October 1991, just prior to the reconvening of the **International Conference on Cambodia in Paris**, KPRP held an extraordinary congress. In a dramatic initiative, the word 'revolutionary' was dropped from the party's name, and in translation the word 'Cambodian' was substituted for 'Kampuchean'. **Heng Samrin** was removed as formal leader in favour of **Chea Sim** and an exclusive Marxism was repudiated for political pluralism, while **Prince Norodom Sihanouk** was endorsed as head of state in succession to **Heng Samrin**. The change in nomenclature and the decision to opt for a multiparty system and political realignment in order to be identified with **Prince Sihanouk** served to demonstrate the shallow political base of the party and the extent to which it had

been a creation of the Vietnamese invasion and a career vehicle for its leadership. Renamed the **Cambodian People's Party (CPP)** in 1991, the CPP took part in elections in May 1993 conducted under UN auspices, securing second place overall, and then joined a coalition government in October in which **Hun Sen** became second prime minister. Prime Minister **Hun Sen** continues to lead the party, which has imposed its political dominance most recently in 2018, when it won all the seats in Parliament.

see also: **Cambodian People's Party (CPP)**; **Chea Sim**; **Heng Samrin**; **Ho Chi Minh**; **Hun Sen**; **International Conference on Cambodia**, **Paris 1991**; **Kampuchea, People's Republic of (PRK)**; **Sihanouk**, **King Norodom**.

### **Karen (Myanmar)**

The **Karen** are a substantial but less than homogeneous ethnic minority in Myanmar who have long resisted domination by the central government through armed struggle. Numbering some five million, the **Karen** are concentrated from south of Mandalay in three mixed geographic zones of deltas, mountain ranges, and plateaux which extend in a southeasterly direction parallel to the border with Thailand. The separate identity of the **Karen** was strengthened during British rule when a good number were converted to various denominations of Christianity and also recruited into the ranks of the colonial army. **Karen** were involved in helping to crush an anti-colonial rebellion in the early 1930s and in conducting armed resistance against the Japanese in 1942 to cover the British retreat into India. Ethnic **Burmans** within the Japanese-sponsored **Burma Independence Army** took a savage revenge against the **Karen** civilian population, which left a bitter legacy of political alienation after independence in 1948.

In February 1947 a meeting in **Panglong** between the provisional central government and representatives of a number of ethnic minorities came to an agreement on the constitutional basis of a federal Union of Burma (see **Panglong Agreement**). The **Karen**, organized in the **Karen National Union (KNU)**, rejected this accord and boycotted elections to a constituent assembly in April 1947. Independence in January 1948 was followed by civil war in which the

Karen played a major role in challenging central authority. By January 1949, the Karen rebellion had penetrated the northern suburbs of the capital and posed an acute threat to the integrity of Burma, until August 1950 when good fortune enabled a unit of the national army to eliminate two of their key leaders. The Karen were pushed back into their traditional areas of settlement but have continued to resist the central government since the early 1950s. KNU has continued to demand political autonomy within a multi-minority National Democratic Front, which in 1988 transformed itself into the Democratic Alliance of Burma with dissident student and religious groups who had been alienated by the bloody repression of the military regime. An opposition National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma was established in December 1990 in the town of Manerplaw (close to the Thai border), which housed the headquarters of KNU. Manerplaw had been under recurrent attack by the Myanmar army, and in 1992 its troops advanced to within six miles of the town before being repulsed with heavy casualties. The Karen position crumbled in December 1994 with the defection of a Buddhist faction which allied with the Yangon government. Manerplaw fell in January 1995 after being held by the Karen for 47 years, forcing the Karen to retreat to their new base in Mu Aye Pu (Pu Bo Mya Plaw) on the Thai border. KNU entered into talks with the Yangon authorities from December 1995, but they failed to produce an accord and collapsed in January 1997. Fighting then resumed, which was spearheaded by the disaffected Democratic Karen Buddhist Army, giving rise to a flow of refugees into Thailand and a further deterioration of the Karen position.

In October 1999, a Karen splinter group, known as God's Army, seized Myanmar's Embassy in Bangkok and then negotiated their release by helicopter to the Thai border. In January 2000, the same splinter group seized Ratchaburi hospital on Thailand's western border in an attempt to stop the Thai army from shelling its positions and also to secure permission for its unarmed fighters to receive medical treatment. In the event, the hospital was stormed by Thai commandos who killed all the Karen

insurgents and released all hostages. The net effect was to turn Thai public sentiment against the Karens. KNU, which denounced the hospital seizure, then announced the removal from military command of General Bo Mya, its long-time leader. A verbal agreement for a ceasefire reached in 2003 between Karen leaders and Lieutenant General **Khin Nyunt** broke down a year later after the latter's fall from grace, and the Myanmar military continued its offensive against Karen villages. Beset by factionalism and the death of General Bo Mya in 2006, KNU struggled to fend off these offensives.

In January 2012, following years of pressure and sanctions by the international community, the Myanmar government signed a ceasefire with KNU, following talks held between the two parties in Hpa-an. KNU released a list of demands to be satisfied in order for a peace agreement to be reached, which called for security guarantees, provision of basic services to underdeveloped regions, land reform, an end to the forced labour of civilians, a release of prisoners and an effective mechanism to monitor the truce. Although major offensives in the Karen State have decreased following the ceasefire, Myanmar's military still maintains a large troop presence in the state. In February 2013, KNU General Secretary Padoh Kwe Htoo stated that the KNU did not support the **2008 Constitution**, as it provided no guarantees for ethnic minorities, democracy, or people's rights, and therefore discounted the possibility of the KNU being registered as a political party to contest elections. In March 2013 it was reported that the Myanmar army was grabbing land in the Karen state for development projects despite the ceasefire agreement, and in the process were displacing Karen communities. The Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA), the armed wing of the KNU, is increasingly isolated, as many other ethnic rebel groups have signed ceasefire deals with the ruling military junta over the past decade. The KNLA has been significantly weakened as a result of the counter-insurgency campaign led by the *Tatmadaw* and its numbers have reduced to 5,000 from a peak of 14,000. Following the February 2021 coup, Karen armed resistance has gathered pace even as ethnic Karen civilians have actively protested

the coup and the **State Administration Council**. In April 2021, KNLA forces overran a *Tatmadaw* military outpost along the Thai border. Scores of anti-junta activists have fled to the mountainous Karen State region to obtain arms and military training, while KNU has managed to replenish its ranks as military confrontation with the *Tatmadaw* escalates. Meanwhile, Karen civilians have had to bear the brunt of resurgent armed conflict. Thousands fled Karen State for Thailand since the coup to avoid bombing raids by the Myanmar Air Force.

see also: Constitution 2008; Insurgencies, Myanmar; Khin Nyunt, General; Panglong Agreement; State Administration Council.

### **Kaysone Phomvihan** (Laos)

Kaysone Phomvihan was the most powerful figure in the Laotian communist movement from its formation at the end of the Pacific War for almost half a century. He was born on 13 December 1920 near the southern town of Savannakhet to a Laotian mother and a Vietnamese father who was an official in the French colonial administration. His parents sent him to be educated in Hanoi, where he studied law and also became drawn into the anti-colonial movement which was subject to the strong influence of the Communist Party of Indochina (and subsequently of Vietnam), which he joined. At the end of the Pacific War, the party dispatched him back to his hometown in an abortive attempt to seize power from the Japanese in order to preempt the return of the French.

In his political career, Kaysone appeared guided by the judgement that independence for landlocked Laos could be secured only through the patronage of the Communist Party of Vietnam. In January 1949 he founded a fighting unit which was the precursor of the Lao People's Liberation Army. In August 1950 he became minister of national defence in the Vietnamese-sponsored Lao Resistance government, more commonly known as **Pathet Lao** (translated as Lao Nation or State). This so-called government failed to secure representation at the conference leading to the **Geneva Agreements on Indochina** in 1954, which recognized the independence of the Kingdom of Laos from France. Kaysone then devoted his

organizational skills to challenging the royal government in Vientiane, serving as general secretary of the clandestine **Lao People's Revolutionary Party** (LPRP) founded in March 1955. The open instrument of challenge was the **Neo Lao Hak Sat** (Lao Patriotic Front) led nominally by Prince **Souphanouvong** but with Kaysone always in a commanding position, able to draw on Vietnamese military stiffening. The political future of Laos was determined by the outcome of revolutionary struggle in neighbouring Vietnam. The fall of Saigon in April 1975 led to a progressive collapse of the coalition government in Vientiane by the end of the year. On 2 December 1975 the monarchy was abolished and the Lao People's Democratic Republic was proclaimed with Kaysone Phomvihan as prime minister. He combined the office with that of general secretary of LPRP.

Initially, Kaysone followed Vietnamese doctrine and practice in managing the economy which led to a dramatic failure in performance. He also allied Laos with Vietnam in the conflict over Cambodia in the third of the **Indochina Wars**, early in the course of which relations with the People's Republic of China became strained while those with the Soviet Union were reinforced. Under Kaysone's leadership, and again following Vietnam's lead, Laos changed economic course and adopted market-driven principles while retaining an authoritarian political system. Correspondingly, relations were repaired with China and improved with Thailand and the United States. With the end of the Cold War, Laos under Kaysone still acknowledged a special relationship with Vietnam but sought a more balanced international position to compensate for the loss of support from both Vietnam and the former Soviet Union. Despite the fluctuations of policy which distinguished his rule, Kaysone never appeared to be subject to serious political challenge. At the fifth Congress of LPRP in March 1991, the Secretariat was abolished and Kaysone was elected to a new office of party president. In August 1991, with the promulgation of a new constitution, he gave up the office of prime minister for that of president. On his death on 21 November 1992, his offices were shared out among senior colleagues. Prime Minister **Khamtay Siphandon**

became party leader, while **Nouhak Phoumsavan** became head of state.

see also: Geneva Agreements on Indochina 1954; Geneva Agreements on Laos 1962; Indochina Wars; Khamtay Siphandon; Lao People's Revolutionary Party; *Neo Lao Hak Sat*; Nouhak Phoumsavan; *Pathet Lao*; Souphanouvong, Prince.

### **Khamtay Siphandon** (Laos)

Khamtay Siphandon became head of state in February 1998 concurrently with his tenure as chairman of the **Lao People's Revolutionary Party** (LPRP), which he had assumed in November 1992 on the death of **Kaysone Phomvihhan**. He had been a close associate of Kaysone for over three decades, having succeeded him as head of the **Pathet Lao** in 1962.

Khamtay was born on 8 February 1924 in Champassak Province. He was a postal worker under French rule but became involved in revolutionary nationalism under Vietnamese sponsorship at the end of the Pacific War. By the late 1940s, he had made his mark as a political cadre and military leader. He attended the meeting in August 1950 of the Free Laos Front, which gave the name *Pathet Lao* to the pro-communist insurgency against the government in Vientiane. He became a member of the Central Committee of the Lao People's (subsequently Revolutionary) Party in 1957 and following on his military leadership of the *Pathet Lao* in 1962, he was appointed commander-in-chief of the Lao People's Liberation Army in 1966. He became a member of the Politburo of LPRP in 1972 and played a leading role in the seizure of power during 1975. After the creation of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Khamtay was appointed minister of defence and deputy prime minister. By the early 1990s, he had risen to third place in the Politburo and in August 1991 succeeded Kaysone as prime minister. He gave up that office on becoming head of state in succession to **Nouhak Phoumsavan**. Khamtay remained president of Laos from 24 February 1998 until 8 June 2006. In June 2006 Khamtay resigned and was officially replaced by former vice-president **Choummaly Sayasone**. In March 2006, he had stepped down as head of the Communist Party and had also left

the Politburo. At the age of 96, Khamtay Siphandone continues to be an influential figure in the party. His son, Sonexay Siphandone, is currently deputy prime minister.

see also: Choummaly Sayasone; Kaysone Phomvihhan; Lao People's Revolutionary Party; Nouhak Phoumsavan; *Pathet Lao*.

### **Khem Sokha** (Cambodia)

A prominent human rights standard bearer and opposition leader in Cambodia, Khem Sokha was born in June 1953 to a family of humble means. He studied law in Phnom Penh, just before the **Khmer Rouge** regime came to power, and biochemistry in Prague in the mid-1980s. Khem actively opposed the Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia during the years of the Third Indochina War, even though he held the office of district deputy chief in Phnom Penh. In 1992 Khem joined the Buddhist Liberal Democratic Party led by **Son Sann**, and rose to become its general secretary as well as an elected member of Parliament. He subsequently fled to Thailand in 1997 after his failed opposition to the coup launched by the **Cambodian People's Party** in an effort to oust the first prime minister, **Prince Norodom Ranariddh**. After returning in 1998, Sokha would be involved with a number of political parties, including **FUNCINPEC**. He later formed the Cambodian Center for Human Rights in 2002, cementing his standing as one of Cambodia's leading human rights activists. Khem was the founder of the Human Rights Party in 2007, which eventually merged with the **Sam Rainsy Party** to form the **Cambodia National Rescue Party** in 2012. Khem assumed the position as president of the party in March 2017 following the resignation of **Sam Rainsy**. He was arrested in September that year on charges of conspiring with foreign powers to topple the government by inciting a 'lotus revolution.' Because the government had earlier introduced legislation that disqualified politicians with criminal records from leading political parties, Khem had to resign.

Khem's arrest was condemned by ASEAN Parliamentarians for Human Rights chairman Charles Santiago as 'a blatant violation of parliamentary immunity protections under the Cambodian constitution' and an attempt to

'crush' and 'cripple' the opposition in Cambodia. This was followed by the dissolution of the party two months later.

see *also*: Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP); Cambodian People's Party (CPP); FUNCINPEC; Ranariddh, Prince Norodom; Sam Rainsy; Sam Rainsy Party; Son Sann.

### **Khieu Samphan** (Cambodia)

Khieu Samphan has been the best-known intellectual voice among the **Khmer Rouge** in addition to acting as their official representative and spokesman with consistent, servile loyalty to **Pol Pot's** leadership. He is currently the most senior living member of the Khmer Rouge leadership. Khieu Samphan was born on 28 July 1931 in Svay Rieng Province, the son of a local judge. A promising student, he won a scholarship to study economics in Paris, where he became secretary-general of the communist-dominated Union of Cambodian Students. In 1959 he was awarded a doctorate for his thesis on Cambodia's economy that advocated autonomy from market capitalism, which corresponded to policies implemented by the Khmer Rouge when they were in power. On his return to Cambodia, he entered left-wing journalism and was subsequently elected to the National Assembly in 1962 and again in 1966, where he acquired a popular reputation for political integrity and incorruptibility. He was co-opted into government by Prince **Norodom Sihanouk**, but he broke with him and, in 1967, fled the capital with two other dissident colleagues to join Pol Pot in the jungle.

Khieu Samphan did not make a public reappearance until 1973, after the deposition of Prince Sihanouk. He was then commander-in-chief of the Khmer Liberation Armed Forces, despite a lack of military experience. After the Khmer Rouge seized power, he succeeded Prince Sihanouk as head of state in April 1976 and survived in that position until the Vietnamese invasion in December 1978. He was evacuated through Beijing and assumed a major diplomatic role on behalf of the ousted government of so-called **Democratic Kampuchea**, which still retained the Cambodian seat in the United Nations. When the **Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea (CGDK)** was

formed in June 1982 with non-communist participation under Prince Sihanouk's leadership, he became vice-president in charge of foreign affairs. In August 1985 he assumed formal responsibility for the Democratic Kampuchean faction on the ostensible retirement of Pol Pot. In that role, he took part in negotiations which led ultimately to a political settlement for Cambodia under UN auspices reached at the **International Conference on Cambodia** in Paris in October 1991. He became the senior Khmer Rouge representative on the **Supreme National Council**, returning to Cambodia in the following month, when he was almost lynched by a mob organized by the incumbent government. As a member of that Council, he registered Khmer Rouge obstructionism to implementing the Paris accords, and in April 1993 he withdrew from Phnom Penh as an act of defiance before general elections which the Khmer Rouge boycotted.

With the successful conduct of those elections in May and the formation of a coalition government in October, from which the Khmer Rouge were excluded, Khieu Samphan made an abortive attempt to secure an advisory place for his faction. He refused to return to Phnom Penh on the grounds that adequate provision could not be made for his protection. In July 1994, he was named prime minister in a provisional government proclaimed by the Khmer Rouge and served as its nominal leader. In July 1997, he was involved in abortive negotiations with representatives of Cambodia's first prime minister, **Norodom Ranariddh**, which precipitated a successful coup mounted by second prime minister **Hun Sen** the following month. Although Pol Pot died in April 1998, Khieu Samphan surrendered to the authorities in Phnom Penh only in December that year. He was flown in a helicopter to the capital where he was received by Prime Minister Hun Sen, who initially promised him amnesty in return for pledging allegiance to his government. Nevertheless, Khieu Samphan was arrested by the Cambodia tribunal in November 2007 and charged with crimes against humanity and war crimes, including against groups of Vietnamese and Cham at the **Khmer Rouge Trials**. In April 2008 he made his first appearance at Cambodia's

genocide tribunal, with the defence that as the head of the state he was not directly responsible for the genocide. In May 2013, Khieu Samphan expressed remorse for the atrocities committed by the Khmer Rouge regime. Nevertheless, he was found guilty of crimes against humanity in 2014, and for genocide against the **Cham**, together with **Nuon Chea**, in 2018 at the age of 87 and sentenced to life imprisonment. He appealed the conviction in August 2021.

*see also:* Cham; Democratic Kampuchea, Coalition Government of (CGDK) 1982–90; Hun Sen; International Conference on Cambodia, Paris 1991; Khmer Rouge; Khmer Rouge Trials; Nuon Chea; Pol Pot; Ranariddh, Prince Norodom; Sihanouk, King Norodom; Supreme National Council.

### **Khin Nyunt, General** (Myanmar)

Lieutenant General Khin Nyunt was Myanmar's prime minister from 2003 until his arrest in 2004. He was a crucial figure in Myanmar's transition to democracy and the opening of the economy to foreign direct investment. He is credited for formulating the seven-step '**Roadmap to Democracy**' that guided Myanmar through the 2010 elections, the first in more than two decades, and the formation of a semi-civilian democracy in March 2011.

Khin Nyunt was born on 11 October 1939 in Kyauktan, Yangon division, and after dropping out of Yankin College in the 1950s, he graduated as part of the 25th batch of the Officer's Training School in 1960. He began his career in the infantry and rose to become a tactical operations officer in the 44th Light Infantry Division in 1982 before moving to military intelligence. In 1983, he was appointed as head of the Directorate of Defence Services Intelligence, an organization with a secret police role collecting intelligence on both the civilian population and the military, thus giving Khin Nyunt his source of power. Khin Nyunt became Secretary-1 of the **State Law and Order Restoration Council** (SLORC) from its formation in 1988 and assumed the same role in the **State Peace and Development Council** (SPDC) that replaced the SLORC in November 1997. This position made him number three in the military junta. He is believed to have been the primary influence

in managing the country's burgeoning relationship with the People's Republic of China as well as responsible for sustaining military pressure against dissident ethnic minorities. In late 1992 he reportedly overcame attempts to remove him by a group of military officers opposed to his policy of closer relations with China. Khin Nyunt was chief negotiator for the ceasefire agreements between the junta and ethnic groups in the 1990s (*see* **Insurgencies, Myanmar**) and normalization of relations with China and Thailand. He was also an important figure in leading Myanmar into **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** in 1997. Until shortly before his arrest in 2004, Khin Nyunt was widely considered to be the most powerful man in the country due to his pervasive intelligence network, albeit still deferential to his patron, **Ne Win**. That position appeared to have been consolidated with the establishment in September 1998 of a political affairs committee with Khin Nyunt as its chairman.

Dependent on continuing support from an ailing Ne Win in the face of resentment towards his role by mainstream field commanders, Khin Nyunt's position became somewhat precarious after the arrest of Ne Win in March 2002, the result of an alleged coup plot to overthrow the government. On 25 August 2003, he was appointed prime minister of Myanmar and soon after announced the Roadmap to Democracy, which provided a blueprint for the country's transition from military rule to a democracy, albeit with military influence. He also oversaw the reconvening of the National Convention which eventually drafted Myanmar's **2008 Constitution**. On 18 October 2004, Khin Nyunt was placed under house arrest for a term of 44 years on corruption charges and his intelligence apparatus largely dismantled with many of its officers receiving lengthy prison terms on corruption charges. This act removed a potential challenger to **Than Shwe** and cemented his grip on power. Yet during his house arrest, the military government continued to consult Khin Nyunt on foreign policy and ethnic minority issues. Khin Nyunt was released from house arrest on 12 January 2012 by order of President **Thein Sein**, after which he embraced a low-profile civilian life.

see *also*: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Constitution 2008; Insurgencies, Myanmar; Ne Win, General; Roadmap to Democracy; State Law and Order Restoration Council; State Peace and Development Council; Than Shwe, Senior General; Thein Sein.

### **Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF) (Cambodia)**

The Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF) was a non-communist resistance organization set up in October 1979 in order to challenge the government imposed in Cambodia by Vietnamese force of arms in January 1979. The principal role in its formation was played by **Son Sann**, who had served as prime minister under Prince **Norodom Sihanouk**. KPNLF drew support from an educated constituency of a republican disposition which had supported the overthrow of Prince Sihanouk in 1970. In June 1982 it joined in a so-called **Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea (CGDK)** with the **Khmer Rouge** and Prince Sihanouk's **FUNCINPEC** (National United Front for an Independent, Neutral, Peaceful and Cooperative Cambodia) in which Son Sann was named prime minister. KPNLF suffered from problems of divided leadership and lack of internal cohesion and also enjoyed mixed military fortunes. Despite misgivings about direct negotiations with the government in Phnom Penh, KPNLF became a party to the dialogue, initially at the regional level, which led to the UN-sponsored peace accord concluded at the **International Conference on Cambodia** in Paris in October 1991. When the UN presence in Cambodia charged with conducting elections began to register political parties (see **UNTAC**), KPNLF changed its name to the Buddhist Liberal Democratic Party (BLDP). It participated in those elections in May 1993, winning ten seats in a Constituent Assembly of 120 members and then securing minimal representation in the coalition government established at the end of October 1993.

In 1995, there emerged internal dissension within BLDP caused by conflict between two politicians: Son Sann and Ian Mouly. Differences between the two politicians were settled

through a power-sharing agreement after the 1993 elections, where Sann would remain as head of the party, while Mouly would get the party's only cabinet position as minister of information. However, this arrangement did not last for long as tensions re-emerged in 1995, leading to Sann's faction announcing that Mouly had been ousted from BLDP, to which the Mouly faction retaliated by claiming that it was Sann who had been ousted from the party. On 9 July 1995, Mouly summoned a special congress of BLDP in order to select a new leadership. Due to the non-attendance of Sann and his supporters, Mouly was elected unanimously by the congress. However, shortly after the congress was held, BLDP was dissolved in 1997. In 1998, Mouly's faction formed the Buddhist Liberal Party, while Sann's supporters created the Son Sann party. Yet, both these parties failed to win a single seat in the 1998 National Assembly elections.

see *also*: Democratic Kampuchea, Coalition Government of (CGDK) 1982–90; FUNCINPEC; International Conference on Cambodia, Paris 1991; Khmer Rouge; Sihanouk, King Norodom; Son Sann; United Nations: Cambodia 1991–3; UNTAC (United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia).

### **Khmer Republic (Cambodia)**

The Khmer Republic was proclaimed in Phnom Penh on 9 October 1970 in succession to the monarchy which had been terminated with the overthrow of Prince **Norodom Sihanouk** in March 1970. The Khmer Republic, which was inspired by Marshal **Lon Nol**, who led the coup against Prince Sihanouk, lasted only until 17 April 1975, when the **Khmer Rouge** seized power. The Khmer Republic was distinguished by feckless political leadership and corrupt practices which led to an initial popular welcome to the end of the civil war won by the Khmer Rouge.

see *also*: Khmer Rouge; Lon Nol; Sihanouk, King Norodom.

### **Khmer Rouge (Cambodia)**

The pejorative term Khmer Rouge (Red Cambodians) was originally applied to the country's communist movement in the 1960s by the head

of state, Prince **Norodom Sihanouk**, to differentiate them from the right-wing Khmer Bleu. That movement had by then become dominated by an indigenous intellectual leadership which had been converted to Marxism while students together in Paris. By the late 1960s, it had mounted an insurgency which exploited rural discontent. In March 1970 Prince Sihanouk was overthrown by a right-wing coup while out of the country. In exile in the People's Republic of China, he joined a united front with his communist adversaries against the government in Phnom Penh headed by General **Lon Nol**. The term Khmer Rouge stuck, nonetheless. Its revolutionary army, initially spearheaded by Vietnamese intervention, achieved military victory in April 1975.

A reign of collectivist terror was then launched under the leadership of party leader **Pol Pot** in an attempt to create an ideal socialist society, which led to more than one million deaths. All members of the Lon Nol administration and army were executed. The cities were emptied of their populations, who were set to work in agricultural communes, many to die from malnutrition and disease. Family life was abolished and the Buddhist religion erased. Economic failure aggravated a paranoid tendency expressed in intra-party purges against alleged Vietnamese agents, while armed raids were conducted across the eastern border. In December 1978 invading Vietnamese forces drove the Khmer Rouge from Cambodia. Provided with territorial sanctuary by Thailand and military supplies by China, the Khmer Rouge were revived and able to launch an insurgency against the government installed in Phnom Penh by Vietnam in January 1979.

In June 1982 the Khmer Rouge joined in a fragile **Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea** (CGDK) with two non-communist Cambodian factions in a united challenge to Vietnam's military occupation and the Phnom Penh government under the nominal leadership of Prince Sihanouk. As a party to that coalition, they engaged in negotiations which culminated in a political settlement for Cambodia at the **International Conference on Cambodia** in Paris in October 1991. Although a signatory to

the Paris accord, the Khmer Rouge refused to accept its military provisions and then boycotted the elections, which were held in May 1993 without significant disruption. The elections led to a new coalition government in October 1993 between the two non-communist factions and the prior incumbent administration in Phnom Penh. The Khmer Rouge then sought an advisory position within the new government, while continuing their insurgency. The Phnom Penh government conducted armed operations against Khmer Rouge base camps in the north and west of the country in early 1994 but, after initial successes, experienced military reverses at heavy cost. The effect was to demonstrate the military resilience of the Khmer Rouge, leaving them with greater territorial control. The Khmer Rouge maintained a coherent political identity and a viable military organization with a younger generation of commanders assuming leadership roles. Although Pol Pot formally retired from all leadership positions in September 1985, informed sources maintained that he continued in overall control of the Khmer Rouge. In July 1994, the Khmer Rouge proclaimed a provisional government headed ostensibly by **Khieu Samphan** in reaction to their being outlawed by Cambodia's Parliament.

Although able initially to resist military challenge by the government in Phnom Penh, the Khmer Rouge failed to demonstrate an ability to challenge its national power. Moreover, it began to experience a revival of self-destructive internal strife, which led on to its effective disintegration as a viable political-military entity, signalled first by the defection of **Ieng Sary** in August 1996. Moreover, the two rival first and second prime ministers in Phnom Penh competed to inspire further defections. It was in this context in June 1997, that Pol Pot ordered the murder of former defence minister **Son Sen**, his wife, and 16 members of his family. Pol Pot then fled into the jungle with a small band of loyalists with other Khmer Rouge leaders as hostages. Pol Pot was captured by **Ta Mok**, the one-time chief of staff, and returned to the redoubt of Anlong Veng where, in July 1997, he was sentenced to life imprisonment by a 'people's court' for the murder of Son Sen. The trial was witnessed by



an American journalist, Nate Thayer, who interviewed an unrepentant Pol Pot in October 1997. Pol Pot died in April 1998 in a remote jungle retreat, apparently from a heart attack, although his body was cremated before a post-mortem examination could be conducted.

Desultory armed confrontation continued between government forces and Khmer Rouge bands but several hundred insurgents surrendered nominally to the government in a ceremony near the Thai border in December 1998, leaving just a small number led by Ta Mok under arms. At the end of the month, Khmer Rouge leaders Khieu Samphan and **Nuon Chea** were flown by helicopter to Phnom Penh where they were met by **Hun Sen**, who received their pledge of allegiance to his government. The surrender of the last main fighting units and of the political leaders brought an effective end to over three decades of civil war, which had drawn Cambodia into a living hell. Ta Mok was captured in March 1999. In May, security forces apprehended Kang Kek Leu, alias Duch, the commandant of the notorious prison and interrogation centre, **Tuol Sleng**. They were both charged with genocide in September 1999, but their trial was delayed by a dispute with the United Nations over the composition of the judicial tribunal and the appointment of prosecutors, which was resolved through a compromise agreement in May 2000 (see **Khmer Rouge Trials**). The Khmer Rouge period in Cambodian history was a murderous experience; its historical lesson is that evil practice may be readily justified in the name of a noble ideal. A remnant of the Khmer Rouge now live unmolested in the town of Pailin to the southwest of Battambang, which is a centre of gem-trading, gambling, and prostitution.

see also: Democratic Kampuchea, Coalition Government of (CGDK) 1982–90; Hun Sen; Ieng Sary; International Conference on Cambodia, Paris 1991; Khieu Samphan; Khmer Rouge Trials; Lon Nol; Nuon Chea; Pol Pot; Sihanouk, King Norodom; Son Sen; Ta Mok; Tuol Sleng; United Nations: Cambodia 1991–3.

### **Khmer Rouge Trials** (Cambodia)

The Khmer Rouge Trials represent a series of trials of key figures in the **Khmer Rouge** regime

(1975–9), prosecuted for grave human rights violations including genocide, and was conducted by a UN-backed war crimes tribunal consisting of both Cambodian and international judges. Conservative estimates put the number of deaths during the Khmer Rouge regime at 1.7 million, almost 25 per cent of the population at the time. However, serious attempts to hold them accountable were not made for almost two decades after the atrocities had taken place due to domestic political circumstances, the weakness of the Cambodian judiciary (the legal sector was emasculated during the reign of the Khmer Rouge, for whom trained lawyers were a prime target), as well as lack of international interest in international law and human rights during the Cold War. This mood shifted in the 1990s, when the international community and the UN became increasingly concerned with massive human rights violations in the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda.

The Khmer Rouge Tribunal (KRT) has its roots in the royal pardon of **Ieng Sary**, the former deputy prime minister for foreign affairs who had earlier been given the death sentence *in absentia* by a Cambodian court in September 1996. His pardon attracted the attention of the UN Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR), which suggested that a tribunal be created and modelled after the international tribunal established for the former Yugoslavia. In 1997, the Cambodian government formally requested UN assistance to establish a court to try senior leaders of the Khmer Rouge. Negotiations between Cambodia and the UN began on the establishment of the KRT. The process of establishing a judicial procedure and forum for trying the Khmer Rouge was fraught with difficulties and controversy. From the outset, the composition and juridical scope of the tribunal became a matter of considerable contest. Harboured reticence towards the Cambodian judiciary's skill and capability to withstand anticipated political interference, UN negotiators concluded that international participation on the panel was absolutely essential. On the other hand, Prime Minister **Hun Sen** had insisted that Cambodians made up the majority of the

court, and that the role of international personnel be restricted to the provision of assistance. It took six years for a compromise to be reached between both parties. In June 2003, the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC), which constituted the KRT, were established.

The KRT itself was battered with criticism even before investigations began. For a start, the inclusion of Cambodian officials in the KRT came under attack from detractors who argued it was weighted in favour of the Cambodian government and hence the officials would inevitably be the thin end of a wedge of government interference. Many observers also cast aspersions on Hun Sen's role, alleging that his intentions for the KRT were not so much for justice and reconciliation for the Cambodian people, but more for personal gain – to establish himself as the leader who would bring peace to the conflict-ridden nation. Negotiations between the UN and Cambodia over the crimes to be included were to cover three major categories – genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity. There were differences, however, as to what constituted these crimes: in particular, whether what the Khmer Rouge did amounted to genocide. A bigger controversy that complicated negotiations and that acted as a constraint on the trials pertained to the identity and number of perpetrators involved to be prosecuted for human rights abuses of the Khmer Rouge regime. During the negotiations, Hun Sen rejected an initial international expert report that put the figure at between 20 and 30 persons. Instead, he wanted the KRT to focus exclusively on the most senior leaders of the Khmer Rouge regime, arguing that actions taken to prosecute former low-ranking members of the Khmer Rouge, who had been re-integrated into the society, could lead to civil unrest and violence. This led to the provision regarding the scope of jurisdiction of the tribunal, that allows the prosecution only of '[s]enior leaders of Democratic Kampuchea' and '[t]hose believed to be most responsible for grave violations of national and international law'. The ambiguity of the legal wording should not be

a surprise, given that some of the elite members of the ruling **Cambodian People's Party (CPP)**, including Hun Sen himself, had been mid-level Khmer Rouge officials.

Notwithstanding these obstacles, the KRT successfully completed its first case in February 2012, giving a life sentence to Duch, who had been in charge of running a notorious prison and was thus held responsible for some 15,000 deaths. Attention then shifted to its second case against four senior Khmer Rouge leaders – 'Brother Number Two' **Nuon Chea**, former head of state **Khieu Samphan**, Ieng Sary, and his wife Ieng Thirith, a former social action minister. All four were accused of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes during the 1970s. Eventually, only Khieu Samphan and Nuon Chea were convicted, as Ieng Sary and Ieng Thirith died before the verdicts of their trials. Khieu Samphan and Nuon Chea were given two life sentences for crimes against humanity (2014) and genocide (2018). Nuon Chea died on 4 August 2019 at the age of 93 while serving his sentence, and Khieu Samphan has appealed his conviction.

A second challenge pertained to cases three and four involving mid-level Khmer Rouge military commanders who were identified by the international co-prosecutor as being responsible for the deaths of tens of thousands of people – many more than Duch was accused of. In a surprising and puzzling move, the judges announced that the cases being investigated have been closed without even bringing in the suspects for questioning. This heightened suspicion that the outcomes had already been pre-determined, or that the tribunal caved to political pressures. The Cambodian government made clear repeatedly that it did not want the tribunal to move on with the third and fourth cases. Attempts to investigate mid-level Khmer Rouge officials met strong resistance and opposition, leading to the resignation of two international judges from the court within a span of six months in 2011–12.

see also: Cambodian People's Party (CPP); Hun Sen; Ieng Sary; Khieu Samphan; Khmer Rouge; Nuon Chea.

**Kiet, Vo Van** (Vietnam) see **Vo Van Kiet**

**Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi**  
(Indonesia) see **Corruption Eradication Commission**

**Konfrontasi** (Indonesia/Malaysia) see **Confrontation**

**Kriangsak Chomanan, General**  
(Thailand)

General Kriangsak Chomanan held the office of prime minister of Thailand from November 1977 until February 1980. In the wake of a coup that removed Prime Minister **Thanin Kraivichian**, he was appointed as a compromise candidate of the military with the conditional support of the **Young Turks** faction. He initiated a policy of reconciliation with Vietnam and Laos and then authorized its reverse in response to the challenge posed by Vietnam's occupation of Cambodia from December 1978 in the third phase of the **Indochina Wars**. He was obliged to resign office in favour of the army commander, General **Prem Tinsulanonda**, after losing the support of young military officers represented in Parliament. Kriangsak Chomanan was born in 1917 and educated at Chulachomklao Royal Military Academy and the American Army Staff College. He saw service during the Korean War and by the 1970s had assumed a series of senior staff posts. In October 1977 he held the honorific office of supreme commander of the armed forces. He was the first prime minister drawn from the ranks of the military in 46 years who had not previously been a first army area commander and commander-in-chief of the army. After losing office, he stood successfully for Parliament in August 1981 but was implicated in an abortive military coup in September 1985 and was placed under arrest. He was granted bail in February 1986 and went on trial in 1987. He benefited from a general amnesty in 1988 and ceased to play any part in public life, with the exception of assisting in restoring relations

with Laos. He passed away on 23 December 2003 at the age of 86.

see also: Indochina Wars; Prem Tinsulanonda, General; Thanin Kraivichian; Young Turks.

**Kuala Lumpur Declaration 1971**  
(Indonesia/Malaysia/Philippines/  
Singapore/Thailand)

A meeting of foreign ministers of ASEAN (**Association of Southeast Asian Nations**) states in Kuala Lumpur issued a declaration on 27 November 1971 which expressed their governments' determination 'to exert initially necessary efforts to secure the recognition of, and respect for, Southeast Asia as a Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality [**ZOPFAN**], free from any form or manner of interference by outside Powers'. The meeting had been arranged at the United Nations in New York at the beginning of October in the expectation that the People's Republic of China would assume China's seat in place of Taiwan. The realization that such a change would have an impact in Southeast Asia brought the five representatives to the Malaysian capital to find an acceptable formula for regional order. At issue was whether to endorse an earlier Malaysian proposal that Southeast Asia be neutralized with guarantees from major powers. Indonesia, in particular, took exception to this prescription, which appeared to accord virtual policing rights to extra-regional states. The final declaration reflected Indonesia's priority that regional order should be managed on an autonomous basis rather than be determined through the intervening role of external powers. Accordingly, only lip service was paid to the desirability of neutralization. In November 1971 ASEAN was not yet ready to declare a corporate political role. Consequently, the foreign ministers met on an *ad hoc* basis and not in a corporate capacity. In February 1976, however, at the **Bali Summit**, the first meeting of heads of government of ASEAN, the Kuala Lumpur Declaration was incorporated in the **Declaration of ASEAN Concord** which registered political goals. Subsequently the formula for a ZOPFAN became a part of the common

declaratory policy of ASEAN but without any practical operational utility, despite the measure of success in December 1995 in concluding a treaty on a regional nuclear weapon-free zone.

see *also*: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Bali Summit (ASEAN) 1976; Declaration of ASEAN Concord 1976; ZOPFAN (Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality) 1971.

### **Kuala Lumpur Summit (ASEAN) 1977** (Indonesia/Malaysia/Philippines/ Singapore/Thailand)

The tenth anniversary of the formation of **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** was celebrated with a meeting of heads of government in the Malaysian capital on 3–4 August 1977. Although the first summit had taken place only in February 1976, the meeting was convened in order to reaffirm the corporate solidarity of ASEAN within a Southeast Asia which had not long partly fallen prey to successful revolutionary forces. In addition, there was some expectation that proposals for trade liberalization among members which had proven abortive at the 1976 **Bali Summit** might be revived. In the event, little of substance was achieved by way of new forms of economic cooperation, while a Thai initiative for greater security cooperation came to naught. ASEAN did achieve an important measure of diplomatic success, however. Any disappointment experienced at Vietnam's refusal to be represented at the inaugural ceremony was more than compensated for by the presence in Kuala Lumpur of the prime ministers of Japan, Australia, and New Zealand, who took part in post-summit discussions with their ASEAN counterparts. Of special significance was the presence of Japan's prime minister, Takeo Fukuda, indicating a major Japanese reappraisal of ASEAN. The Kuala Lumpur Summit provided the opportunity for Japan to communicate its visible approval of ASEAN. Moreover, it inaugurated a wider process of institutionalized dialogue between ASEAN as a corporate entity and industrialized states

which served to enhance the Association's international standing. The practice of wider dialogue was initiated in September 1977 with a meeting in Manila with a US delegation led by an Under-Secretary of State for Economic Affairs.

see *also*: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Bali Summit (ASEAN) 1976.

### **Kuala Lumpur Summit (ASEAN)** **2005** (Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/ Laos/Malaysia/Myanmar/Philippines/ Singapore/Thailand/Vietnam)

The 11th meeting of heads of government of **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** convened in the capital of Malaysia on 12–14 December 2005. The summit was most notable for the signing of the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on the Establishment of the **ASEAN Charter**, a document that sought not only to codify ASEAN norms, rules, and values but also accord ASEAN a legal identity independent of its member states. It was agreed that an Eminent Persons Group (EPG) consisting of distinguished and respected statesmen would be established with the mandate of making recommendations on the contents of the Charter. ASEAN leaders also agreed that a High-Level Task Force would be established to draft the ASEAN Charter based on the Kuala Lumpur Declaration as well as the recommendations of the EPG. The Summit further witnessed the accession of Mongolia, Australia, and New Zealand to the **Treaty of Amity and Cooperation**. In the case of the latter two states, this paved the way for their membership in the **East Asia Summit** (EAS). The meeting of leaders at the inaugural EAS also convened in Kuala Lumpur on 14 December. The EAS, to be held annually, brought ASEAN leaders together with the heads of government of Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, and South Korea. It was envisaged to complement the ASEAN Plus Three process in strengthening cooperation in a broad range of issues in the region.

see *also*: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; ASEAN Charter

(Charter of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations); East Asia Summit 2005–; Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (ASEAN) 1976.

**Kuala Lumpur and Langkawi Summit (ASEAN) April 2015** (Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/Laos/Malaysia/Myanmar/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand/Vietnam)

The 26th iteration of the summit of **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** was held in Kuala Lumpur and Langkawi in April 2015. In keeping with the practice of articulating annual themes, Malaysia chose ‘Our People, Our Community, Our Vision’ as the theme for its chairmanship year.

The **South China Sea** disputes predictably surfaced as a matter of concern. In the event, differences soon emerged between the Philippines, which desired for ASEAN to take a firmer position on Chinese reclamation activities on several features in the Spratly Islands, and the Malaysian chair that favoured the pursuit of a more conciliatory approach. The summit also adopted the Langkawi Declaration on the Global Movement of Moderates, an initiative advocated personally by Prime Minister **Najib Tun Razak** as a reflection of Malaysian resolve to lead international efforts to promote moderation as a tool for bridging differences. In line with this, the matter of how to address the threat of religious extremism also featured considerably in discussions. Several exploratory procedural revisions to the annual schedule of Association gatherings were also discussed, including the possible reduction of ASEAN meetings including the number of summits annually from two to one in view of the expressed concerns of some member states for the onerous meeting schedule, and strengthening of the **East Asia Summit** process in order to enhance its effectiveness. To that effect, an immediate outcome of the discussion was an agreement to allow Laos to hold its two summits back-to-back, thereby effectively making it one extended summit, when it chairs the Association in 2016. The summit also expressed hope that the **Regional Comprehensive Economic**

**Partnership** would be completed by the end of 2015, although most officials were privately of the view that this was highly unlikely.

see *also*: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; East Asia Summit 2005–; Najib Tun Razak, Datuk Seri Mohamad; Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership; South China Sea.

**Kuala Lumpur Summit (ASEAN) November 2015** (Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/Laos/Malaysia/Myanmar/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand/Vietnam)

Leaders of **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** assembled in Kuala Lumpur in November 2015 for their 27th summit as well as meetings with dialogue partners and the tenth **East Asia Summit**.

The highlight of the November summit was doubtless the declaration of the establishment of the **ASEAN Community** on 31 December 2015. This expression of regional unity was formalized in the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on ASEAN 2015: Forging Ahead Together. Likewise, a post-2015 vision for the Association was also articulated with the launch of several documents that served to chart the path ahead for the next decade. Collectively titled the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on ASEAN 2025: Forging Ahead Together, the document included the ASEAN Community Vision 2025, ASEAN Political-Security Community Blueprint 2025, ASEAN Economic Community Blueprint 2025, and ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Blueprint 2025. In signature ASEAN fashion, these documents were aspirational and broadly worded rather than prescriptive, designed to demonstrate solidarity among the diverse collection of member states. Leaders further expressed their commitment to expediting the completion of the **Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership**. In addition to this, statements on climate change, drug trafficking, and violence against women and children were also made. On the **South China Sea**, the summit reaffirmed the importance of maintaining peace, security, and stability, intensifying mutual trust and understanding, and, in a

veiled response to China's reclamation activities, exercising restraint in activities in the area in conformity with principles of international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. Leaders also committed to hastening the completion of a Code of Conduct and more stringent implementation of the **Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea**. The summit also expressed hope that three feasibility studies on the admission of Timor-Leste into AEAN membership would be completed soon.

Meanwhile, the dialogue meetings that took place on the sidelines of the summit saw the United States and ASEAN elevate their relations to the level of a strategic partnership. President Barack Obama also announced plans to host ASEAN leaders to a summit in the United States scheduled for the following year. Correspondingly, relations with China were also enhanced with the upgrading of the ASEAN-China Free Trade Agreement originally signed in 2010.

see *also*: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967-; ASEAN Community; Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (ASEAN) 2002; East Asia Summit 2005-; Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership; South China Sea.

### **Kukrit Pramoj** (Thailand)

Kukrit Pramoj was prime minister of Thailand between March 1975 and April 1976 during the democratic interlude after the student-inspired removal of the military regime in 1973. He led a minority government as head of the progressive Social Action Party (*Kit Sangkhom*). In January 1976 he dissolved Parliament; in elections in April he lost his seat in a Bangkok constituency which contained a high proportion of military voters. Kukrit Pramoj was born in Bangkok on 20 April 1911 into a junior branch of the royal family and was the younger brother of former prime minister **Seni Pramoj**. He completed his higher education in England at Queen's College, Oxford, and on his return to Thailand made an initial career in the Ministry of Finance. After the Pacific War, he became active in the **Democrat Party** and then made a reputation as

the publisher of the newspaper *Siam Rath* (Thai State). After the fall of the military regime in 1973, he was instrumental in helping to form the liberal conservative Social Action Party, which remained a continuing factor in Thai politics after Kukrit ceased to be prime minister. He stayed in politics on losing high office but played only an elder statesman role, being especially critical of military intervention and opposed to the unelected prime minister **Prem Tinsulanonda**, who initially took that position when army commander. He gave up the leadership of the Social Action Party in December 1985 to the foreign minister, Siddhi Savetsila, to retire from public life. He died on 9 October 1995, aged 84.

see *also*: Democrat Party; Prem Tinsulanonda, General; Seni Pramoj.

### **Kumpulan Militan Malaysia** (Malaysia)

In August 2001, investigation into a botched bombing attempt at a shopping mall in Jakarta uncovered information on an underground militant group known then as *Kumpulan Mujahidin Malaysia* (KMM). In a move that puzzled even Malaysia's security agencies, who continued using the term '*Mujahidin*', newspaper reports on KMM started soon after the discovery of the group to refer to it as *Kumpulan 'Militan' Malaysia*.

KMM is an underground militant Muslim group which sought to overthrow the government of Malaysia and to create an Islamic state to span from the Philippines to Indonesia. While there have been purported linkages with **Jemaah Islamiyah** (JI), the extent and substance of these links remained murky. According to authorities in Singapore, a JI member was supposed to have assisted the KMM to purchase a boat for activities in Indonesia, while KMM allegedly aided JI in obtaining ammonium nitrate. Investigations revealed that KMM was formed on 12 October 1995 by Zainon Ismail, and had its roots in *Halaqah Pakindo*, a clandestine movement formed in 1986 as an alumni association for Malaysian graduates from religious institutions in Pakistan, India, and Indonesia. The government later disclosed that eight of the ten alleged KMM members detained in an August 2001 raid were members of the youth wing of **Parti Islam**

**Se-Malaysia**, including Nik Adli Abdul Aziz, the son of **Nik Aziz Nik Mat**. Nik Adli was allegedly elected leader of KMM at a meeting of 12 senior members in Kampung Seri Aman, Puchong, in early 1999, though it was later contended by the government that real leadership came from **Abu Bakar Ba'asyir** and **Hambali**, the notorious spiritual and operational leaders of the Indonesia-based JI. According to government investigations and allegedly Nik Adli's own confession, the religious teacher had made frequent trips to Afghanistan. This confession formed the basis of government allegations that Nik Adli was active in the *Mujahidin* resistance in Afghanistan during the era of the Afghan–Soviet

war, and upon his return evidently maintained connections with 'key leaders of radical groups in the region'. To date however, these allegations have not been conclusively proven.

see also: Ba'asyir, Abu Bakar; Hambali (Riduan Isamuddin); *Jemaah Islamiyah*; Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat; *Parti Islam Se-Malaysia*.

***Kumpulan Mujahidin Malaysia***  
(Malaysia) see ***Kumpulan Militan Malaysia***

***Kwam Wang Mai*** (Thailand) see ***New Aspiration Party***

# L

## ***Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino*** **(LDP)** (Philippines)

*Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino* (LDP), the Philippine Democratic Struggle, is a coalition of political groups whose origins lie in the formation in 1978 of *Lakas ng Bayan* (*Laban*), the People's Struggle Movement, by the late **Benigno Aquino**, while in detention. In 1983, after his assassination, *Laban* was merged with the *Partido Demokratiko Pilipino* (Philippine Democratic Party – PDP) to become **Partido Demokratiko Pilipino–Lakas ng Bayan** or PDP-*Laban*, led by José Cojuangco, the younger brother of **Corazón Aquino**. It served as the vehicle for the challenge to President **Ferdinand Marcos** by Corazón Aquino, who ran for election in February 1986 under its banner. After her success, it became the governing party but was joined in a wider coalition in June 1988 to become LDP. The enlarged grouping began to fracture, as it was employed as an instrument for the presidential ambitions of the speaker of the House of Representatives, Ramon Mitra. LDP secured 17 seats in the Senate and 89 seats in the House of Representatives in the legislative elections in May 1992, making it the largest party in Congress. But with Ramon Mitra's failure in the concurrent race for president, it progressively lost 64 of its members through defection to **Lakas–NUCD**, the party of President **Fidel Ramos**, who also depended on LDP for a season by way of coalition. Ramos had himself left LDP after it had failed to nominate him for the presidency. The party revived during 1994 as popular alienation from President Ramos over his taxation policy prompted political realignments in Congress. LDP then moved from opposition into a coalition with Ramos's *Lakas–NUCD* to contest mid-term elections in May 1995. Success in that venture reinforced the congressional position of LDP. In February 1996, LDP broke with *Lakas–NUCD*, ostensibly over taxation policy but driven by the presidential aspirations of its leader in the Senate, Edgardo Angara. In October, it forced a change

in the Senate presidency in order to pre-empt the tabling of a constitutional amendment, which would have permitted Ramos to stand for a second term. In June 1997, however, LDP merged with the Struggle of the Nationalist Filipino Masses (LMMP) headed by Vice-President **Joseph Estrada**, which served as the vehicle for his successful bid for presidential office in May 1998. Angara stood as LMMP's unsuccessful candidate for vice-president but was appointed agriculture minister in the new administration.

When Estrada became president, LMMP became the ruling coalition but its hold on Congress ended with his ouster. Subsequently, it was planned that LDP would form the core of the main opposition coalition, the *Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino* (KNP). However, by 2004, the party was divided into two factions, one led by party president Edgardo 'Sonny' Angara who supported the presidential candidacy of party outsider Fernando Poe Jr, and another by party secretary-general Agapito Aquino who supported Senator Panfilo Lacson's candidacy. The split became institutional when the Commission on Elections (COMELEC) intervened. Subsequently, Lacson ran under the LDP–Aquino wing, and Poe ran under the LDP–Angara wing, which would later take on the KNP name. During the campaign period there were numerous unification talks between the two factions. Unification failed to materialize, however, as neither Poe nor Lacson were prepared to concede their presidential ambitions to the other. Eventually, Lacson only gained 10.8 per cent of the vote while Poe won 36.5 per cent, coming second to **Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo**, who won 40 per cent. In the May 2007 general election LDP won two seats, and in the 2010 general election LDP was part of the **Liberal Party**-led coalition which came into power. In the 2013 Senate elections, LDP candidate Angara was successfully elected. In 2016, the party supported the successful presidential bid of **Rodrigo Duterte** but stayed out of elections for the Senate. In



the mid-term elections of 2019, they won one Senate seat.

see also: Aquino, Benigno; Aquino, Corazón; Duterte, Rodrigo; Estrada, Joseph Ejercito; *Lakas-NUCD*; Liberal Party; Macapagal-Arroyo, Gloria; Marcos, Ferdinand; *Partido Demokratiko Pilipino-Lakas ng Bayan* (PDP-Laban); Ramos, Fidel.

### **Lahad Datu Crisis 2013** (Malaysia/ Philippines)

Lahad Datu is a coastal town in the northeast of the East Malaysian state of Sabah, in Borneo, which has remained an object of a Philippine sovereignty claim since its incorporation into the Malaysian federation in 1963.

On 9 February 2013, an armed group numbering more than 100 followers of the presumptive sultan of Sulu Jamalul Kiram III, led by his brother Azinmudie Kiram, landed undetected at the village of Tanduau on the shores of Lahad Datu. Calling themselves members of the Royal Army of Sulu, this militia was evidently dispatched by Jamalul Kiram, one of at least two claimants to the defunct sultanate of Sulu and North Borneo, to advance his claim to ownership over the territory of Sabah on grounds that the East Malaysian state was historically part of the Sulu sultanate. Malaysian security forces responded to this incursion by surrounding Tanduau and giving the Sulu militia three weeks to withdraw. On his part, President **Benigno Aquino III** attempted to negotiate an extension to the Malaysian deadline for the militants to return to the Philippines even as he echoed Malaysian calls for the militia to stand down. In the face of recalcitrance on the part of the Sulu militia, Malaysian security forces launched a major offensive which included air strikes and mortar fire on 5 March. Military operations continued for several days, resulting in more than 60 casualties and 150 arrests. In protest of the incursions, the Malaysian government ceased the hitherto annual cession payment to the sultanate of Sulu which it inherited from the British North Borneo Company in 1963 on the occasion of the formation of the Malaysian federation.

At the heart of events at Lahad Datu was the unresolved **Philippines' Claim to Sabah**. Located nearer to Manila than to Kuala Lumpur, Sabah was historically a gift from the sultan of Brunei to the sultan of Sulu in 1685 for the latter's assistance in quelling a rebellion. In 1878, the British North Borneo Company leased Sabah from the Sulu sultanate in return for a sum of money to be paid in perpetuity. In 1885, Spain renounced its claims over Borneo in exchange for British recognition of its control of the Sulu archipelago. Sabah became a crown colony in 1946 after the British North Borneo Company ceded its lease to the British government, and together with Sarawak and Singapore in 1963, it became a part of the Federation of Malaysia. In 1962, the heir to the Sulu sultanate, Esmail Kiram, surrendered his territories to the government of **Diosdado Macapagal**. When the Federation of Malaysia was formed in 1963, the Philippines government rejected the inclusion of Sabah on the grounds that sovereignty over the territory belonged to Manila. In December 1967, President **Ferdinand Marcos** approved a plan to use Moro militants to infiltrate Sabah in order to foment instability and press Manila's claims to the territory. 'Operation Merdeka', as it was called, was later abandoned when the Moro militants rejected the prospect of fighting their ethnic kin in Sabah and withdrew their commitment to the operation. This led to their massacre in the infamous **Corregidor Affair** in order to cover up the operation. The fact that the Malaysian government had until 2013 been paying an annual sum to the sultan of Sulu has been interpreted by Filipinos as an acknowledgement that Sabah was leased, and not ceded, to Britain, and by extension, Malaysia. On its part, the Malaysian government has never officially acknowledged this payment and views the acts of the Sulu militia as an incursion onto Malaysia's sovereign territory. The Philippines government has never officially disavowed its claim to Sabah, although in recent years it has chosen not to pursue the issue in favour of better relations with Malaysia.

see also: Aquino, Benigno Simeon Cojuangco, III; Corregidor Affair 1968; Macapagal, Diosdado; Marcos, Ferdinand; Philippines' Claim to Sabah.

**Lakas–CMD** (Philippines)

*Lakas–CMD* is a mixed acronym for the ruling coalition in the Philippines during the incumbency of President **Fidel Ramos**, which was built on the earlier *Lakas–NUCD* party. *Lakas* is the shortened form for *Lakas ng EDSA* (People's Power Party), harking back to the overthrow of **Ferdinand Marcos** in 1986 (see **EDSA [Epifanio de los Santos Avenue]; People Power**), while *NUCD* stands for National Union of Christian Democrats.

*Lakas* was formed in December 1991 as the vehicle for the presidential ambitions of former defence minister Fidel Ramos, who had left the **Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino** (LDP) after he had failed to secure its nomination. It formed a partnership with the minor liberal-centre *NUCD* headed by **Corazón Aquino's** foreign minister, Raul Manglapus. Fidel Ramos stood under its banner in May 1992 to win the presidential elections with 23.6 per cent of the vote. *Lakas–NUCD* failed to make much of a showing in the elections to Congress. It subsequently attracted the largest number of members to its parliamentary ranks through defections from other parties but without any deep political loyalty. Opposition within Congress was overcome through a pact with LDP to contest mid-term elections in May 1995. Success in 9 out of 12 seats in the Senate and also in the House of Representatives enabled President Ramos to claim a fresh mandate for his economic reform programme, but *Lakas–NUCD* remained in a minority position in the Congress. That minority position was exposed again when its coalition with LDP broke up in February 1996. In December 1997, after a failed attempt to secure a second term, Ramos endorsed Jose de Venecia, speaker of the House of Representatives, as his party's preferred presidential candidate. In May 1998, Venecia polled well behind the successful **Joseph Estrada**. A significant consolation for *Lakas–NUCD* was the election of its candidate **Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo** to the office of vice-president.

In 2004, *Lakas–NUCD* transformed into the *Lakas–Christian Muslim Democrats (Lakas–CMD)* to champion both Christian–Muslim democracy as well as a parliamentary form of government. It contested the 2004 elections as a member of the K-4 coalition represented by

Macapagal-Arroyo's candidature. Factionalism was rife within the party, however, with heavyweights Macapagal-Arroyo, Fidel Ramos, and Jose de Venecia all commanding their own support base. This led to frequent acrimonious internal party exchanges, including calls for President Arroyo's resignation. In May 2009 *Lakas–CMD* officially merged with *Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino* (KAMPI), established in 1998 to support Macapagal-Arroyo's abortive presidential bid and revived by her husband Jose Miguel after she came to power, to form the largest national political party at the May 2010 polls against the objections of Ramos and de Venecia. *Lakas–CMD–KAMPI's* inability to win at the 2010 presidential elections led to massive defections to the **Liberal Party** and the National Unity Party. The standing of the party suffered further in 2012 with the arrest of Macapagal-Arroyo. It experienced something of a revival since 2016, when it supported the presidential election campaign of **Rodrigo Duterte**.

see also: Aquino, Corazón; Duterte, Rodrigo; EDSA (Epifanio de los Santos Avenue); Estrada, Joseph Ejercito; *Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino* (LDP); Liberal Party; Macapagal-Arroyo, Gloria; Marcos, Ferdinand; People Power; Ramos, Fidel.

**Lakas–NUCD** (Philippines) see **Lakas–CMD**

**Lancang-Mekong Cooperation**

(Cambodia/Laos/Myanmar/Thailand/Vietnam)

The 4,350-km-long Mekong River, the 12th longest in the world, flows from the highlands of the Tibetan plateau in China through Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam out to the **South China Sea**. The river's basin houses 20 per cent of global freshwater fish catchment and is instrumental as an economic lifeline to the agricultural communities of its Southeast Asian riparian states. Because it is the upper riparian state, China enjoys a geographic advantage which easily translates to political, economic, and strategic influence over this region. It is, however, not a member of the **Mekong River Commission**, and hence

could do little to shape Mekong-related affairs through that platform.

At the 17th China–ASEAN Summit held in November 2014, Chinese Premier Li Keqiang proposed the establishment of the Lancang-Mekong Cooperation Framework to provide a platform for China to cooperate with the Southeast Asian states of the Mekong subregion on the management of resources of the Mekong. This set the stage for the Lancang-Mekong Cooperation Forum which met for the first time in March 2016. The Forum comprises a leaders' meeting, foreign ministers meeting, senior officials' meetings (SOM), and working groups, and works closely with the Mekong River Commission of which four of the Southeast Asian riparian states are members (Myanmar is not). Since its formation, the Forum has facilitated Chinese investments to the tune of billions to support activities such as water resource research centres, connectivity projects, industrial capacity building, border trade, and agricultural development. These investments have deepened the dependence of the poorer riparian states on China.

In recent years however, the Mekong has been beset by droughts, and water levels have reached record lows. A prolonged drought in 2020 sent water levels tumbling to its lowest in a century. This has prompted criticism of Chinese activities in the upper Mekong, which the Chinese call *Lancang*, including the construction of 11 giant dams to meet its own energy needs. In addition, China has also assisted some of the Southeast Asian states with dam construction downriver. In the interests of generating hydropower, Laos has cooperated with China to build approximately 140 dams along its segment of the Mekong and its tributaries, including the controversial **Xayaburi Dam**, the first dam built in the lower Mekong. These dams have also been assessed to have done considerable damage to the ecosystem by depleting fish stocks and polluting hitherto nutrient-rich soil that the rice paddies of Vietnam rely on. Along with the impact of climate change, these Chinese dam building activities have been blamed for the environmental degradation and drought in the region. On its part, China has responded by arguing that the poor precipitation was caused by irregular rainfall.

The Mekong River Commission also came to Beijing's defence, absolving Chinese dam building from blame for the droughts. It did, however, call for China to be transparent with its hydrological data, which Beijing agreed to do at the 2020 annual leaders' meeting. Another issue of concern has been the expansion of navigation tunnels in the Mekong by China for purposes of shipping heavy cargo along the river. Because this involves blasting to remove obstacles that obstruct navigation, including rocks and underwater shoals, the environmental impact has occasioned concern on the part of civil society groups.

Despite its name, the Lancang-Mekong Cooperation Forum is not solely focused on the Mekong. The Forum has also expressed intent to strengthen cooperation in public health and maintain stability of supply chains in order to encourage synergy between the development of the New International Land-Sea Trade Corridor and the Mekong-Lancang Economic Development Belt under the auspices of China's Belt and Road Initiative. While essentially an economic and development initiative, the Lancang-Mekong Cooperation Forum has prompted concerns for its geopolitical implications, to wit, the dynamics it generates might cause that subregion to gravitate away from **ASEAN**.

see also: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Mekong River Commission; South China Sea; Xayaburi Dam.

**Lanzin** (Burma/Myanmar) see **Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP)**

**Lao Dong** (Vietnam)

*Dang Lao Dong Vietnam* (Vietnam Workers Party) was the name adopted by the Communist Party of Indochina in February 1951 when separate revolutionary parties were concurrently established for Laos and Cambodia, partly in order to accommodate nationalist feelings in the peninsula. The term *Lao Dong* continued to be employed by the party during the course of the **Vietnam War** against France and the United States. After formal unification of the country in July 1976, the title Communist Party of Vietnam was adopted in replacement

at its fourth National Congress in December that year. It also incorporated the People's Revolutionary Party, which had been established in southern Vietnam in 1962 as a branch of the northern organization.

see also: Communism in Southeast Asia; Indochina Wars; Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam (PRG) 1969–76; Vietnam War.

### Lao Patriotic Front (Laos) see *Neo Lao Hak Sat*

**Lao People's Revolutionary Party (Laos)**  
The Lao People's Revolutionary Party (LPRP) is the title adopted by the ruling Communist Party in Laos. It traces its origins in direct lineal descent to the Communist Party of Indochina set up by **Ho Chi Minh** in 1930 and has always modelled itself on its Vietnamese mentor. When the Communist Party of Indochina was dissolved in 1951, successor parties for the three Indochinese states were established but in the case of Laos took the initial form of a committee for the preparation of the party. The Lao People's Party was subsequently set up in March 1955 as the clandestine core organization within the **Neo Lao Hak Sat** (Lao Patriotic Front) designed to attract popular support for the **Pathet Lao** (Lao Nation or State) revolutionary movement. At the second congress of the party in 1972, its name was changed to Lao People's Revolutionary Party, which was revealed after the communists had consolidated their seizure of power in December 1975 and proclaimed the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

The distinguishing feature of the Leninist party, apart from its monopoly political role, has been the continuity in high office of a limited number of members whose association dates from the initial struggle against French rule at the end of the Pacific War. **Kaysone Phomvihane** served as its leader from the formation of the Lao People's Party in 1955 until his death in November 1992. He was succeeded by **Khamtay Siphandon**, also a veteran party member, who had followed Kaysone as commander of the *Pathet Lao* armed forces and as prime minister in August 1991. In February

1998, he exchanged the office of prime minister for that of head of state, while continuing as party chairman. In the 2002 National Assembly elections, LPRP won 108 of the 109 seats. From 2006 to 2016, LPRP was led by **Choummaly Sayasone**. In 2016 Choummaly handed over the post of party secretary and the position of state president to **Bounnhang Vorachith**. In January 2021, **Thongloun Sisoulith** was elected general secretary at the 11th National Congress. He was subsequently appointed state president in March 2021.

A feature of LPRP has been the emergence of dynasticism. A new generation of the Siphandon and Phomvihane families in particular, are currently members of the Politburo. In the April 2006 National Assembly elections, LPRP won 113 of the 115 seats. In the April 2011 National Assembly elections, LPRP won 128 of the 132 seats. The March 2016 election saw another landslide, with LPRP winning 144 out of 149 seats. Results of the February 2021 parliamentary election were similar, in which LPRP secured 158 out of 164 seats.

see also: Bounnhang Vorachith; Choummaly Sayasone; Ho Chi Minh; Kaysone Phomvihane; Khamtay Siphandon; *Neo Lao Hak Sat*; *Pathet Lao*; Thongloun Sisoulith.

### **Laskar Jihad** (Indonesia)

*Laskar Jihad* or Warriors of *Jihad* was an Islamist anti-Christian militia established in January 2000 by Jaafar Umar Thalib, an Indonesian of Arab-Madurese descent, who fought with the Afghan Mujahidin in the late 1980s and studied in the Mawdudi Institute in Lahore. *Laskar Jihad* shared many of the ideals of Islamic revival and struggle against Western cultural influences that defined Islamist organizations the world over, though its focus of attention was confined to Indonesia, which it aimed to convert into an Islamic state. *Laskar Jihad* gained notoriety for violence against Christians. Under Jaafar Umar Thalib, *Laskar Jihad* declared a *jihad* against Christians during the period of **Maluku Violence** between 1999 and 2002, and managed to dispatch a 10,000-strong militia to Ambon under the pretext of providing humanitarian assistance. Despite instructions from President **Abdurrahman Wahid** that they were not to be permitted entry, the

militia managed to gain access into Ambon through alleged complicity of the security forces. In some cases these militia even managed to acquire weapons from sympathizers within the Indonesian army and police. Aside from Ambon, *Laskar Jihad* was also reported to have been involved in violence in Sulawesi, and was also known for its periodic raids on places they deemed 'un-Islamic,' such as brothels and nightclubs. The group was eventually disbanded in 2002 soon after the Bali bombings (see **Terrorism in Southeast Asia**).

see also: Maluku Violence 1999–2002; Terrorism in Southeast Asia; Wahid, Abdurrahman.

### **Le Duan** (Vietnam)

Le Duan held the office of general secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam from September 1960 until his death in July 1986 and was its most important leader after the death of **Ho Chi Minh** in 1969. He was born in 1908 in Quang Tri Province, where his father was a railway clerk. Twenty years later, he joined Ho Chi Minh's revolutionary movement and in 1930 became a founding member of the Communist Party of Indochina. He spent 10 of the next 15 years in prison, including the period of the Pacific War. After his release in 1945, he assumed responsibility for organizing revolutionary activity in the south of the country where he remained until after the **Geneva Agreements on Indochina in 1954**. He was brought to Hanoi in 1957 to join the Politburo, and after Ho Chi Minh's death, he presided effectively over a collective leadership and the revolutionary struggle which culminated in the unification of Vietnam in 1975. That success was followed by bitter years. Le Duan is believed to have been responsible for the dogmatic application of socialist economic doctrine as well as implicated in the ill-fated military intervention into Cambodia which together brought Vietnam virtually to its knees. He was also identified with the country's alignment with the Soviet Union (the **Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation 1978**) which aggravated relations with the People's Republic of China. After he died in July 1986, he was succeeded initially by another reputed hard-liner, **Truong Chinh**. But in December, at the

Communist Party's sixth National Congress, Vietnam embarked on a radical reversal of the economic policy associated with his leadership, with **Nguyen Van Linh** appointed as a reformist general secretary.

see also: Geneva Agreements on Indochina 1954; Ho Chi Minh; Nguyen Van Linh; Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation 1978; Truong Chinh; Vietnam War.

### **Le Duc Anh, General** (Vietnam)

General Le Duc Anh was president of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam between September 1992 and September 1997. On his election by the National Assembly, he was the second-ranking member of the Politburo of the ruling Communist Party, which indicated his national political standing. Le Duc Anh was born near the central Vietnamese city of Hue in 1920. He was a factory worker as a young man, joining the Communist Party in his late teens and then pursuing a military career during the long period of armed struggle. He held the rank of lieutenant-general at the time of unification in 1975, and in 1980 he became vice-minister of defence, having played a key role in the invasion of Cambodia. Le Duc Anh was admitted to the Politburo in 1981 and became minister of defence in 1986. He assumed a special responsibility for managing relations with the People's Republic of China. He was the first senior party official to make an official visit to China after key changes in the leadership following the seventh National Congress in June 1991. In November 1993 he was also the first president of Vietnam to visit China since **Ho Chi Minh** in 1959. His election as president was interpreted as an assurance to the party faithful that economic reform would not be allowed to infect the conservative communist political system.

In mid-November 1996, he was hospitalized after a major stroke. His illness coincided with factional infighting within the party between a reformist camp, led by **Vo Van Kiet**, which wanted to liberalize the Vietnamese economy; and a conservative camp which advocated a socialist-oriented market economy. Though reformists were at a numerical disadvantage

at the time of Le's illness, the change of political leadership weakened the conservatives. However, under party leader **Do Muoi**, the conservative camp gained momentum. They were further reinvigorated by Le's recovery in April 1997. Le Duc Anh stepped down as president shortly afterwards, in September 1997, and was succeeded by **Tran Duc Luong**. Subsequently, he became an advisor to the party's Central Committee from 1997 to 2001. He passed away on 22 April 2019 at the age of 98.

see also: Do Muoi; Ho Chi Minh; Nguyen Phu Trong; Tran Duc Luong; Vo Van Kiet.

### Le Duc Tho (Vietnam)

Le Duc Tho was a senior member of the Communist Party of Vietnam who is best known for his role in leading the negotiations for the **Paris Peace Agreements** which ended US military intervention in the **Vietnam War** and also for turning down the joint award of the Nobel Peace Prize with Henry Kissinger. He was born in Mam Ha Province on 14 October 1911, the son of an official in the French colonial administration. Inducted into the anti-French revolutionary movement as a teenager, he was a founding member of the Communist Party of Indochina and spent many years in the 1930s and early 1940s in French prisons. He was released in time to join **Ho Chi Minh** for the declaration of Vietnam's independence in Hanoi in September 1945 following the **August Revolution** and the beginning of military confrontation with France in the first of the **Indochina Wars**. By the early 1950s he had become a member of the Politburo of the Communist Party. In that capacity, he held a special responsibility for its southern branch and proved to be a guardian of ideological rectitude, especially after unification in 1975. He is believed to have been jointly responsible for Vietnam's decision to invade Cambodia in December 1978 and also for resisting the pace of economic reform intended to overcome the country's attendant international isolation. He was obliged to step down from the Politburo at the Communist Party's sixth National Congress in December 1986 but continued to exercise political influence. His death at the age of

79 on 13 October 1990 is believed to have paved the way for a softening of Vietnam's position on Cambodia and a greater concentration on internal priorities.

see also: August Revolution 1945; Ho Chi Minh; Indochina Wars; Paris Peace Agreements 1973; Vietnam War.

### Le Kha Phieu, General (Vietnam)

General Le Kha Phieu, then senior political commissar in the armed forces, was elected general secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam in December 1997. He was born on 27 December 1931 in Thanh Hoa Province. He joined the Communist Party in 1949 and took part in the military struggle against the French. He graduated from the military college and subsequently transferred into the army's political wing, receiving his higher military education in the Soviet Union. He spent his army career as a political officer and saw service in Cambodia between 1984 and 1988. He was elected to the party's Central Committee in June 1991 and to its Politburo in January 1994, joining its inner core Standing Board in July 1996. He has been identified as a hardline conservative with misgivings about the political implications of market-based economic reforms and who advocated the centralization of power, to the extent of once advocating the merger of the state presidency with the position of party secretary similar to the People's Republic of China. However, he held the middle ground in the debate about their continued pace in the face of economic adversity during the late 1990s. He has also been publicly identified as a strong opponent of corruption. Le Kha Phieu remained the general secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam until April 2001, when he was unable to muster the patronage and support required to gain reelection. During his tenure he had alienated party elders by abolishing their positions as advisors to the Central Committee, and they responded by criticizing Phieu for nepotism, failure to revive the economy after the **Asian Financial Crisis**, and pursuing a pro-China

policy. On the eve of the party congress in April 2001, Phieu managed to corral the support of the Politburo for a re-nomination as party secretary. However, the re-nomination was overturned by the Central Committee several days later after it was discovered he used military intelligence facilities to wiretap Politburo members. He was consequently replaced by **Nong Duc Manh** after completing only four years of his five-year term. He died on 7 August 2020.

see also: Asian Financial Crisis 1997–8; Nong Duc Manh.

### Lee Hsien Loong (Singapore)

Lee Hsien Loong assumed the office of prime minister of Singapore on 12 August 2004 after the retirement of **Goh Chok Tong**. His rise in the military and politics has been nothing short of meteoric – he was promoted to the rank of brigadier general at the age of 31 and became deputy prime minister at the age of 38.

Lee Hsien Loong was born on 10 February 1952 in Singapore and educated in England and the United States – in mathematics and computer sciences at the University of Cambridge and in public administration at Harvard University – on scholarships awarded to him as a serving officer in Singapore's armed forces. His intellectual attainment at university was distinguished. In September 1984, shortly after having been promoted to the rank of brigadier general, he retired from military service and stood successfully as a parliamentary candidate for the ruling **People's Action Party** (PAP). Within two years, Lee had become minister for trade and industry, acquiring a reputation for administrative ability and, in the process, also for an abrasive assertiveness in the style of his father, **Lee Kuan Yew**. His position as heir apparent to Goh Chok Tong was placed in doubt with the announcement in November 1992 that he was suffering from cancer of the lymphatic system and that he was temporarily relinquishing his trade and industry portfolio. The next month, however, he was elected first assistant secretary-general of PAP when Goh Chok Tong succeeded Lee Kuan Yew as secretary-general. In December 1993, as part of a cabinet reshuffle, Prime Minister Goh

confirmed Lee Hsien Loong's position as sole deputy prime minister and also that he was in full remission from cancer. He was appointed to oversee the Ministry of Trade and Industry from January 1994, and from mid-1994 the Ministry of Defence, without holding either portfolio. Lee Hsien Loong assumed a vigorous role in managing Singapore's response to the economic crisis in the late 1990s. In December 1997, he was appointed chairman of its Monetary Authority. He had also begun to assume a more appropriate public persona for advancing his political career. In 2001, Lee was appointed minister of finance. He became Singapore's third prime minister in August 2004. A month prior to assuming high office, Lee made an official visit to Taiwan and was castigated by the government of the People's Republic of China. In response, Lee reiterated Singapore's long-standing One-China policy.

During his term as prime minister, Lee Hsien Loong has passed several novel policies such as: the controversial construction of two Integrated Resorts (IRs) with casinos, which was a matter of considerable debate behind closed cabinet doors; the five-day work week; and increased paid maternity leave to two months in response to the declining national birth rate. At the same time, Lee's tenure has been defined by a considerable softening of the PAP's approach to governance. Lee adopted a more consultative style not only within the government but also through active engagement with the population, the latter of which was at least in part prompted by the party's declining popularity.

In his first election at the helm, Lee led PAP to a landslide victory in 2006, winning 82 of 84 seats, including 37 uncontested seats, and 66.6 per cent of the popular vote. At the time however, Lee was criticized by the opposition for attempting to buy support through his policy of budget surplus redistribution to the sum of S\$2.6 billion just three months before the election in May. In 2006 and 2010, Lee Hsien Loong launched two successful defamation lawsuits against the *Far East Economic Review* and the *International Herald Tribune* respectively. In May 2010, Lee Hsien Loong instituted several electoral reforms including reducing the number of group representation constituencies (GRC),

increasing the number of non-constituency members of Parliament and nominated members of Parliament, and legalizing internet campaigning. Despite these piecemeal attempts to liberalize the political sphere, PAP delivered its worst electoral performance since independence at the 2011 general election, when it managed to capture only 60.1 per cent of the total vote and lost six seats to the opposition in the process. Notably, the PAP also lost the **Aljunied Group Representation Constituency (GRC)** to the **Workers' Party (WP)**, making it the first time a GRC had fallen into opposition hands. A combination of euphoria on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the island-state's independence and emotion after his father's passing earlier in March that year allowed Lee to steer PAP to a resounding election victory in 2015 when the party won almost 70 per cent of the popular vote and 83 of 89 parliamentary seats. Earlier in February that year, Lee was diagnosed with prostate cancer and underwent successful surgery.

In 2019, the year when Singapore celebrated its bicentennial, Lee Hsien Loong articulated three major priorities on which the future of Singapore hinged: maintaining meritocracy and social cohesion through educational opportunities, providing greater support for its ageing population through policies that addressed their health and employment concerns, and the need to mitigate the impact of climate change. In the same year, Lee also announced his intention to hand over power to then-finance minister Heng Swee Keat, who himself had just recovered from a stroke. At the time, the announcement put to rest widespread anxiety over political succession. During the **Covid-19** pandemic of 2020, Lee Hsien Loong proceeded to call for a general election. While fears that campaigning would accelerate the spread of the virus proved unfounded, the election result saw WP win ten parliamentary seats including a second GRC, giving Singapore the largest opposition presence in government since independence. PAP lost considerable support as its vote-share diminished to slightly over 61 per cent, barely a shade better than its performance in 2011. In a move that won him plaudits, Lee publicly acknowledged

that the result showed Singaporeans desired a more diverse Parliament and immediately called Pritam Singh, who had taken over as WP leader from **Low Thia Kiang**, to invite him to assume the post of leader of the opposition. The swing away from PAP was in part a consequence of creeping authoritarianism in the form of tighter regulations on alternative media, the passage of legislation purportedly to tighten local town council governance but which many suspected to be targeted at the opposition. While Singapore is known for its emphasis on long term, strategic planning, an inability to finalise a succession plan has placed exigent demands on Lee, requiring him to carry on in office beyond his preferred retirement date.

In the realm of foreign policy, Lee Hsien Loong has distinguished himself as a strategic thinker comparable to his father. He managed to carefully balance the island-state's relationships with the United States and the People's Republic of China. Under Lee, Singapore provided robust support for the United States in its war on terror but also invested much attention to allaying concerns of its own Muslim population. Singapore also welcomed the rotational deployment of littoral combat vessels under the 'Rebalance to Asia' strategy of President Barack Obama. In August 2016, Lee was honoured with a White House state dinner. Meanwhile, Lee was also strongly supportive of deepening engagement with the People's Republic. Under his leadership, the China-Singapore Free Trade Agreement, the first that the People's Republic had signed with an Asian country, came into being in 2009, and Singapore is the largest country investor in China. As Sino-US rivalry escalated, Lee Hsien Loong candidly expressed his view on the need for restraint on the part of both powers.

In August 2016, Lee stumbled and almost fainted while delivering his annual National Day Rally address, but he managed to continue after a brief respite. The event triggered fears that health issues may have returned to bedevil him. In the event, doctors confirmed there was no cardiac abnormality or stroke, and that it was likely a case of exhaustion. Following the death of his father, Lee Kuan Yew, in 2015 Lee



Hsien Loong found himself embroiled in a high-profile family feud with his siblings over the fate of the family house.

see also: Aljunied Group Representation Constituency; Covid-19; Goh Chok Tong; Lee Kuan Yew; Low Thia Khiang; People's Action Party; Workers' Party.

### Lee Kuan Yew (Singapore)

Lee Kuan Yew was prime minister of Singapore from June 1959 until November 1990, when he relinquished that office voluntarily. He has enjoyed an international reputation as a politician and statesman of singular intellectual ability and fearsome personality. His principal legacy is the remarkable economic achievement and environmental quality of Singapore, which under his leadership was transformed from a declining regional entrepôt into a renowned international centre for manufacturing, technology, and financial services. As a politician, he has commanded more respect than affection. He has been guided by the conviction that Singapore is afflicted by an innate vulnerability and that its government's margin for error is minimal. He has been an unrepentant elitist believing in the virtues of good government and civic discipline, which in Singapore's case are said to require limiting Western-style democracy.

Lee Kuan Yew was born in Singapore on 16 September 1923 to a Straits Chinese family. He received his secondary education at Raffles Institution. During the Japanese occupation, he worked for a time as a cable editor for a propaganda agency. At the end of hostilities, he made himself useful to the returning British military authorities by procuring supplies and in return secured passage on a troopship to Britain where he had obtained a place to study law at the London School of Economics. Lee found post-war London a trying place and moved to Cambridge, where he studied law at Fitzwilliam House with great distinction. He completed his professional legal studies at the Middle Temple in London and became involved in the Malayan Forum, a political club comprising students from Malaya and Singapore who sought an early end to colonial rule.

On returning to Singapore, Lee entered legal practice and his skill as an advocate took him into politics through becoming an advisor to a number of radical trade unions subject to communist influence. In November 1954 he played a leading role in founding the **People's Action Party** (PAP), a self-styled democratic socialist body committed to the political union of Singapore and Malaya. Lee Kuan Yew bid deliberately for the Chinese-educated vote in an island whose population was then more than three-quarters ethnic Chinese and won election as one of three PAP members in 1955. He also skilfully played the anti-colonial card and secured support from the Communist Party of Malaya while fending off their control of PAP, of which he was secretary-general. In May 1959 Lee led PAP to an impressive victory at the polls, becoming in June prime minister of a self-governing but not fully independent Singapore. One of his early successes was to convince Malaya's prime minister, **Tunku Abdul Rahman**, of the urgent need to proceed with a political merger, albeit in a wider context incorporating British North Borneo. The terms of union for a Federation of Malaysia announced in 1961 provoked a split within PAP, with a left-wing faction moving into opposition as **Barisan Sosialis** (Socialist Front). Lee's government held on to office with the support of right-wing opponents and won the day politically through successfully managing a referendum on Singapore's entry into Malaysia. On the formation of the new federation in September 1963, which had been opposed externally by Indonesia, Lee led his truncated party to a second victory at the polls.

Singapore's membership of Malaysia was short-lived. The island with its Chinese majority had been accepted into the new federation only as a matter of political necessity. In April 1964 the PAP contested nine constituencies in elections in mainland Malaya in an attempt to attract the vote of the ethnic Chinese and secure a place in the federal cabinet. Although PAP won only one seat, Lee Kuan Yew continued to press his party's claim to be more representative of the interests of the non-Malays than the peninsular Chinese **Alliance Party** partners of the **UMNO (United Malays National**

**Organization).** His perceived headstrong approach, including speeches in the federal legislature, provoked racial tension which Tunku Abdul Rahman decided could be contained only by Singapore's separation from Malaysia, which took place in August 1965. Lee's public expression of disappointment was tearful, but he was quick to recover, and he and his cabinet colleagues demonstrated remarkable resoluteness and resilience as they tackled the unanticipated problem of governing an independent Singapore.

Deprived of a natural hinterland, Singapore under Lee's leadership set out to extend national economic horizons by transcending the island-state's regional environment to make the world its marketplace. In that endeavour, his success has been quite remarkable. Lee Kuan Yew has been distinguished among politicians by always thinking ahead, driven in Singapore's context by an acute sense of the innate vulnerability of the island because of its scale, locale, predominantly ethnic Chinese identity, and economic role. He began to make provision for orderly political succession early on by promoting a second generation of leadership. Concern that they were not steeled sufficiently in political combativeness reinforced a natural intolerance towards organized dissent. When he gave up office as prime minister, he remained in the cabinet as senior minister (from 1990 to 2004) and minister mentor (2004–2011) and also held on for a time to the post of secretary-general of PAP. Immediately after stepping down from high office, he continued to assert influence in decision-making and politics through informal cabinet sessions which he chaired, and through some of his public comments. However, after his elder son and deputy prime minister, **Lee Hsien Loong**, was diagnosed with cancer of the lymphatic system, he resigned as secretary-general of the PAP in favour of **Goh Chok Tong** and took more of a political back seat. In May 2011, he announced his retirement from the cabinet. In September 2008, Lee underwent successful treatment for abnormal heart rhythm (atrial flutter). In September 2010 he was hospitalized for a chest infection; and subsequently at 88 years, he was diagnosed with peripheral neuropathy. His

wife and confidante, Kwa Geok Choo, passed away at the age of 89 in October 2010 following a long illness.

A dynamic and cerebral figure who seldom pulled his punches, Lee has held strong and oftentimes controversial views on a range of issues. Referring to politics in the island-state, he has suggested on occasion that a one-man, one-vote system may not be the best for Singapore, and that Muslim communities were difficult to integrate into society because of their strict observance of religious mores. A firm believer in social Darwinism, Lee frequently articulated the view that marriage should involve partners of equal intellectual standing, as the intellect of children is presumed to be considerably influenced by those of their parents.

Regionally within Southeast Asia, Lee Kuan Yew played an important part in helping to consolidate the viability of **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)**. Initially suspicious of the Association as an Indonesian vehicle for regional dominance, he soon recognized its utility as a diplomatic community which could protect Singapore's interests through encouraging the habit of bureaucratic and ministerial consultation. More widely in Asia, he enjoyed the confidence of governments both in Beijing and Taiwan, and after his retirement as prime minister, he travelled on invitation to Vietnam, where his advice on economic development was eagerly sought. As an international statesman, Singapore provided a limited base for Lee Kuan Yew's talents. In his later years, Lee Kuan Yew was a vigorous advocate of authoritarian 'good government' as a visible alternative to the failings of Western liberal democracy. In September 1998, on his 75th birthday, he published the first volume of his memoirs dealing with his life experience up to separation in 1965. Its appearance served to aggravate relations with Malaysia, and especially with Malaysia's prime minister, **Mahathir Mohamad**, with whom he had a testy relationship. The second volume of his memoirs was published in 2000. After Malaysia's watershed 2008 election, Lee made a visit to Malaysia the following year where he met both government and opposition leaders, including a face-to-face meeting with **Parti**

**Islam Se-Malaysia** spiritual leader **Nik Aziz Nik Mat**. Widely recognized as the father of modern Singapore, Lee Kuan Yew passed away on 23 March 2015 at the age of 91 after being hospitalised for severe pneumonia.

see also: Abdul Rahman, Tunku; Alliance Party; ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; *Barisan Sosialis*; Goh Chok Tong; Lee Hsien Loong; Mahathir Mohamad, Tun; Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat; *Parti Islam Se-Malaysia*; People's Action Party; UMNO (United Malays National Organization).

### **Legislative Council (Brunei)**

The Legislative Council is a unicameral semi-elected parliamentary body of Brunei Darussalam and currently possesses only consultative powers. It was introduced and provided for in Brunei's 1959 Constitution, which also permitted half of the council to comprise elected representatives. However, the council was temporarily suspended after the **Brunei Revolt** of 1962, during which a state of emergency was declared. The British re-opened the Legislative Council in 1965. This time, instead of a semi-elected Parliament, all the members of Brunei's Legislative Council were to be appointed by the sultan. Upon independence from Britain in 1984, the Legislative Council was abolished and the sultan ruled by emergency decree, assisted by the Council of Ministers and the Privy Council. Rather unexpectedly, the Legislative Council was reconvened on 25 September 2004 with 21 members appointed by the sultan. The newly reconvened council subsequently voted and passed a constitutional amendment that would increase its size to 45 members, 15 of whom would be directly elected by the people as district representatives while the rest would be appointed by the sultan. In September 2005, the sultan dissolved Parliament and an enlarged Legislative Council comprising 30 members was reconvened. Five of the members had been indirectly elected by village and sub-district heads.

The mandate of the Legislative Council, which convenes annually in March, has largely been restricted to discussion of and debate over the yearly national budget. Political parties are hoping that the election of the 15 members will

signal the start of political reforms that will gradually allow them greater involvement in government. However, independent observers have noted that significant reforms are still lacking, and the space available for political contestation remains limited. The majority of the council members will continue to be appointed by the sultan, and candidates running for the few elected seats will be pre-screened. Furthermore, the sultan does not require approval from the Legislative Council to pass laws, thus ensuring that the council's influence remains limited. In March 2021, the Council held its 17th sitting since it was reconvened in 2004. There are presently 36 council members.

see also: Brunei Revolt 1962.

### **Liberal Party (Philippines) see *Partido Liberal ng Pilipinas***

### **Lim Guan Eng (Malaysia)**

Lim Guan Eng was formerly secretary-general of the **Democratic Action Party (DAP)**. He was previously chief minister of the Malaysian state of Penang between March 2008 and May 2018, after which he assumed the post of minister of finance in the **Pakatan Harapan** government. Lim was a certified accountant before entering politics. He is also the son of DAP stalwart **Lim Kit Siang**. His wife, Betty Chew, was formerly a DAP assemblywoman for the state of Malacca.

A graduate of Monash University in Australia, Lim first became a member of Parliament in 1986 for Kota Melaka and was re-elected to the same seat on three occasions. Lim has courted controversy through his political career and has been painted as a Chinese chauvinist by the Malay right-wing daily *Utusan Malaysia*. Lim was also detained twice by government authorities. In 1987, he was detained with other prominent opposition political figures under the Internal Security Act during Operation Lalang, a crackdown on opposition politicians, academics, and activists for allegedly stoking racial tension. He was released a year and a half later, in April 1989. In 1994, Lim was arrested following his vocal criticism of the Malaysian government's handling of an alleged statutory rape involving Penang's former chief minister, Rahim Thamby Chik. He was subsequently

sentenced to 18 months' imprisonment but served only 12 months. Lim returned to the political fray in 2008 after missing out on the 2004 election, where he was barred from participation because of his conviction. Despite not hailing from Penang, Lim won both the parliamentary and state seat he contested as the opposition **Pakatan Rakyat** coalition unseated **Barisan Nasional** (National Front, BN) in the state at the 2008 general election. He was appointed chief minister on 11 March 2008 and held that post for a decade. His political star continued to rise as the *Pakatan Harapan* coalition came to power in 2018, and he was given the meaty portfolio of finance minister in the cabinet of the nonagenarian prime minister **Mahathir Mohamad**, himself a former nemesis of both Lim and his father.

As his political fortunes rose, so too did controversies. In 2011, Lim ran afoul of the Johor state government when he remarked that Singaporeans travelling to the southern Malaysian state risked being kidnapped. He was later forced to publicly apologize to the sultan of Johor for the remark. Controversy has also surrounded his leadership within DAP as well. Although Lim was party secretary-general at the time, both he and his wife were surprisingly voted out of its state committee in Malacca in 2005. However, the party's constitution permitted him to retain a seat in the committee by virtue of his position as secretary-general. In 2016, Lim was charged with two counts of abuse of power for approving a land deal and the purchase of a bungalow at below market price. The charges, widely believed to have been politically motivated as then prime minister **Najib Tun Razak** embarked on a crackdown of the opposition, were subsequently dropped after Najib's defeat at the 2018 election. Soon after his removal from office following the collapse of the *Pakatan Harapan* government in March 2020, Lim was detained on charges of corruption related to infrastructure projects in Penang. Further charges of money laundering were levelled against Lim and his wife in August that year, in relation to a dormitory project. Lim pleaded not guilty to all the charges.

see also: *Barisan Nasional* (BN); Democratic Action Party (DAP); Lim Kit Siang; Mahathir

Mohamad, Tun; Najib Tun Razak, Datuk Seri Mohamad; *Pakatan Harapan*; *Pakatan Rakyat*.

### Lim Kit Siang (Malaysia)

Lim Kit Siang was the leader of the opposition **Democratic Action Party (DAP)** for over 30 years until his resignation in December 1999 following his failure to hold both state and federal seats in elections in the previous month. He went on to become chairman of the party from 1999 to 2004. Lim had also been leader of the federal parliamentary opposition and in that role was the most vocal critic of the ruling **Barisan Nasional** (National Front, BN) coalition, although he never presented a political threat to **Mahathir Mohamad**, with whom he had a particularly testy relationship.

Lim was born on 20 February 1941 in Batu Pahat in the state of Johor. After finishing his secondary education in 1959, he worked as a temporary teacher and then as a journalist in Singapore. He returned to Malaysia after Singapore had been expelled from the Federation to work for the *Rocket*, the newspaper of the newly registered DAP. Lim Kit Siang was first elected to the federal Parliament for a Malacca constituency in May 1969 but was detained for almost a year and a half under the Internal Security Act after the **May 13 Racial Riots** that followed the elections. He returned to active politics after October 1970 and also stood successfully for DAP for the Malacca state legislature. During the 1970s Lim found time to pursue a career as a lawyer, qualifying from Lincoln's Inn in London in 1977. He spent a second period in detention from October 1987, when Prime Minister Mahathir seized the opportunity to detain a large number of political opponents in response to a rise in racial tension over the issue of Chinese education. He was made subject to a two-year detention order in December 1987 together with his son, **Lim Guan Eng**. In April 1989 Lim and his son became the last of 106 people detained without trial in October 1987 to be released. In June 1999, he took DAP into **Barisan Alternatif** (Alternative Front), an inter-racial electoral pact. In the elections in the following November, his party improved its federal position marginally, although his personal political standing

was diminished with his failure at the polls. In 2004 Lim Kit Siang refused re-appointment as chairman of DAP and was subsequently succeeded by Karpal Singh. That year, he was successfully elected a member of Parliament for Ipoh Timur, a seat he also defended successfully at the 2008 election, and became the opposition leader in Parliament while his son became secretary-general of DAP. In the 2013 elections, Lim Kit Siang caused an upset when he resoundingly defeated Johor's chief minister, Abdul Ghani Othman, for a parliamentary seat from the state.

A senior figure in opposition politics in Malaysia, Lim Kit Siang has been a vocal opponent of forces aiming to introduce Islamic strictures in Malaysia at the expense of the non-Muslim minority. In 2001, he stood at the forefront of the 'No to 929' campaign launched to challenge Prime Minister Mahathir's claim that Malaysia was already an Islamic state. Likewise, he has frequently been at loggerheads with leaders from the Islamic opposition party **Parti Islam Se-Malaysia** (PAS) over the latter's objectives of the creation of an Islamic state in Malaysia, including the implementation of the Islamic *hudud* penal code. While much was made of the presumptive reconciliation between Mahathir and Anwar Ibrahim that lay the foundation for the success of **Pakatan Harapan** in the 2018 election when they defeated BN, equally pivotal was the rapprochement between Mahathir and Lim, which paved the way for DAP to work with **Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia**.

see also: *Barisan Alternatif* (BA); *Barisan Nasional* (BN); Democratic Action Party (DAP); Lim Guan Eng; Mahathir Mohamad, Tun; May 13 Racial Riots 1969; *Pakatan Harapan*; *Parti Islam Se-Malaysia*; *Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia*.

### **Lim Yew Hock** (Malaya/Malaysia/Singapore)

Lim Yew Hock served as chief minister of Singapore between June 1956 and June 1959 before the colony acquired self-governing status. He was born in 1914 in Singapore and from a lowly occupation as a clerk moved into

politics through the trade union movement. As secretary-general of the Singapore Clerical and Administrative Workers Union, he was nominated to the Legislative Council in 1948. As president of the Singapore Labour Party in 1949, he went on to form the Labour Front coalition to participate in elections to the more representative Legislative Assembly in 1955. He succeeded **David Marshall** as chief minister in June 1956 against a background of communist-inspired political violence and went on to reach an understanding with the British government for Singapore's self-rule. His wider coalition, the Singapore People's Alliance, lost to the **People's Action Party** (PAP) in 1959, and Lim Yew Hock lost his parliamentary seat in elections in 1963. He moved to Kuala Lumpur under the patronage of Malaysia's prime minister, **Tunku Abdul Rahman**, and became high commissioner to Australia but was obliged to resign in embarrassing circumstances. Lim Yew Hock then converted to Islam and moved to Saudi Arabia as an official of the Islamic Conference, dying there in November 1984.

see also: Abdul Rahman, Tunku; Marshall, David; People's Action Party.

### **Limbang Claim** (Brunei/Malaysia)

Limbang is a tongue of territory under the jurisdiction of the Malaysian state of Sarawak in northern Borneo which interposes between the two enclaves of land that comprise the sultanate of Brunei. Limbang had at one time been a constituent part of Brunei but had been annexed in March 1890 by Sarawak, then under the rule of Raja Charles Brooke. That final dismemberment of the once-extensive Brunei state has long rankled with its ruling royal family because it occurred after British protection had been established in 1888. In the wake of some acrimony over Brunei's decision not to merge with Malaysia, Sultan Sir Omar Ali Saifuddin revived the claim to Limbang in the late 1960s. Although relations between Brunei and Malaysia improved substantially from the late 1970s, and especially after the sultanate became independent and joined **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** in January 1984, the claim has not been withdrawn. In 1986 a meeting in Brunei between Sultan **Hassanal Bolkiah**

and Prime Minister **Mahathir Mohamad** prompted press speculation about the retrocession of Limbang in return for financial compensation. In April 1994, a joint commission involving the foreign ministers of Brunei and Malaysia agreed to address the Limbang claim through bilateral dialogue and not through litigation, but made no headway towards resolving the dispute.

The signing of the **Exchange of Letters** between Prime Minister **Abdullah Badawi** and Sultan Hassanal Bolkia in March 2009 signalled that both parties had reached an agreement on Limbang as part of the resolution of a series of disputes. In April 2010, Prime Minister Badawi revealed that the Exchange of Letters settled the issue of sovereignty of the area in dispute, whereby sovereign rights to the resources in the disputed area belonged to Brunei. This provoked acrimonious accusations by former prime minister Mahathir Mohamed that his successor was 'signing away' Malaysia's rights over hydrocarbon resources in the area, specifically in Blocks L and M, in exchange for Brunei giving up its claim over Limbang.

see also: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Badawi, Tun Abdullah Ahmad; Bolkia, Sultan Hassanal; Exchange of Letters 2009; Mahathir Mohamad, Tun.

### **Lina Joy Issue** (Malaysia)

The Lina Joy Issue concerns an attempt by a Malaysian, Azalina Jailani, to have her change of religion reflected in her official papers but which eventually escalated into a constitutional controversy regarding religious freedom in Malaysia.

In 1998, Azalina Jailani chose to leave the Muslim faith in order to become a Christian. She changed her name to Lina Joy, although her official papers still indicated her religion as 'Islam'. As Malaysia has a parallel legal system of secular and *shari'a* law, where the latter governs the private lives of Muslims, Lina Joy had to secure the *Shari'a* Court's approval to officially change her religion. However, her applications to the *Shari'a* Court were rejected on grounds that Muslims were not permitted to leave the faith. Attempts to appeal to the

High Court and Court of Appeals also failed. Joy's final recourse was to bring her case before Malaysia's Federal Court, the highest court in the land, where she filed a suit in 2006. In May 2007, the panel of three judges delivered a verdict against her by two to one. The decision was based on the court's position that a person who wished to renounce his or her religion must do so according to the practices and laws of the particular religion, and only when the respective religious authorities had approved the apostasy would a change of religion be recognized. At the same time the sole dissenting judge, a non-Muslim, expressed the view that this interpretation was discriminatory and unconstitutional.

Although Article 11 of Malaysia's constitution allows for freedom of religion, it appears that the right of Malaysian Muslims to exercise this freedom was dependent on the Islamic religious courts. In this regard, the Lina Joy case highlighted the predicament of Muslims who wished to convert to other religions. The case also underlines the complexity of the parallel legal system, which seems to blur the spheres of jurisdiction between the *shari'a* and secular courts. Outside of the courtrooms, the publicity surrounding the case led conservative Muslims on the one hand and non-Muslims on the other to mobilize for and against Lina Joy's right to leave Islam and become a Christian, giving rise to groups such as **Pembela** and the **Article 11 Coalition**.

see also: Article 11 Coalition; *Pembela*.

### **Linh, Nguyen Van** (Vietnam) see **Nguyen Van Linh**

### **Loi Tack** (Malaya/Malaysia)

Loi Tack was general secretary of the Communist Party of Malaya between 1939 and 1947. He disappeared with its funds after having served as a prime source of intelligence for British Special Branch in Singapore. Although posing as a Chinese, he was born in Vietnam and had worked for French intelligence in Indochina. British Special Branch had arranged for him to move to Singapore in the early 1930s, ostensibly as a representative of the Comintern. He

worked for the Japanese during the occupation and organized the liquidation of leading Communist Party members in an ambush in the Batu Caves outside of Kuala Lumpur in September 1942. After the war, he resumed his work for British intelligence until he came under suspicion in March 1947, leaving first for Hong Kong and then on to Thailand, where he was assassinated, probably by a communist hit squad.

### **Lon Nol** (Cambodia)

Marshal Lon Nol achieved notoriety as the leader of the coup which overthrew Prince **Norodom Sihanouk** on 18 March 1970. He ended the monarchy in Cambodia and in October 1970 established the short-lived **Khmer Republic**, which was superseded when the **Khmer Rouge** seized power in April 1975. Lon Nol was born on 13 November 1913 in Prey Veng Province. He was educated at the Lycée Sisowath from which he joined the French colonial administration, rising rapidly to become a provincial governor at the age of 32. At the end of the Pacific War, Lon Nol became chief of the Cambodian police and then transferred to military command, displaying loyalty to Norodom Sihanouk, who was then king. Lon Nol was appointed governor of the important border province of Battambang in 1954 and then chief of staff of the army in 1955. By the end of the decade, he had become both commander-in-chief and minister of defence. He was prime minister in 1966–7. In September 1969 he returned to the office of prime minister as Prince Sihanouk's political grip on Cambodia began to weaken.

After the removal of Prince Sihanouk, Lon Nol, who was a practising mystic, showed himself to be an incompetent military leader in the face of a Vietnamese-led insurgent challenge. In February 1971 he suffered a stroke from which he never fully recovered, yet still held on to power with US backing. His rule was both repressive and corrupt, contributing to the ultimate victory of the Khmer Rouge. He was persuaded to go into exile on 1 April 1975, but only in return for US\$1 million being deposited

in his name in a US bank. He settled in Hawaii until 1979 when he moved to California, where he died on 17 November 1985.

see *also*: Khmer Republic; Khmer Rouge; Sihanouk, King Norodom.

### **Low Thia Khiang** (Singapore)

Low Thia Khiang occupied the office of secretary-general of the **Workers' Party** (WP) in Singapore from 2001 to 2018. During that time, he was also the longest-serving opposition member of Parliament (MP) when he served first, in the constituency of Hougang from 1991 to 2011 and later, as member of the WP team for **Aljunied Group Representation Constituency** (GRC) from 2011 to 2020. Born in 1956 in Singapore, he graduated from Nanyang University with a bachelor of arts degree in 1980 and a bachelor of arts (honours) degree from the National University of Singapore in 1981. Upon his graduation, he pursued a diploma in education at the Institute of Education in Singapore and began his career as a teacher. He subsequently left the profession to start his own business.

Low joined WP in 1982. In 1991, he became an MP after winning the Hougang single-member constituency seat at the 1991 general election. He was re-elected for a further three terms and remained MP for Hougang for almost two decades. Low succeeded **J. B. Jeyaretnam** as the secretary-general of the WP in 2001 and initiated a renewal process in the party, successfully recruiting younger candidates for subsequent elections. At the 2011 general election, Low led a team of five candidates to victory in Aljunied GRC against the incumbent **People's Action Party** (PAP) by a margin of more than 9 per cent. They were re-elected again in 2015. In 2016, Low Thia Khiang prevailed over Chen Show Mao in a surprise contest for the office of secretary-general. Speculation that the challenge was indicative of cracks within the party, however, proved unfounded. In any event, Low would hand over the reins of party leadership to Pritam Singh in 2018 and would eventually retire from parliamentary politics in 2020 as he made way for new blood.

More comfortable communicating in the Chinese language and the Teochew dialect, Low has been credited with the transformation of the image of the party, which resulted in the coming of age of a new generation of leaders with impressive professional qualifications. He also moved the party away from the tradition of robust ideological confrontation with the PAP

under his predecessor to a more focused strategy of engagement on local issues.

*see also:* Aljunied Group Representation Constituency; Jeyaretnam, J. B.; People's Action Party; Workers' Party.

**Luong, Tran Duc** (Vietnam) *see* **Tran Duc Luong**



# M

## **Ma'aruf Amin** (Indonesia)

One of the most powerful and influential Muslim clerics in Indonesia, Ma'aruf Amin was elected vice-president to **Joko Widodo** and assumed office in October 2019. At the age of 77 years, Ma'aruf is the oldest vice-president to take office. Prior to assuming office, Ma'aruf held the position of chairman of Indonesia's pinnacle Islamic clerical body, the Indonesian Muslim Ulama Council or **Majelis Ulama Indonesia** (MUI), which oversees all registered Muslim organizations in the country. He is currently on leave from that position. Ma'aruf was also a luminary from the **Nahdlatul Ulama** or NU, Indonesia's largest Muslim organization. He also had previous experience in politics during the **New Order** administration, when he served on the DPR or **People's Representative Council**, and also took up membership in **Partai Persatuan Pembangunan**. He would later switch party allegiances to **Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa** (PKB) after the fall of President **Suharto**, on account of his close relationship with PKB leader and the first president of Indonesia's democratic era, **Abdurrahman Wahid**.

No stranger to controversy, as a prominent Islamic cleric Ma'aruf has supported a number of controversial laws and regulations, such as the anti-pornography bill as well as other legislation that have impinged on the rights of minority religious groups. The cleric was a lead signatory of the MUI *fatwa* against pluralism, secularism, and liberalism in 2005 and, ironically, would later also play an active role in the 2016 blasphemy ruling against the Jakarta governor, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama (*see* **Anti-Ahok Protests 2016**). Because of Ma'aruf's affiliation with NU, his selection as vice-presidential candidate allowed Joko Widodo to expand and consolidate his base in the organization, in the process delivering much-needed Islamic votes. At the height of the **Covid-19** pandemic in Indonesia, Ma'aruf played a crucial role in providing clerical endorsement of the vaccination programme.

*see also:* Anti-Ahok Protests 2016; Covid-19; *Majelis Ulama Indonesia*; *Nahdlatul Ulama*; *New Order*; *Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa*; *Partai Persatuan Pembangunan*; *People's Representative Council*; *Suharto*; *Wahid*, *Abdurrahman*; *Widodo*, *Joko*.

## **Macapagal, Diosdado** (Philippines)

Diosdado Macapagal was president of the Philippines between January 1961 and January 1965, having served for the previous four years as vice-president. He was born on 28 September 1910 into a peasant family in Pampanga Province and in his youth had ambitions to become an actor. A benefactor financed his legal education at Santo Tomas University in Manila, after which he went into a US law firm. After the Pacific War he served in his country's foreign service where he developed an interest in reclaiming territory which had once been part of the domain of the sultanate of Sulu and had then been incorporated into British North Borneo. He entered politics in 1949, winning a place in the House of Representatives on behalf of the **Liberal Party**. He established himself as a fine orator and was skilful at securing financial support for agriculture and rural health projects. In 1957 he was elected as vice-president to Carlos García from the **Nacionalista Party**, who treated him as a non-person. Macapagal exploited his humble origins and exposed governmental graft and corruption to succeed to highest office in 1961, aided by strong US support. As president, he failed to make a real impact on fundamental economic and social ills, giving considerable attention to rousing nationalist feelings as a distraction. He changed the date of the anniversary of national independence from 4 July, when sovereignty had been transferred from the United States in 1946, to 12 June, when Emilio Aguinaldo had declared independence from Spain in 1898. He also prosecuted the **Philippines' Claim to Sabah** and in the process challenged the formation of Malaysia in company with President **Sukarno's** Indonesia (*see*

**Confrontation**). As an alternative, he proposed the formation of a confederation called in acronym **Maphilindo** (comprising the first parts of the names of Malaya, the Philippines and Indonesia) but this foundered from the outset. He was defeated in his attempt to retain office by **Ferdinand Marcos**, who had defected from the Liberal Party to the *Nacionalista* Party after Macapagal had reneged on a promise to stand down from the presidency after only one term. He died on 21 April 1997.

see also: Confrontation; Liberal Party; Maphilindo; Marcos, Ferdinand; *Nacionalista* Party; Philippines' Claim to Sabah; Sukarno.

**Macapagal-Arroyo, Gloria** (Philippines) Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo was sworn in to the presidency of the Philippines after the impeachment of her predecessor, **Joseph Estrada**. She was the second female president of the Philippines. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo was born in Manila on 5 April 1947 and is the daughter of the late president, **Diosdado Macapagal**. She was educated at the Ateneo de Manila and at Georgetown University in Washington, where she was a contemporary of President Bill Clinton. She returned home to take a doctorate in economics at the University of the Philippines after which she pursued an academic career. She was drawn to politics through her opposition to the late president, **Ferdinand Marcos**. After his overthrow in 1986, she received junior office appointments in the government of President **Corazón Aquino**. She stood successfully for the Senate in June 1992, where she established a reputation for championing economic reform legislation. As senator, Arroyo filed 400 bills, and in addition to that authored or sponsored approximately 55 laws. Among the more prominent of these are the Anti-Sexual Harassment Law and the Indigenous People's Rights Law. She also established her own party as a vehicle for pursuing presidential ambitions but judged such a bid premature and settled successfully for vice-presidential office. As vice-president to President **Joseph Estrada**, Arroyo skilfully reconciled collective responsibility with her evident role as a focus of opposition to a president who had

failed to live up to his populist promise. After impeachment proceedings against President Estrada for corruption led to a second '**People Power**' revolution (known as **EDSA II**) and ultimately to his removal in 2001, Arroyo was appointed president. She would later win her own mandate for the presidency at the 2004 election.

As an economist, Arroyo focused heavily on economic policy during her administration, especially rural development. During her presidency which ended in 2010, growth in the Philippines averaged a commendable 5 per cent annually, a figure that exceeded what her predecessors managed to achieve. At the same time, according to various reports from international organizations, poverty levels in the country had also increased. Her term was also marked by high rates of corruption, and at one point, she was accused of electoral fraud. Yet, unlike her predecessor whose populist brand of politics posed a direct challenge to established institutions of the Philippines state, President Arroyo utilized 'pork barrel politics' to placate the church, the military, and Congress in order to reinforce her position as rumours of a possible coup circled.

After completing her presidential term in 2010, she ran for Congress, winning a seat to represent her province of Pampanga where she succeeded her son, Juan Miguel 'Mikee' Arroyo. She would be re-elected for two more consecutive three-year terms. In November 2011, Arroyo was arrested for electoral fraud and soon after (medical reasons being cited) was placed under hospital arrest at the Veterans Memorial Medical Centre in Quezón City. Charges were dropped in July 2012. In October that year she was re-arrested along with several former administration officials on fresh charges relating to the misuse of state lottery funds, but these charges too were dropped in July 2016. In July 2018, she was elected speaker of the House of Representatives by her peers, earning her the distinction of being the first female in Philippine history to occupy that office.

see also: Aquino, Corazón; EDSA II; Estrada, Joseph Ejercito; Macapagal, Diosdado; Marcos, Ferdinand; People Power.

**Madiun Revolt 1948** (Indonesia)

Madiun is a town in East Java where in late September 1948 armed clashes between dissident military units and forces loyal to the government of the revolutionary republic of Indonesia escalated into an uprising on the part of the Communist Party of Indonesia. The uprising, which received retrospective endorsement from Moscow Radio, was crushed by the end of the month and the principal leaders of the party were killed. A factor in the uprising had been the disguised return to Indonesia in early August 1948 of Musso, the pre-war communist leader, who was believed to have been in exile in the Soviet Union. His return and resumption of party leadership encouraged the radical left wing of the nationalist movement to challenge the policy of the republican government of seeking independence from the Dutch by diplomacy rather than by armed struggle. They attracted support from irregular forces resentful of a programme of rationalization intended to ensure central military control as well as of the terms of an agreement with the Dutch reached in January 1948. In the event, Musso found himself drawn into an abortive physical challenge to the government of the republic at a time when it was still subject to acute menace from the Dutch. The Communist Party was accordingly discredited with its leadership eliminated, but the embryonic republic attracted favourable interest in Washington, where foreign policy had come to be dictated by Cold War priorities. Madiun marked a turning point in Indonesia's national revolution, leaving a legacy not only of political bitterness but of communal hatred. Armed confrontation in the villages around Madiun tended to correspond with a fundamental cultural-religious division in Java between observant Muslims (**Santri**) and those who combined a nominal observance of Islam with attachment to Hindu-Buddhism and mystical practices (**Abangan**). That division, with a repetition of bloodletting, was revealed again after the abortive coup (*see Gestapu*) in Indonesia in October 1965. A notable party to and casualty of the uprising, besides Musso, was Amir Syarifuddin, a former Socialist Party prime minister, who was

captured and executed in December 1948 by republican forces.

*see also: Abangan; Gestapu; Islam; Santri.*

**Magsaysay, Ramón (Philippines)**

Ramón Magsaysay was president of the Philippines from January 1953 until his premature death in an air crash on 16 March 1957 on the island of Cebu. He was a man of considerable personal magnetism whose honesty and close affinity with the mass of the people as well as a reputation for having been instrumental in crushing the '*Huk*' (**Hukbalahap Movement**) insurgency made him a national hero and then a martyr.

Ramón Magsaysay was born in 1907 in Zimales Province into a wealthy family of part Chinese descent. He was an indifferent student and became a bus mechanic before taking over the management of the bus company. During the Japanese occupation, he joined a US-led guerrilla group and at the end of the war was made provincial military governor. He stood successfully for Congress in 1946 and made a name for himself as a lobbyist in Washington on behalf of Filipino war veterans. This activity brought Magsaysay to the attention of Colonel Edward Lansdale of the US Central Intelligence Agency, who saw him as the ideal candidate to lead the fight against the communist insurgency in the Philippines. Through Lansdale's intervention with the US State Department, President Elpidio Quirino was persuaded to appoint Magsaysay as secretary of national defence in August 1950. In that office, he became identified with land reform and clean elections and received the credit for the collapse of the insurgency, which failed for a variety of reasons without any fundamental change to the Philippine pattern of land tenure. With US funding and public relations support, Magsaysay won a landslide victory in contesting the presidency against the incumbent Quirino in 1953. This moment of glory was followed by several years of political anti-climax until his death, as he never came to grips with fundamental problems of governance and administration which required more than public relations for their solution.

*see also: Hukbalahap Movement.*

## Maguindanao Massacre 2009

(Philippines)

The Maguindanao Massacre refers to an incident that took place in the southern Philippine province of Maguindanao in which 58 people were killed in a politically motivated slaughter. On 23 November 2009, vice-mayor of Buluan in Maguindanao, Esmael Mangudadatu, invited journalists to cover the filing of his candidacy for the Maguindanao gubernatorial elections with the Commission on Elections in the provincial office at Shariff Aguak. A convoy of six vehicles carrying 37 journalists, several lawyers, and relatives of Mangudadatu started their ill-fated journey to the provincial office in the morning that day. Along the way, the convoy was set upon by around 100 armed men who abducted and massacred those in the convoy. Several individuals who happened to be travelling along the same route were mistaken to be members of the convoy and were also killed. In a gruesome scene, many of the women, including Mangudadatu's wife, aunt, and sister, were raped, mutilated, beheaded, and dumped in a shallow grave. In a text message sent just before she was killed, Mangudadatu's wife was able to identify those who stopped the convoy, including a son of rival politician and incumbent Maguindanao governor, Andal Ampatuan Sr. Ampatuan was later identified as the mastermind of the massacre. Both father and son and other identified attackers were later charged with the murders. Investigations were stalled by the troubling disappearance and murder of several key witnesses. In December 2019, ten years after the incident, the principal suspects in the case, including Datu Andal Ampatuan Jr, alias 'Unsay', and the former governor of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao, Zaldy Ampatuan, were finally found guilty by a regional trial court and sentenced to 40 years' imprisonment.

## Maha Vajiralongkorn, King (Thailand)

The only son of the late King **Bhumibol Adulyadej** and Queen Sirikit, King Maha Vajiralongkorn was born on 28 July 1952 in Bangkok and was invested as crown prince in December 1972, making him heir apparent. Despite the fact that his father passed away on 13 October

2016, Maha Vajiralongkorn declined an immediate succession for reasons of personal mourning, and only formally ascended the throne on 1 December 2016. His coronation as Rama X, the tenth king in the Chakri dynasty that was founded in 1782, took place on 4 May 2019.

Maha Vajiralongkorn's early education was in England and Australia; and from January 1972, he attended the Royal Military College, Duntroon, in Canberra for four years. He went on to the Royal Thai Army Command and General Staff College during 1977–8 and then trained as a pilot. He also received advanced military training at the US Army Institute at Fort Bragg as well as spending a year at the Royal College of Defence Studies in London. In 1988 he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant general as commander of the King's Own Bodyguard Regiment. As crown prince, his role in Thailand had been primarily ceremonial and did not involve him in political life in the manner of his father, whom he had nevertheless represented at home and abroad. As King Bhumibol advanced in years, the issue of royal succession gradually became a matter of deep political concern, in the main because of concern whether his successor would command Bhumibol's moral authority and replicate his stabilizing influence as reigning monarch. Though public reservations towards the then prince was not outspoken due to *lèse majesté* law (which criminalizes criticism of the royal family), it was nevertheless evident from online chatter. Negative sentiments spiked following a 2007 scandal where the prince was filmed with his topless third wife at a birthday party held for his dog, which he famously pampered to the extent of giving it a military title. Such incidents typically associated with the then crown prince stood in contrast to the virtues associated with King Bhumibol. His legitimacy, thence, was a matter of concern for monarchists and royalists who are engaged in a debilitating political struggle with former prime minister **Thaksin Shinawatra**, whom the crown prince is known to be close to.

Since ascending the throne in December 2016 at the age of 64, Maha Vajiralongkorn has projected an image of assertiveness towards the military, in the process concentrating much

power and influence in himself. He took personal control of all assets in the Crown Property Bureau worth multiple billions of dollars, commandeered the 1st and 11th infantry regiments for his own purposes, and, in a departure from recent practice, appointed royalist generals from the King's Guards aligned with him to key positions in the army. He also compelled the rewriting of aspects of the constitution that touched on the role of the king, including the need to appoint a regent in the event he was out of the country (which is significant given the fact that he spends extended periods of time in Germany) and the countersigning of royal edicts by government ministers, before giving the document his imprimatur in April 2017. In February 2019, he intervened to block his sister, Ubol Ratana, from stepping forward as a candidate for prime minister during the build-up to the March election. At the height of pro-democracy demonstrations in 2020 against the government of **Prayuth Chan-ocha**, protesters expanded their call for reform and change to include the monarchy as well. This turn of events was remarkable given the sacrosanct nature of the institution.

Married four times and divorced thrice, Maha Vajiralongkorn's personal life has been no less complex. His wives have borne him seven children, but he has disowned four sons and banished them from the kingdom after accusing his second wife and their mother, Sujarinee Vivacharawongse, of adultery in 1996. Curiously, her daughter with Maha Vajiralongkorn has been allowed to return to Thailand. He divorced his third wife and royal consort, Srirasmi Suwadee, subject of the notorious birthday party video, stripped her of her titles following allegations of corruption against her family, and imprisoned her parents under *lèse majesté* for influence peddling. He currently has two consorts, both of whom were former military officers.

see also: Bhumibol Adulyadej, King; Prayuth Chan-ocha, General; Thaksin Shinawatra.

### **Mahathir Mohamad, Tun** (Malaysia)

Mahathir Mohamad was Malaysia's longest-serving prime minister, having held office from July 1981 to October 2003, and again from May

2018 to February 2020. He has left his political mark on Malaysia as a strong, testy-minded, and successful leader with combative qualities. He also possessed an authoritarian disposition determined to bend all independent institutions to his will, although this aspect of his leadership was significantly reduced during his second tenure in office when he cast himself as an advocate of democracy. When in power, he also assumed a strident role as a spokesman for post-colonial states, revealing a deep resentment of British attitudes and policies in his earlier years in power. The nonagenarian continues to exercise a considerable degree of influence in Malaysian politics.

Mahathir Mohamad was born on 20 December 1925 in Alor Setar, Kedah. His father was a schoolteacher who had migrated from southern India. He qualified in medicine at the University of Malaya, then located in Singapore. Mahathir entered politics in April 1964 as a member of Parliament for **UMNO (United Malays National Organization)**. He was expelled from the party in July 1969 after losing his seat in elections in May and then writing a bitterly critical letter to the prime minister, **Tunku Abdul Rahman**, accusing him of betraying the Malay community. In the political wilderness, he wrote a controversial book entitled *The Malay Dilemma*, which addressed the economic backwardness of the indigenous people. Mahathir was readmitted to UMNO after **Tun Abdul Razak** became prime minister. He was re-elected to Parliament in August 1974 and then appointed minister of education. In March 1976, after **Hussein Onn** had succeeded Tun Razak as prime minister, he appointed Mahathir as deputy prime minister.

On assuming high office in 1981, Mahathir sought to transform the national work ethic, encouraging his countrymen to look east to Japan for economic example. He led UMNO to resounding electoral victories in April 1982 and August 1986 but his strong-minded style of leadership together with scandal in public life provoked dissension within the party. In April 1987 he was challenged for UMNO's leadership by **Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah**, minister for trade and industry, and retained office only by a narrow margin of 43 votes. In February 1988, after a

High Court decision declaring UMNO to be an illegal organization because some of its branches were not validly registered, Mahathir set up UMNO *Baru* (New UMNO) with majority support in Parliament. Faced with a major political challenge by an alternative Malay party, **Semanagat '46** (Spirit of 1946), headed by Tengku Razaleigh, he consolidated his leadership by taking UMNO to a further victory in general elections in October 1990, retaining a two-thirds majority for the **Barisan Nasional** (National Front, BN) coalition in which UMNO was the dominant party. In late 1997, differences over economic policy against the backdrop of the **Asian Financial Crisis** reinforced a growing personal rivalry between Mahathir and his hitherto protégé and deputy prime minister, **Anwar Ibrahim**, who had risen meteorically through UMNO ranks. Matters came to a head after the political downfall of President **Suharto** of Indonesia when Mahathir concluded Anwar was trying to force him from office and that his historical reputation as a successful economic modernizer would be placed in jeopardy. In September 1998, Mahathir dismissed Anwar from government office and also had him removed as deputy president and as a member of UMNO. He was then detained and charged with abuse of power in connection with allegations of sodomy on which he was subsequently tried and convicted. Meanwhile, Mahathir led BN to an overwhelming federal electoral victory in November 1999. On forming his new cabinet, Mahathir announced that it would be his last term of office.

Mahathir's penchant for the dramatic was on display at the 2002 UMNO General Assembly when he tearfully announced his resignation as prime minister to the surprise of assembled party leaders and the audience. Following the expression of widespread support for his continued leadership, he postponed his retirement to October 2003 in order to enable a smooth transition of office to his handpicked successor, **Abdullah Ahmad Badawi**. Rejecting an invitation to stay on in the cabinet, Mahathir took on the role of senior advisor to flagship Malaysian companies such as Proton and Petronas. He also returned to the social and political commentary he had engaged in as a medical student, using the *nom de guerre* 'Che Det'.

Despite having handpicked Badawi as his successor, their relationship soon broke down, and in 2005 he became his successor's fiercest critic. Such was the acrimony that in 2006 Mahathir even sought election as a local UMNO divisional representative to the party general assembly with the explicit purpose of catalysing opposition to Badawi. In 2008, UMNO lost its two-thirds parliamentary majority at the general election, and Mahathir resigned from the party, declaring that he would rejoin only if Badawi resigned or was removed. Mahathir returned to the party fold upon Prime Minister Badawi's replacement in April 2009 by **Najib Tun Razak**, a move which he initially advocated. Mahathir soon turned on Najib as well, citing a litany of sins such as corruption and abuse of power that led him to publicly withdraw his support for the prime minister in August 2014. In doing so, Mahathir had to set aside his loyalty to Najib's father, Tun Abdul Razak. His opposition to Najib climaxed when he left UMNO again, in 2016, after which he proceeded to establish a new party, **Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia** or *Bersatu*, together with fellow defector and former UMNO deputy president, **Muhyiddin Yassin**. *Bersatu* would go on to form part of **Pakatan Harapan** and win the 2018 election, bringing Mahathir back to the pinnacle of Malaysian politics in May that year. As prime minister for a second run, Mahathir's political persona was discernibly different. Gone, at least from the surface, was his authoritarian demeanour, which was replaced by a more open and consultative approach as he struggled to balance both competing ideologies and interests of the component parties in the *Pakatan Harapan* government while tempering the ambitions of Anwar Ibrahim, with whom in a twist of events he appeared at the time to have reconciled. An alleged 'gentlemen's agreement' that power would be handed over to Anwar after two years was apparently made, although Mahathir was often characteristically coy and evasive on the issue when pressed. In the event, objection to the power transfer arrangement prompted internal dissension in *Pakatan Harapan* that precipitated political manoeuvring by forces opposed to Anwar, which entered the lexicon as the '**Sheraton Move**'. Mahathir's

role in the episode remains murky, but it was clear that a constituent part of the script was an attempt to form a unity government with him at the helm. The effort eventually foundered over disagreements on the participation of UMNO in the effort, which Mahathir rejected. The impasse was eventually broken with Mahathir's resignation and later, the formation of the **Perikatan Nasional** government led by his erstwhile ally, Muhyiddin Yassin.

In foreign policy, Mahathir gained notoriety during the early 1980s by denigrating the Commonwealth and by his **Buy British Last Policy**, prompted by a belief that the former colonial power had deliberately acted against Malaysia's interests. He enhanced Malaysia's standing by promoting South-South cooperation and took a strong stand on the Palestinian issue in which his anti-Zionism was at times difficult to distinguish from anti-Semitism. He enjoyed an uneasy position within **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)**, creating tension within the Association by his proposal for an East Asian Economic Caucus which was put forward publicly without consultation. His anger at US President Bill Clinton's neglect of his proposal led him to boycott an informal summit of Asian-Pacific leaders called by the president in Seattle in November 1993 at the end of an **Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)** ministerial meeting. Among Southeast Asian leaders, Mahathir was prominent in arguing that China did not represent a threat to regional security, although during his second term in office he was frustrated at Beijing's lack of cooperation when he sought to renegotiate Belt and Road Initiative contracts that were signed with the preceding BN government. For the most part, he retained his view that the presence of the United States in the region was unnecessarily intrusive. He consistently employed the rhetoric of 'Asian values' in opposition to Western interference in the region. Mahathir's relationship with Australia was also marked with tensions, as in 2003 when he sarcastically accused Australia's prime minister, John Howard, of attempting to be America's 'Deputy Sheriff' in the Pacific region. Mahathir has been a vocal critic of Washington's Middle East policy and viscerally opposed the invasion of Iraq in 2003,

which he decried as an expression of an American war against Muslims. On a visit to China in August 2018, Mahathir raised the eyebrows of his hosts by evoking the spectre of 'new colonialism'.

Even after his resignation in 2020, Mahathir remains an active and visible political figure at the age of 96, and has formed a new political party, **Parti Pejuang Tanah Air** or Warriors of the Homeland. His legacy has been one of both unity and division. In an interview in February 2021 Mahathir revealed that his resignation from UMNO in 2003 was one of his biggest regrets.

*see also:* Abdul Rahman, Tunku; Anwar Ibrahim; APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) 1989–; ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Asian Financial Crisis, 1997–8; Badawi, Tun Abdullah Ahmad; *Berikatan Nasional* (BN); Buy British Last Policy; Constitutional Crises; Hussein Onn, Tun; Muhyiddin Yassin, Tan Sri; Najib Tun Razak, Datuk Seri Mohamad; *Pakatan Harapan*; *Parti Islam Se-Malaysia*; *Parti Pejuang Tanah Air*; *Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia*; *Perikatan Nasional*; Razak, Tun Abdul; Razaleigh Hamzah, Tengku; *Semangat '46*; Sheraton Move 2020; Suharto; UMNO (United Malays National Organization); *Yang di-Pertuan Agong*.

## ***Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia*** (Indonesia)

*Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia* (MMI or the Indonesian Mujahidin Council) was established in 2000 as an Islamist umbrella organization purportedly aiming to unite Islamist activist groups with a radical bent such as **Jemaah Islamiyah (JI)**, **Front Pembela Islam (FPI)** and **Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI)**. While there are significant operational and ideological differences among its constituent groups, the members of the MMI shared in common their desire for the creation of an Islamic state in post-Suharto Indonesia. Although it is not a militant Islamist organization, MMI did accept such groups into its fold, and was believed to have helped facilitate the alignment and participation of Indonesian *jihadis* with *Jabhat al-Nusra* in the Syrian conflict. Along the way, the nomenclature of MMI has

evolved to become the Council of Mujahidin for Islamic Law Enforcement, as reflected in its current official website and Facebook page. It is currently led by Muhammad Thalib.

The origins of MMI can be traced to the activism of Irfan Awwas, a radical cleric and member of **Darul Islam**, who published a wide range of semi-clandestine bulletins in Yogyakarta in the 1980s. Another key figure in MMI is **Abu Bakar Ba'asyir**, who spearheaded the inaugural Mujahidin Congress in August 2001 and who served as *Amir al-Mujahidin* (Commander of the Mujahidin). Despite its radical origins, one of its most notable contributions was its activism in the wake of the 2004 **Tsunami**, where MMI members helped in aid distribution and spiritual relief for survivors as well as the more morbid task of disposing of dead bodies. While the ideology of MMI was clearly radical, it also condemned the 2005 Bali bombings and distanced itself from the extreme faction of **Jl** which perpetrated the attacks. Instead, MMI took the position that while it opposed the Indonesian government's support for US policies in Iraq and Afghanistan, it also opposed the killing of innocent Indonesian Muslims through such attacks. On the other hand, MMI was also involved in attacks against **Ahmadiyah** mosques in 2007, after a *fatwa* issued by **Majelis Ulama Indonesia** (Indonesian Ulama Council) declared the *Ahmadiyah* to be heretics. MMI was also vocal in its criticism of the government of **Joko Widodo**, accusing it of being sympathetic to communists and minority Islamic sects such as *Ahmadiyah*. It was also involved in the **Anti-Ahok Protests** that influenced the Jakarta gubernatorial elections of 2017 in favour of a candidate aligned with President Widodo's political opponents. However, this activism merely veiled the fact that MMI was gradually losing some of its gloss. In 2008, Abu Bakar Ba'asyir resigned from his position in MMI after infighting within the organization and proceeded to form *Jamaah Ansarut Tauhid* (JAT or the Supporters of Monotheism Group), purportedly because he failed to get support which would allow him to emerge as the supreme leader of MMI. The loss of its charismatic leader along with the proliferation of pro-*shari'a* activist groups in Indonesia and forced closure of many of its bookstores and

websites led to a gradual erosion of the influence of MMI. In July 2017, MMI was designated a foreign terrorist group by the US government. see also: *Ahmadiyah*; Anti-Ahok Protests 2016; Ba'asyir, Abu Bakar; *Darul Islam*; *Front Pembela Islam*; *Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia*; *Jamaah Islamiyah*; *Majelis Ulama Indonesia*; Suharto; Tsunami 2004: Widodo, Joko.

### **Majelis Ulama Indonesia** (Indonesia)

The Indonesian Ulama Council, or in Indonesian, *Majelis Ulama Indonesia* (MUI), was established in 1975 by President **Suharto** to serve as a bridge between the government and Indonesia's large Muslim population. Specifically, MUI has been a source of *fatwas* (religious edicts) as well as advice and commentary on contemporary social issues affecting Indonesian Muslims. The Council claims a membership comprising all major Muslim organizations in Indonesia, including **Nahdlatul Ulama** and **Muhammadiyah**. Two groups that represent alternative streams of the Muslim faith, the *Ahlul Bait Indonesia* (*Shi'a*) and *Jemaat Ahmadiyah Indonesia* (**Ahmadiyah**), lie outside its fold. Because of its close association with the state, its source of financial support, MUI is sometimes viewed as an instrument of the ruling regime. To that effect, it has been criticized for issuing *fatwas* that appear to legitimize government policies, such as in the case of mandatory birth control and the use of money derived from the sale of lottery tickets. Other MUI *fatwas* have been controversial for their effect on social cohesion, such as the 2005 *fatwa* declaring that secularism, pluralism, and liberalism were against the teachings of Islam, and the 2008 *fatwa* against the *Ahmadiyah* sect. At the same time, MUI have been ardent advocates of **Pancasila**, the national state ideology, on grounds that it allowed Muslims the liberty to practice their religion. MUI enjoyed a close symbiotic relationship with the state during the presidency of **Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono** when the president frequently offered open endorsement of MUI activism and *fatwas*, to the extent that the latter came to be seen as dictating state policy on issues ranging from public morality and blasphemy to the practice of minority Islamic sects.



In February 2021 MUI caused controversy when it called for President **Joko Widodo** to be detained for breaching public health protocols during a visit to East Nusa Tenggara at the height of the **Covid-19** pandemic. MUI made their case on grounds that the visit was analogous to the arrest of **Front Pembela Islam** leader Rizieq Habib for failure to adhere to safe distancing protocols during a religious rally. In truth, tensions between MUI and President Widodo predated this incident. MUI luminaries had opposed Widodo's candidature as president in 2014 and, before that, for the 2012 Jakarta gubernatorial elections as well.

see also: *Ahmadiyah*; Covid-19; *Front Pembela Islam*; *Muhammadiyah*; *Nahdlatul Ulama*; *Pancasila*; Suharto; Widodo, Joko; Yudhoyono, Susilo Bambang.

### **Malacca Strait** (Indonesia/Malaysia/Singapore)

The Malacca Strait is located between the eastern coast of the Indonesian island of Sumatra and the western coasts of Thailand and peninsular Malaysia. It extends for more than 500 miles to join up with the **Singapore Strait**, which is located south of the island-state and the southeastern tip of peninsular Malaysia and north of Indonesia's Riau Islands. Together, the linked straits extend for some 600 miles and have provided the shortest and most important maritime passage between the Indian and Pacific Oceans since the Suez Canal was opened in 1869. The straits are constricted and heavily congested and had experienced a number of serious collisions and groundings involving oil tankers before a traffic separation scheme was instituted in 1977. Close to where the Malacca and Singapore straits merge, the land width narrows to 3.2 miles and the navigable channel reduces to 1.8 miles. Indonesia had extended the breadth of its territorial waters to 12 miles in a historic **Archipelago Declaration** in December 1957 (subsequently enacted in law in February 1960) so extending its jurisdiction in the Malacca Strait. In August 1969 Malaysia followed suit. On 17 March 1970 a treaty was concluded which delimited the territorial sea boundary between Indonesia and Malaysia in

the Malacca Strait, south of One Fathom Bank, reflecting the improved bilateral relationship since the end of **Confrontation**.

Maritime cooperation continued with both safety of navigation and security in mind. On 16 November 1971, in response to a Japanese attempt to institutionalize international responsibility for safety of navigation through the linked straits, the governments of Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore issued a dissenting joint declaration. That declaration maintained that safety of navigation was the exclusive responsibility of the three coastal states. Controversy arose from a part of the statement, to which Singapore only took note, by which Indonesia and Malaysia challenged the customary legal status of passage through the linked straits. This attempt to substitute a regime of innocent for that of free passage was resolved ultimately during the course of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea and embodied in the Convention promulgated on 10 December 1982. In that Convention, the linked straits of Malacca and Singapore were to be encompassed by a new regime of transit passage applying to all straits used for international navigation. As a preliminary to this accord, the three coastal states had come to an agreement on 24 February 1977 on provision for safety of navigation, incorporating a traffic separation scheme which received international recognition. However, by the early 1990s, a series of collisions in the Malacca Strait with loss of life and spillage of oil had led to calls by Malaysia and Indonesia that the self-policing traffic separation scheme should be replaced by a new regime corresponding to that employed in trans-oceanic canals. An additional hazard to navigation, life, and property has been the growing incidence of piracy. Cooperation between the three littoral states, however, had brought the problem of piracy under control by 2004.

In comparison, cooperation to battle the threat of maritime terrorism in the Strait proved more difficult given sensitivities towards external power involvement. This came primarily in the form of American interest in countering the threat of **terrorism in Southeast Asia** in the wake of the events of September 11. In that

regard, an American offer to increase its naval presence in the region was not well received by Indonesia and Malaysia. In 2004, the United States proposed the Regional Maritime Security Initiative, which would allow US special forces to provide security patrols in the Malacca Strait. This was rejected once again by Indonesia and Malaysia, although both eventually consented to a scaled-down version of the proposal. Meanwhile, cooperation between the three littoral states progressed further with the inception of the **Malacca Strait Patrol** in 2004 and the 'Eyes in the Sky' programme in 2005. Nevertheless, the potential effectiveness of these initiatives was dampened by residual mistrust among the participating states, exemplified for instance in how air patrols were prohibited from going within three miles of each other's borders, thus limiting the scope of intelligence sharing. Additionally, the growing importance that regional powers such as China, India, and Japan place on the Malacca Strait introduces another layer of strategic competition and complexity that the littoral states, including Thailand, will have to manage in the coming years.

see also: Archipelago Declaration 1957; Confrontation; Malacca Strait Patrol; Singapore Strait; Terrorism in Southeast Asia.

### **Malacca Strait Patrol** (Indonesia/Malaysia/Singapore/Thailand)

The Malacca Strait Patrol (MSP) is a set of practical cooperative security measures undertaken by the four littoral states – Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand – in an effort to maintain the security of the **Malacca Strait**. It consists of two initiatives – MALSINDO and Eyes in the Sky (EiS). The MSP initiative recognizes the urgency of multilateral cooperation among the littoral states that would be significantly affected in the event the security of shipping lanes was undermined.

In 2004, and against the backdrop of concerns that American unilateralism might translate to military intervention in the Malacca Strait, Indonesia proposed trilateral coordinated naval patrols involving Malaysia and Singapore. These patrols, codenamed MALSINDO, were subsequently launched by the chiefs of armed

forces of Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore in July 2004 after the initial Indonesian proposal was accepted by the other two littoral states. Thailand joined the initiative in 2008. The EiS initiative was launched in September 2005 to augment surveillance efforts by providing coordinated air surveillance over the Strait through the deployment of maritime patrol aircraft from the four littoral states. The collective efforts of the MSP were further bolstered in 2006 with the formation of the Intelligence Exchange Group (IEG) to support the sea and air patrols through the use of the internet-based Malacca Strait Patrols Information System, which enhances shared situation awareness and facilitates cooperation in terms of a collective response.

The initiation of the MSP was the first time that the littoral states of Southeast Asia committed to coordinated patrols in a multilateral rather than bilateral setting. The success of the initiative is more remarkable given that cooperation between these littoral states had hitherto been hampered by **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** norms, which emphasize sovereignty and non-interference, and the historical suspicions each has harboured towards the other. While India has indicated interest in contributing to MSP efforts, it has been rebuffed by Indonesia, which has taken the position that only states bordering the straits used for international navigation could patrol the straits under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). While the joint efforts of littoral states under the MSP had gradually brought piracy under control over the years, 2019 witnessed a spike in the number of such activities with 31 cases reported compared to seven in 2018, eight in 2017, and two in 2016.

see also: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Malacca Strait.

### **Malayan Union Proposal 1946** (Malaya/Malaysia)

The Malayan Union was an abortive scheme for constitutional change in Malaya promulgated by Britain on 1 April 1946. Restricted territorially to the Malay Peninsula (that is, including Penang but excluding Singapore),

it entailed transferring the formal sovereignty of the sultans or rulers of the Malay states to the British Crown and establishing a common citizenship to the advantage of ethnic Chinese and Indian residents of migrant origin. The initial objectives were political integration of a plural society and the rationalization of colonial administration within a unitary form of government. However, the coercive manner in which the rulers were relieved of sovereign status confirmed for the indigenous Malays that their political birthright was at serious risk. The scheme provoked an unprecedented expression of Malay nationalism, but not a demand for independence from colonial rule, given the growing threat from the predominantly ethnic Chinese Communist Party of Malaya. In March 1946 a Pan Malayan Malay Congress was convened in Kuala Lumpur in a protest which led on to the formation in May of **UMNO (United Malays National Organization)**, the first effective Malay political party. Led by Onn bin Ja'afar, a senior civil servant from Johor, it campaigned successfully for the Malayan Union to be rescinded, touching a British political nerve at the prospect of mass violence of the kind in train in neighbouring Indonesia. The Malayan Union was set aside on 25 July 1946 in favour of a Federation of Malaya under colonial aegis with the position of the rulers restored and citizenship made more difficult for non-Malays to acquire. Sovereignty was transferred ultimately to an independent Federation of Malaya (still excluding Singapore) on 31 August 1957.

see *also*: UMNO (United Malays National Organization).

### **Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA)** (Malaya/Malaysia)

The Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA) was established originally in 1949 as the Malayan Chinese Association, ostensibly as a welfare organization to counter the appeal of communist insurgency among the Chinese community. In February 1952 its Selangor branch took a historic political initiative by entering into an electoral pact with the local branch of **UMNO (United Malays National Organization)** in contesting municipal elections in Kuala Lumpur.

Success in this enterprise paved the way for partnership with UMNO and the Malayan (subsequently **Malaysian**) **Indian Congress** (MIC) in federal elections in July 1955. This intercommunal **Alliance Party** provided the political model for a ruling coalition which had been continuously in power until 2018.

MCA has always occupied the role of principal communal partner of UMNO within the ruling coalition which, in the early 1970s, became known as **Barisan Nasional** (National Front, BN). That position has never reflected its true standing within the Chinese community. The MCA has been primarily identified with a wealthy elite prominent within Chinese chambers of commerce who have been content to appease Malay political partners in a narrow economic interest. As such, it has found it difficult to command a majority of the Chinese vote in competition with the opposition **Democratic Action Party (DAP)**, which attracts lower-income support. MCA has always suffered from never having been able to satisfy adequately its senior political partner and its communal constituency at the same time. A humiliating electoral failure in May 1969 was a factor in a political crisis brought to a head by the **May 13 Racial Riots**. In its wake, and with the introduction of a **New Economic Policy** designed to revise the balance of advantage in the Malay interest, MCA was downgraded as a political partner. While it had to give up key economic portfolios in the cabinet, the primarily Chinese-based **Gerakan Rakyat Malaysia** (Malaysian People's Movement) was brought into the ruling coalition. The problem for MCA from that juncture has been that the more its leaders have attempted to cultivate the separate interests of the Chinese community, the greater the political alienation exhibited by UMNO. For example, after a period of internal factionalism, an attempt to take up the emotive issue of Chinese education led in October 1987 to the detention of eight party members. Until recently, MCA has survived politically because its place in politics and government serves UMNO's interests and also because Malaysia has prospered since the mid-1970s. The New Economic Policy has caused alienation among the Chinese community, but they have also shared in the fruits of

development. During the 1980s, however, MCA did little more than hold its own politically because of the contradiction in representing Chinese interests, while at the same time subordinating those interests to Malay priorities. In April 1995, however, it made a political breakthrough in securing a majority of Chinese votes at the expense of DAP. MCA won 30 seats out of 34 contested in the federal Parliament, its best-ever electoral performance. The number was reduced to 29 in elections in November 1999.

Since 1999, factionalism has taken the party to the brink of collapse. The party's problems were compounded by widening disconnect with ethnic Chinese grassroots, eroding its support base considerably. Chronic internal discord was triggered by the retirement of Deputy President Lim Ah Lek in 1999. Lim's retirement was followed by a series of leadership tussles which were interrupted only by a cosmetic show of unity on the eve of the 2004 election, which nevertheless saw a strong performance by MCA. In the event, it proved to be a pyrrhic victory. Persistent myopic factionalism took its toll at the 2008 general election, when a groundswell of opposition against MCA's impotence within BN and the party's inability to surmount factional politics led to significant losses, as it managed to secure a meagre 15 parliamentary seats. Rather than recede, factionalism intensified. In 2011, the MCA General Assembly endorsed a cryptic resolution to decline government posts if the party performed badly in the forthcoming elections. In the event, the 2013 election saw MCA slide even further into irrelevance. Consequently, for the first time since independence, there were no MCA ministers in the Malaysian cabinet. The 2013 election was also the first time that a sitting president (Chua Soi Lek) of MCA, the second largest party in BN, was omitted from the coalition's candidate list. By the 2018 election, MCA was but a shadow of its former self. Its inability to stem the tide of growing Malay ethnonationalism led Chinese voters to abandon the party in droves. It won only two parliamentary seats and lost all state seats it contested. In 2020, however, MCA returned to power as a constituent member of a BN that was aligned with **Perikatan Nasional**, although it was by then, for all intents and purposes, a spent political force.

*see also:* Alliance Party; *Barisan Nasional* (BN); Democratic Action Party (DAP); *Gerakan Rakyat Malaysia*; Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC); May 13 Racial Riots 1969; New Economic Policy; *Perikatan Nasional*; UMNO (United Malays National Organization).

### Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC) (Malaya/Malaysia)

The Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC), formerly the Malayan Indian Congress, is one of the communal components of the **Barisan Nasional** (National Front, BN) coalition. MIC was founded in 1946 to represent peninsular Malayan residents of sub-continental origin. Its initial orientation was as much Indian as Malayan, with the name taken from the Indian National Congress. A leftist disposition was discarded with the onset of the **Emergency** in 1948. After the success of Malay–Chinese political cooperation in municipal elections in Kuala Lumpur in 1952, MIC participated within the tripartite intercommunal **Alliance Party**, which won every seat but one in national elections the following year. MIC has always been the most junior partner in this governing relationship, which was carried over with the formation of the Federation of Malaysia in 1963 and then in the wider BN in the early 1970s. Indians comprise only slightly over 7 per cent of the population of peninsular Malaysia, and their geographic distribution means that they command very few natural constituencies, leaving MIC to secure representation through receiving a small quota of state and federal seats as well as minimal representation in the cabinet. Indian political influence is limited also because of Hindu–Muslim divisions and because Indian rural workers in the rubber industry have never felt that their interests have been represented by the small group of businesspeople and professionals of Tamil origin who have always dominated MIC.

MIC's claim to represent the Indian community in Malaysia was severely undermined in 2007 when the **Hindu Rights Action Force (Hindraf)** led a massive protest against the BN government under Prime Minister **Abdullah Badawi** for neglecting the community's

interests. This antipathy translated into a massive swing of ethnic Indian support away from the ruling coalition at the 2008 election, contributing to huge opposition gains. MIC's poor election performance saw longstanding party president Samy Vellu and two party vice-presidents lose their parliamentary seats. Vocal calls for party reform focused on Samy Vellu's leadership, and while he retained the party presidency for a record 11th consecutive term in the party's 2009 internal elections, mounting pressure led to his resignation a year later. Still, MIC failed to perform credibly at the 2013 elections, winning only four parliamentary seats and five state seats. Not unlike the **Malaysian Chinese Association**, by the 2018 election MIC had fallen by the wayside, winning only one parliamentary seat as Indian votes flocked to the **Democratic Action Party** and **Parti Keadilan Rakyat**.

*see also:* Alliance Party; Badawi, Tun Abdullah Ahmad; *Barisan Nasional* (BN); Democratic Action Party (DAP); Emergency 1948–60; Hindraf (Hindu Rights Action Force); Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA); *Parti Keadilan Rakyat*.

### **Malik, Adam** (Indonesia)

Adam Malik served continuously with distinction as foreign minister of Indonesia from March 1966 to May 1977. He was appointed by General **Suharto**, who had assumed executive authority in the wake of an abortive coup (*see Gestapu*) in October 1965 which politically discredited President **Sukarno**. Adam Malik played a key role in the regional and international rehabilitation of Indonesia after an assertive and exhibitionist phase of foreign policy. He was instrumental in promoting reconciliation with Malaysia and in helping to found **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** as well as repairing economic relations with Western states. Indonesia's reintegration into international society was registered by his election as president of the UN General Assembly in September 1971.

Adam Malik was born on 22 July 1917 in Pematang Siantar in northern Sumatra. He combined an early interest in nationalism with that of journalism; at the age of 20 he founded the Antara press agency, which after independence

became the national news agency. At the end of the Pacific War, Adam Malik was a leading member of a group of young radical nationalists who wished to wrest independence from Japan rather than acquire it under their auspices. During the period of national revolution, he became involved in a plot against the socialist prime minister, **Sutan Sjahrir**, and was imprisoned until late 1948. His radical record prevented Adam Malik from playing a political role during the period of parliamentary democracy in the 1950s. Shortly after President Sukarno had instituted his system of **Guided Democracy** in July 1959, Adam Malik was sent as ambassador to the Soviet Union, which proved to be a disillusioning experience. In November 1963 he was appointed minister of trade but became progressively alienated from the Sukarno regime. He was an appropriate civilian choice for foreign minister in the military-dominated administration which replaced that of President Sukarno. Indeed, he ensured that Indonesia's conduct of foreign policy reflected an independent tradition and was not merely a crude expression of military priorities. After serving as foreign minister for 11 years, Adam Malik briefly became speaker of the country's **People's Consultative Assembly** and then, in March 1978, was elected vice-president of the Republic. He retired from public life in March 1983 and died on 5 September 1984.

*see also:* ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; *Gestapu*; Guided Democracy; People's Consultative Assembly; Sjahrir, Sutan; Suharto; Sukarno.

### **Maluku Violence 1999–2002** (Indonesia)

The Maluku Islands, also known as the Moluccas, are a group of islands located to the east of Sulawesi, Indonesia. They comprised a single province after Indonesian independence in 1945 but were subsequently split into two, North Maluku and Maluku, in 1999. North Maluku, whose capital is Ternate, has a predominantly Muslim population; while Maluku, whose capital is Ambon, has a predominantly Christian population.

In January 1999, violence between Christian and Muslim communities broke out and lasted

until the signing of the Malino II Accord on 13 February 2002 in Malino, South Sulawesi. It was estimated that between 5,000 and 9,000 people died as a result of the violence, while another 300,000 to 700,000 were displaced. Approximately 29,000 houses and hundreds of mosques and churches were also destroyed. What triggered the catastrophe was a personal altercation between an Ambonese bus driver and a Bugis passenger in Ambon on 19 January 1999. From that incident, matters quickly escalated to altercations between Christian and Muslim gangs from neighbouring communities, eventually degenerating into widespread communal violence.

The unprecedented scale of violence in Maluku can be explained by multiple factors. While social and economic disparities had existed in Maluku society for decades, the fall of the **New Order** regime and the immediate turbulence of the *Reformasi* era amplified these uncertainties, allowing them to erupt into full-scale violence. Further intensifying the volatile atmosphere were demographic trends which saw immigration from South Sulawesi and transmigration from Java upsetting a hitherto Christian majority. Land and economic competition from these immigrants effectively displaced Christian Ambonese from many sectors of the economy, fuelling resentment towards Muslim immigrants who were perceived as receiving preferential treatment by the national government. This shifting ethno-religious balance further threatened traditional authority structures, such as the *pela* system which defined mutual obligations between villages. In addition, the sectarian violence was also linked to the newly disenfranchised members of the national elite who had a strategic interest in provoking violence to undermine the government of **Abdurrahman Wahid**. These elites were linked to the *preman* (street thugs) who were differentiated by ethnic and religious persuasions. Violence in Maluku worsened when **Laskar Jihad** recruited Muslims from across the archipelago to join Maluku Muslims to fight against Christians. Their arms, training, and logistical superiority accelerated violence and worsened bloodshed across the region marked by savage mutilations, forced conversions, and

rampant destruction of property. The Indonesian military was also widely viewed to have been partisan, with some elements even arming Muslim factions and providing logistical support.

The spate of violence in Maluku ended with the government-sponsored Malino II Peace Accord in February 2002. In what was seen as decisive action by the coordinating minister for people's welfare, **Yusuf Kalla**, the peace accord established an 11-point agreement to end conflict, restore the rule of law, protect the unitary state, establish freedom of movement, eliminate armed organizations, return displaced persons to their homes, rebuild infrastructure, maintain neutrality of security forces, and reconstruct an integrated university.

see also: Kalla, Yusuf; *Laskar Jihad*; *New Order*; Wahid, Abdurrahman.

## Manila Hostage Crisis 2010

(Philippines)

On 23 August 2010 a disgruntled policeman recently dismissed from the police force, Rolando Mendoza, took a tour bus and its passengers hostage in Manila in an attempt to get reinstated into the force. The bus was carrying 25 passengers at the time, most of whom were from Hong Kong. Negotiations with Mendoza, who was armed with a handgun and an M-16 assault rifle, were conducted by Philippine police superintendent Orlando Yebra and chief inspector Romeo Salvado. While the negotiation resulted in the release over several hours of nine hostages, uncertainty about the authorities' position in response to Mendoza's demands created confusion. Agitated by the live coverage and provoked by the presence of his brother, who apparently was introduced into the arena to assist with the hostage negotiations, Mendoza began shooting the hostages. Several attempts by the police at the scene to storm the bus failed, and the crisis only ended when Mendoza was eventually taken down by snipers. By then, Mendoza had killed eight hostages and injured several others.

The crisis was the first test for President **Benigno Aquino III**, who had been sworn into office barely three months earlier, and it proved

a major embarrassment for the Philippines government. The airing live across the world of the confusion surrounding attempts to address Mendoza's demands, and the failed attempts to storm the bus, revealed the incompetence of the police force during a hostage situation. The situation was compounded when investigations into the event, called for by President Aquino, revealed that several of the hostages may have in fact been killed by police fire. Criticism was particularly caustic from the authorities in China and Hong Kong, who proceeded to place the Philippines on their travel alert list. *see also*: Aquino, Benigno Simeon Cojuangco, III.

### **Manila Pact 1954** (Cambodia/Laos/Philippines/Thailand/Vietnam)

The Southeast Asia Collective Defence Treaty, known as the Manila Pact, was concluded in Manila on 8 September 1954 between the governments of the United States, Britain, France, Australia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Thailand, and the Philippines. The alliance was inspired by the United States, whose secretary of state, John Foster Dulles, had failed to mobilize united action in April 1954 to prevent the Vietnamese communist victory at the **Battle of Dien Bien Phu**. As part of a global policy of containing international communism, the alliance was directed at the People's Republic of China and North Vietnam and designed to shore up the provisional territorial settlement reached in the **Geneva Agreements on Indochina** in July 1954. That settlement had divided Vietnam temporarily along the line of the 17th parallel of latitude and had recognized the independence of Laos and Cambodia. The obligation of the signatories of the Manila Pact to act under the central Article IV was extended through a separate protocol to 'the states of Cambodia and Laos and the free territory under the jurisdiction of the State of Vietnam'. The treaty took an institutionalized form from February 1955 when its council meeting in Bangkok approved the establishment of **SEATO (Southeast Asia Treaty Organization)** with headquarters in the Thai capital.

The alliance, which required unanimity for common action, was never effective because its

members differed over security priorities from the outset. Only two of them were resident regional states. The Cambodian leader, Prince **Norodom Sihanouk**, repudiated the protection of the treaty in February 1956, while Laos was excluded from it in July 1962 under the terms of a neutralization agreement (*see* **Geneva Agreements on Laos 1962**). South Vietnam never made an explicit appeal for assistance under the protocol. In March 1962 in a joint statement by Thai Foreign Minister **Thanat Khoman** and US Secretary of State, Dean Rusk, the latter asserted that his country's obligation did not depend upon the prior agreement of all other parties to the treaty since that obligation was individual as well as collective. However, the most that the alliance ever managed was a limited show of force in Thailand in May 1962 by some of its members in response to a crisis in Laos. Pakistan had become alienated early on because of a failure to attract support against India. France openly opposed the US military intervention in Vietnam, while Britain withheld military cooperation, announcing disengagement from east of Suez in July 1967. Apart from the United States, of the original signatories, only Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, and Thailand dispatched troops to Vietnam, but not collectively under the terms of the Manila Pact. The alliance lost its original *raison d'être* after US President Richard Nixon's historic visit to Beijing in February 1972, which confirmed Sino-US rapprochement.

A truncated Pakistan withdrew from the alliance in November 1972, following the secession of Bangladesh at the end of 1971. A Council meeting in September 1973, in the wake of the **Paris Peace Agreements** on Vietnam in January 1973, abolished the military structure of SEATO from February 1974. After communist victories in Cambodia and South Vietnam in April 1975, Thailand's prime minister, **Kukrit Pramoj**, and the Philippines' president, **Ferdinand Marcos**, agreed informally to abolish SEATO during a meeting in Manila in July. That agreement was confirmed at a Council meeting in New York in September 1975 when it was decided that SEATO would be dissolved completely on 30 June 1977. The Collective Defence Treaty has never been revoked, however, primarily

because it provides the only formal defence link between Thailand and the United States. In February 1979, following Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia, US President Jimmy Carter reaffirmed to Thailand's prime minister, **Kriangsak Chomanan**, the validity of the US commitment to his country under the Manila Pact. US defence cooperation with Thailand has been sustained, but the Collective Defence Treaty survives only as a redundant vestige of the Cold War in Asia. *see also:* Dien Bien Phu, Battle of, 1954; Geneva Agreements on Indochina 1954; Geneva Agreements on Laos 1962; Kriangsak Chomanan, General; Kukrit Pramoj; Marcos, Ferdinand; Paris Peace Agreements 1973; SEATO (Southeast Asia Treaty Organization) 1955–77; Sihanouk, King Norodom; Thanat Khoman.

### **Manila Summit (ASEAN) 1987** (Brunei/Indonesia/Malaysia/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand)

In December 1987 the six heads of government of **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** met for two days in Manila. It was only the third such meeting in its history: the first was the **Bali Summit** in February 1976 and the second was the **Kuala Lumpur Summit** in August 1977. The Manila Summit was held amid tight security because of the series of abortive coups mounted against the administration of President **Corazón Aquino**, which had replaced that of **Ferdinand Marcos** in February 1986. The meeting was not significant for any initiatives in political or economic cooperation. Nor did it lead to reconciliation between the Philippines and Malaysia over the **Philippines' Claim to Sabah**. The fleeting gathering was intended, above all, as a display of corporate solidarity for President Aquino's embattled administration on the understanding that failure to have so acted would have reflected adversely on the credibility of ASEAN.

*see also:* Aquino, Corazón; ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations), 1967–; Bali Summit (ASEAN) 1976; Kuala Lumpur Summit (ASEAN) 1977; Marcos, Ferdinand; Philippines' Claim to Sabah.

### **Manila Summit (ASEAN) April 2017**

(Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/Laos/Malaysia/Myanmar/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand/Vietnam)

The 30th summit of **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** took place in Manila from 26 to 29 April 2017 against the backdrop of security concerns following attacks by militants from the **Abu Sayyaf Group** in the island of Bohol a week earlier. Heightened security measures included the mobilization of 41,000 troops and police, and the deployment of ten naval vessels to secure Manila Bay. At any rate, the theme for this landmark year of the Philippine chairmanship was 'Partnering for Change, Engaging the World', which reflected ASEAN's aspiration to be more open and integrated in the wake of the first signs that, under the newly installed administration of President Donald Trump, the United States might step back from its traditional role of global leadership. It was also the first ASEAN summit for **Rodrigo Duterte**, after he was elected into office the year before.

Under the Philippine chairmanship, there were some areas where a different tone to regional discussion could be detected. On the **South China Sea**, a routine agenda item for ASEAN summitry, the gathering was evidently more muted compared to previous gatherings. For instance, the Chairman's Statement was notable for its silence on reclamation and militarization activities in the South China Sea, and on the **Arbitral Tribunal Award** which the Philippines won in its case against China barely a year earlier. Moreover, while reference was made to international law and UNCLOS in the document, they did not appear in the context of the South China Sea. The tone of the discussion was an apparent reflection of the relationship between the Philippines and China, where, much to the consternation of his own security and defence establishment, the Philippine president Duterte sought to forge closer ties with Beijing, to which the Chinese responded with a purported pledge of US\$15 billion of investments and financing for 15 infrastructure projects including a hydroelectric dam, an irrigation system, and two highspeed railways.



Another issue noticeably absent from the official agenda at the summit was the humanitarian crisis in Rakhine State. Following what the UN Commissioner for Human Rights called an ‘unprecedented level of violence’ against the **Rohingya** in a UN report released earlier in February, the democratically elected government in Myanmar led by State Counsellor **Aung San Suu Kyi** had found itself confronted by a growing chorus of international condemnation. In the event, no explicit references were made to the situation in Rakhine State in the Chairman’s Statement, as member states adhered strictly to the organization’s sacrosanct principle of non-interference, although there was oblique mention of crisis and emergency situations involving irregular movement of persons. Indonesian President **Joko Widodo** did manage to have bilateral discussions on the Rohingya crisis with Aung San Suu Kyi at the sidelines of the summit. A more robust position was taken on North Korea, however, as the heads of government issued a statement criticizing nuclear and ballistic missile tests by North Korea and expressed ‘grave concern’ for escalating tensions in the Korean Peninsula.

*see also:* Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG); Arbitral Tribunal Award 2016; ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Aung San Suu Kyi; Duterte, Rodrigo; Rohingya; Widodo, Joko.

### **Manila Summit (ASEAN) November 2017** (Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/Laos/Malaysia/Myanmar/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand/Vietnam)

The 31st edition of the biannual meeting of heads of government of **ASEAN** and its related summits with dialogue partners took place in Manila on 10–14 November 2017.

The summit was dominated by concerns over maritime disputes, trade issues and tensions, terrorism, and cybersecurity. On the **South China Sea** disputes, some progress was made when China agreed with ASEAN counterparts to begin long-delayed negotiations on a Code of Conduct, and to be bound by the document once it is completed and signed. Terrorism also emerged as a major discussion point,

as the Philippine host struggled to recover from the five-month **Marawi Siege** that ended barely a month earlier. On the crisis in Rakhine State, ASEAN did little to move the dial, but while calls for ASEAN to act on the issue did not go entirely unheeded, the Association’s fervent adherence to the non-interference principle meant it had little room to manoeuvre. At any rate, similar to what transpired at the **Manila Summit April 2017**, only oblique mention was made of the crisis in the Chairman’s Statement. As with the tradition of ASEAN summitry, the accompanying summits with dialogue partners were held concurrently. The highlight of the Manila gathering in November was the participation of US President Donald Trump in his first, and eventually only, ASEAN Summit. In the event, President Trump used the occasion to introduce the Indo-Pacific Strategy to the heads of ASEAN governments, which would predicate the continuation of American engagement in the region on a robust pushback of Chinese assertiveness.

An inaugural summit of the leaders of the prospective **Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership** was also held as an effort to signal regional commitment to free trade and expedite the completion of the agreement.

*see also:* ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Manila Summit (ASEAN) April 2017; Marawi Siege 2017; Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership; South China Sea.

### **Maphilindo** (Indonesia/Malaya/Philippines)

Maphilindo is an acronym taken from the first parts of Malaya, the Philippines, and Indonesia, which was coined by Indonesia’s foreign minister, **Subandrio**, in June 1963. The term had its origins in regional contention (**Confrontation**) over the proposal for a Federation of Malaysia with Malaya as its political core. Both Indonesia and the Philippines objected, the latter because of its claim to part of northern Borneo included in the proposal (*see* **Philippines’ Claim to Sabah**). As a blocking alternative, the Philippines’ president, **Diosdado Macapagal**, advanced a plan for a confederation of nations

of Malay origin predicated implicitly on a common anti-Chinese sentiment. At a meeting of senior ministers from the three states, which convened in Manila in June 1963, Subandrio supported the Maphilindo scheme as a flattering gesture to the Philippine president. Malaya's deputy prime minister, **Tun Abdul Razak**, endorsed the concept in an attempt to encourage Indonesia and the Philippines to accept Malaysia. A meeting of heads of government followed at the end of July which upheld the scheme, but the apparent reconciliation did not last. Maphilindo foundered with the advent of Malaysia on 16 September 1963. Neither Indonesia nor the Philippines accorded recognition to the expanded state, and diplomatic relations were broken off between the government in Kuala Lumpur and those in Jakarta and Manila. Despite attempts to revive the concept in 1964, Maphilindo never progressed beyond its declaratory establishment and failed to assume any institutional form.

*see also:* Confrontation; Macapagal, Diosdado; Philippines' Claim to Sabah; Razak, Tun Abdul; Subandrio.

### **Marawi Siege 2017 (Philippines)**

In May 2017, the Philippine military, working on actionable intelligence obtained on the movement of militants, planned an operation to capture Isnilon Hapilon, a leader of the **Abu Sayyaf Group**. The operation triggered an exchange of fire which eventually escalated into a full-blown assault by militants on Marawi City, on the main southern Philippine island of Mindanao and the largest city in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao, which they overtook on 23 May. The occupation of Marawi, which was to eventually last five months, was led by the Maute Group and the Abu Sayyaf Group, militant organizations that claimed allegiance to ISIS (the Islamic State of Iraq and as-Sham), but eventually also involved fighters from Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Yemen, and Saudi Arabia as well.

In response to the siege, President **Rodrigo Duterte**, who was on an overseas trip to Russia at the time, moved swiftly to place the region under martial law. Meanwhile, security officials

and the president confidently predicted that the siege would be brought to an end by 12 June, the Independence Day of the Philippines. In the event, the siege was only declared ended on 23 October, after five months of intense urban warfare, in some instances involving house-to-house combat that the Philippine security forces were unprepared for. The violence left more than 1,000 dead, displaced several hundred thousand civilians, and laid waste to large swathes of the city.

The siege was a devastating indictment of the weaknesses of the Philippine security forces and failure of its intelligence agencies, the vulnerability of its southern provinces to militant elements that still seek to establish a foothold in Southeast Asia, and the harsh reality that terrorism and militancy remains a security threat to the country. Given the presence of Malaysian and Indonesian fighters, it also suggests that **terrorism in Southeast Asia** remains a concern. Meanwhile, the Philippines government approved a budget of 62 billion pesos in 2018 for the reconstruction of Marawi City, and the international community rallied to support the effort, particularly **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)**, China, Japan, Spain, and the United States. Nevertheless, reconstruction has been hampered by a host of obstacles including bureaucratic incompetence and lack of accountability. Three years after the siege was lifted and reconstruction purportedly began, many residents of Marawi have yet to return home, or to receive promised compensation for their losses.

*see also:* Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG); ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Duterte, Rodrigo; Terrorism in Southeast Asia.

### **Marcos, Ferdinand (Philippines)**

Ferdinand Marcos was the most powerful political figure in the post-independence history of the Philippines. He held the office of president from January 1966 until February 1986. Ferdinand Edralin Marcos was born on 17 September 1917 in Ilocos Norte Province on the main island of Luzón. He came to national prominence when he was placed first in the bar finals

after sitting the examinations in prison, prior to a successful appeal against a conviction for murdering a political rival of his father. After the Pacific War and national independence, his career was advanced by his claim to have been a distinguished guerrilla war commander. He entered politics in 1949, moving from the House of Representatives to the Senate in 1959. He was elected president in November 1965 and re-elected in November 1968.

In the face of rising political dissension and a constitutional impediment to a third term of office, Marcos declared martial law in September 1972. The break with constitutional legality was welcomed initially as a brave attempt to regenerate political and economic life. Within a decade, the promise of Marcos's New Society Movement had turned sour. Personal abuse of power undermined all independent institutions, while his family and business circle accumulated great wealth through corrupt practices. His wife **Imelda Marcos** attracted fierce animosity for her regal pretensions. Against a background of economic decline and burgeoning communist insurgency, his personal authority crumbled visibly from August 1983, when his principal political rival, **Benigno Aquino**, was shot dead while in military custody at Manila airport on his return from exile in the United States. Unable to throw off the stigma of Aquino's assassination, stricken by illness, and unable to reverse economic failure, Marcos gambled on re-establishing his political authority through holding a snap election in February 1986. The opposition closed ranks around the popular widow of his assassinated rival, **Corazón Aquino**. Conspicuous electoral fraud, a military revolt led by the minister of defence, **Juan Ponce Enrile**, and the deputy chief of staff of the armed forces, **Fidel Ramos**, together with a massive display of popular support (**People Power**) for Corazón Aquino backed by Cardinal **Jaime Sin** and the Catholic Church, persuaded the US government to advise Marcos to leave the country. He was flown with his family via Guam to Hawaii, where he remained in exile. After inspiring a number of feckless abortive attempts to promote a coup against the new government, recurrent ill health (and the warning of his host government) reduced him to a

pathetic figure. He was refused permission to return to the Philippines and died in Hawaii on 28 September 1989. It was not until four years later that his family was granted permission by the government of President Fidel Ramos for his remains to be returned and entombed in a mausoleum in his hometown of Batac in the Ilocos region of Luzón. His persisting ill repute was demonstrated in June 1998, when president-elect Joseph Estrada revealed that he would permit Marcos's body to be buried in the country's Heroes Cemetery in Manila. The subsequent display of public outrage caused his widow, Imelda, to announce that the plan to bury her late husband would be postponed. It was only in February 1999 that the family of the late president agreed to pay substantial damages to victims of human rights abuses during his despotic and corrupt rule. In November 2016, the body of the deposed dictator was laid to rest with full military honours at the Heroes Cemetery following approval from President **Rodrigo Duterte**.

see also: Aquino, Benigno; Aquino, Corazón; Duterte, Rodrigo; Enrile, Juan Ponce; Estrada, Joseph Ejercito; Marcos, Imelda; People Power; Ramos, Fidel; Sin, Cardinal Jaime.

### **Marcos, Imelda** (Philippines)

Imelda Marcos achieved political notoriety as the venal and controversial consort of President **Ferdinand Marcos** of the Philippines. She was born on 2 July 1929 to an impoverished branch of the wealthy Romualdez family from Leyte in the central Visayan Islands. Much of her life was spent trying to overcome early social disability and material deprivation. She grew up to become a beautiful woman with a sweet soprano voice, subsequently put to her future husband's political service at election rallies. Ferdinand Marcos was attracted to her after Imelda had won the title Muse of Manila at the Philippines International Fair in 1953. In May 1954, after a whirlwind courtship, she married the up-and-coming congressman. Imelda proved to be a political asset to the future president but confined herself to only a ceremonial role during his first two terms of office.

After the introduction of martial law in September 1972, Imelda began to display personal political ambition and at one time came to be regarded as a likely successor to her ailing husband. Her formal political career began in 1975 when she was appointed governor of Metropolitan Manila. She entered the National Assembly in 1978, assuming the portfolio of human settlements later in the year. In 1982 she became a member of the Executive Council charged with responsibility for interim government in the event of the president's death or incapacity. In her political role, she exercised considerable patronage and acted as a plenipotentiary for her husband overseas. Imelda Marcos was an impulsive woman of boundless energy who was obsessed with grandiose schemes, material acquisition, and cultivating a coterie of international celebrities. Her facility for political theatre served her and her husband well for a time.

However, dynastic pretensions and insatiable greed had an alienating political effect nationally, especially after the blatant murder of opposition leader **Benigno Aquino**, which marked a political turning point. In February 1986, after military and popular reaction to fraudulently conducted elections had precipitated political change, she left for exile in Hawaii with her discredited husband. In exile, she continued to hold court among a small circle of émigrés and plotted Ferdinand Marcos's political return to the Philippines until thwarted by his death in September 1989. She was denied the right to bring her husband's body back in state to the Philippines. However, in November 1991 she returned to Manila with her son ostensibly to face civil and criminal charges relating to the expropriation of public funds. Her prime purpose was political vindication and ambition, but she received only limited popular acclaim and did not pose a threat to the widow of the murdered Benigno Aquino, **Corazón Aquino**, who had succeeded Ferdinand Marcos as president. Imelda Marcos stood as a candidate in presidential elections in May 1992, but secured only just over 10 per cent of the national vote, coming fifth behind **Fidel Ramos**, who as deputy chief of staff had led the military revolt which precipitated her husband's political downfall. In September 1993 she was sentenced

in Manila to 18 to 24 years in prison for criminal graft but was released on bail pending appeal. The same month, she was able to have Ferdinand Marcos's remains entombed in a mausoleum in his hometown of Batac in what proved to be an abortive attempt to establish their son as his political successor. Further charges of embezzlement were brought against her in April 1994 and in September 1995. In May 1995, she secured election to the House of Representatives for a constituency in her home province of Leyte. In January 1998, the Supreme Court upheld the 1993 decision sentencing her to 12 years' imprisonment but she was freed pending an appeal. Imelda Marcos then announced her candidacy for the presidential elections in May, but she withdrew at the end of April after opinion polls showed that she would secure only around 2 per cent of the vote. She subsequently supported the candidacy of the then vice-president, **Joseph Estrada**. In October 1998, the Supreme Court upheld her appeal overturning the only conviction on charges of graft relating to her late husband's despotic and corrupt rule. Corruption trials held in March 2008 acquitted Marcos of 32 cases against her. However, in September 2010, the Sandigabayan's Fifth Division ordered Marcos to return 12 million pesos of government funds withdrawn by her late husband from the National Food Authority in 1963.

Two of Imelda Marcos's children are involved in Philippine politics as well. Her daughter Maria Imelda Marcos has been governor of Ilocos Norte since 2010, and her son Ferdinand Jr was elected to the Senate in the same year and has become the leading presidential candidate for the 2022 presidential election. In the 2010 election, Imelda Marcos ran once again for the House of Representatives for the second district of Ilocos Norte, which has long remained the main support base for the Marcos family. She achieved victory by a margin of 60 per cent from her nearest rival, Mariano Nalupta Jr. In October 2012, Marcos sought to renew her term as Ilocos Norte's second district representative by filing for candidacy. In November 2018, while a member of the House of Representatives, Imelda Marcos was convicted of seven counts of graft linked to the creation of private

foundations in Switzerland between 1978 and 1984 and sentenced to a total of 42 years in prison. She was released on bail pending decision on her appeal.

see also: Aquino, Benigno; Aquino, Corazón; Estrada, Joseph Ejercito; Marcos, Ferdinand; Ramos, Fidel.

### **Marshall, David** (Singapore)

David Marshall was the first chief minister of Singapore, holding the office for 14 months during 1955–6 in the initial phase of the island's decolonization. He was born in Singapore on 12 March 1908 to an Orthodox Jewish family from Iraq; his father was a successful trader. After failing to settle to a career in business, Marshall trained in law as a barrister at the Middle Temple in London. His career as a criminal lawyer was interrupted by the Pacific War during which he was interned and then dispatched to Japan to work in coal mines. After the war, he established a reputation as an outstanding advocate. He also began to involve himself in Singapore's politics. In 1954 Marshall founded the Singapore Socialist Party, which he took into an alliance with the Labour Party as the Labour Front to make a strong showing in elections in 1955.

Marshall's period of office was turbulent, partly as a consequence of industrial unrest fomented by the Communist Party of Malaya and because of his own headstrong temperament. It was also short-lived, as he resigned when talks with the British government over self-government broke down; he was succeeded as chief minister by **Lim Yew Hock**. Marshall then resigned his parliamentary seat and went on to found the **Workers' Party**, which attracted communist support, enabling him to win a by-election in 1962 which he then lost in general elections the following year. Marshall returned to legal practice but came into conflict with the government of **Lee Kuan Yew**, which was intolerant of dissent. In October 1972 he was suspended from legal practice for six months because he had breached an undertaking to the attorney general not to part with affidavits in *habeas corpus* proceedings, which were subsequently released at a

conference of the International Press Institute. Reconciliation took place in 1978, however, when he was asked to become Singapore's ambassador to France, a post which he held continuously with distinction until his retirement in 1993. On his return to Singapore, he worked as a legal advisor but became outspoken against the government. He died on 12 December 1995, aged 87.

see also: Lee Kuan Yew; Lim Yew Hock; Workers' Party.

### **Mas Selamat Kastari** (Singapore)

Mas Selamat bin Kastari was the leader of **Jemaah Islamiyah's** (JI) Singapore branch and is currently held under Singapore's Internal Security Act that allows for detention without trial. Born on 23 January 1961 in Java, Indonesia, Mas Selamat Kastari migrated to Singapore with his family as a young boy. He joined **Darul Islam**, the predecessor of JI, in the early 1990s and went to Afghanistan twice. It was in Afghanistan that he met **Hambali**, a leader of JI.

Mas Selamat is believed to be the mastermind behind JI plans to carry out attacks on Western and local targets in Singapore, including the US Embassy and American Club, as well as the headquarters of various Singapore ministries. Investigations also suggested that he had made plans to crash a plane into Singapore's Changi Airport. In December 2001, Singapore's Internal Security Department (ISD) launched a crackdown on the JI cell in Singapore and Mas Selamat fled the country with his family. He was first arrested in the Indonesian island of Bintan in February 2003 by Indonesian authorities for carrying false identification papers. The absence of an extradition agreement between Singapore and Jakarta meant that he was released at the end of his detention. Mas Selamat was arrested again in January 2006 in Java on the same charges and was later investigated for connections to the 2002 Bali bombings. He was subsequently deported to Singapore and held under the Internal Security Act.

Mas Selamat's escape from Singapore's Whitley Road Detention Centre on 27 February 2008 made headlines and placed Singapore under an uncomfortable spotlight. Investigations

revealed that he had climbed out of the building through an unsecured bathroom window while he was in a cubicle, after requesting privacy from guards to change into civilian clothes for a scheduled family visit. A few days later, he reportedly swam more than one kilometre to the southern Malaysian state of Johor at night with the help of an improvised floatation device. A nationwide manhunt was conducted, while an Interpol international red alert was also issued. It was later found that Mas Selamat received help from family members who had provided him with food, shelter, maps, and money before he escaped to Malaysia. Three of them were sentenced to time in prison. The Singapore government came under heavy criticism for failing to disseminate information on his escape to the public promptly. The mainstream media, too, were criticized for failing to question how Mas Selamat was allowed to escape. Six officers from the ISD were subsequently charged, including the superintendent of the detention centre who was dismissed while his deputy and the guards in charge of Mas Selamat were demoted. A Commission of Inquiry uncovered numerous security lapses that led to the escape: the lack of grilles on the window in the toilet cubicle, the poor judgement of the guards, and insufficient security around the Family Visitation Block from which Mas Selamat escaped.

On 1 April 2009, Mas Selamat was re-arrested by the Malaysian Special Branch in a small village in Johor in a joint operation involving intelligence agencies of both countries. His arrest was made public only in May, as the Malaysian government had requested the news of his capture not to be released so as not to jeopardize ongoing security operations. He was subsequently returned to Singaporean custody on 24 September 2010 after being detained for 18 months in Malaysia under its own Internal Security Act.

see also: *Darul Islam*; Hambali (Riduan Isamuddin); *Jemaah Islamiyah*.

### **Masyumi** (Indonesia)

*Masyumi* is an Indonesian acronym drawn from *Majelis Syuro Muslimin Indonesia*, which translates as Consultative Council of Indonesian Muslims. It was established by the Japanese

as an umbrella organization in October 1943. They conceived of the council as an instrument to serve their own wartime political purpose. After the proclamation of independence in August 1945, *Masyumi* became a part of the nationalist movement, but with its own agenda of entrenching the values of Islam in the constitution of the Republic. Divisions between radical, traditional, and modernist wings of the party led to successive defections. After the departure from party ranks of **Nahdlatul Ulama** in 1952, the modernist wing, drawn from the cultural and educational movement **Muhammadiyah** (Followers of the Prophet Muhammad), predominated, but its political fortunes went into decline. *Masyumi* enjoyed representation in the early coalition cabinets which failed to address the country's economic problems. In the country's first general election in 1955, *Masyumi* secured just under 21 per cent of the vote, drawn primarily from the outer islands. That disappointing result undermined its claim to share office, from which it was excluded as parliamentary democracy gave way to **Guided Democracy** through the machinations of President **Sukarno**. Some of its leading members were implicated in abortive regional uprisings in 1958, which led to the party being banned in 1960. After President **Suharto** established his **New Order** from 1966, an attempt was made to reform the party in February 1968 through creating a legal successor as *Partai Muslimin Indonesia* (in acronym *Parmusi*). However, it was excluded from government. Following a weak showing in elections in 1971, it was merged with other Islamic parties into **Partai Persatuan Pembangunan** (United Development Party, PPP) in January 1973. In this form, it served to provide legitimacy for an electoral process whose main function was to lend legitimacy to President Suharto's authoritarian rule, which came to an end in May 1998.

see also: Guided Democracy; Islam; *Muhammadiyah*; *Nahdlatul Ulama*; New Order; *Partai Persatuan Pembangunan*; Suharto; Sukarno.

### **May 13 Racial Riots 1969** (Malaysia)

On 13 May 1969 communal violence erupted between Malays and non-Malays (mainly Chinese) in Kuala Lumpur, which took a toll of 196

lives, according to official figures. The violence occurred after a significant electoral reversal for the governing intercommunal **Alliance Party** coalition which had ruled Malaya and then Malaysia continuously from before independence in August 1957. The Alliance retained its parliamentary majority in the elections of 9 May, but its Chinese component, the **Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA)**, lost 14 out of 27 seats held previously, while **UMNO (United Malays National Organization)**, the dominant party in the coalition, lost a high percentage of votes to its principal Malay opponent, **Parti Islam Se-Malaysia (PAS)**, albeit not accurately reflected in seats retained.

Racial tension with a primary source in Malay political insecurity had been a striking feature of the election campaign. It had been heightened by the results for the federal Parliament and also by the uncertain outcome of the concurrent state elections in the case of Selangor, within which the national capital was situated. Selangor had long been assumed to be an exclusive Malay preserve, reflected in the constitutional provision that the chief minister had to be a Malay. The election produced a deadlocked state legislature and Malay anxieties were reinforced by the provocative nature of celebratory processions by supporters of successful non-Malay opposition parties in Kuala Lumpur. A counter-victory procession organized by Selangor UMNO for the evening of 13 May began with a huge gathering at the residence of the chief minister, Harun Idris. Communal violence at its fringes expanded in an orgy of killing by Malays, which was not fully contained for five days.

The riots proved to be the most significant event in the post-independence history of peninsular Malaysia. Parliamentary democracy was suspended until January 1971. The government was replaced temporarily by a National Operations Council headed by the deputy prime minister, **Tun Abdul Razak**. The format of politics in Malaysia was modified to ensure that the constitutional special position of the Malays was entrenched as one of dominance. A **New Economic Policy** foreshadowed on 1 July 1969 was later given content to shift the balance of material advantage more equitably

in the Malay interest. The riots also demonstrated Malay loss of confidence in Prime Minister **Tunku Abdul Rahman**, who was obliged to resign in favour of his deputy Tun Razak in September 1970.

see also: Abdul Rahman, Tunku; Alliance Party; Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA); New Economic Policy; *Parti Islam Se-Malaysia*; Razak, Tun Abdul; UMNO (United Malays National Organization).

### **Mauk Moruk** (Timor-Leste)

Better known by his *nom de guerre*, Mauk Moruk, Paulino Gama gained notoriety as a hardened resistance fighter in late 1970s during the independence war against Indonesia. After independence, he would go on to form the Maubere Revolutionary Council (KRM), through which he actively opposed the government of **José 'Xanana' Gusmão**.

Born in the Baucau district in 1955, Mauk Moruk fought with *Falintil* when it was the military wing of **Fretilin** during the war of independence, where he was promoted to deputy chief of staff in 1981. In 1984, Moruk was part of a failed coup attempt launched by a group of disgruntled fighters, known as the Hudilaran group, against *Falintil* commander, Gusmão. Forced to surrender to Indonesian authorities following the unsuccessful coup, Moruk managed to flee his Indonesian captors and made his way first to Portugal, and subsequently the Netherlands where he stayed in exile. He returned to Timor-Leste in 2013 and set up the KRM, based in Laluvai, in the rural eastern part of Baucau district, and comprising disaffected veterans of the independence war. From that platform, he attacked Gusmão for his 'authoritarian' leadership and called for the dissolution of Parliament as well as the constitution. Periodic confrontations ensued between Moruk's supporters and the security forces, culminating in the clash on 8 August 2015 in Harare Province, in which Moruk was killed. With his passing, the remnant of the KRM surrendered, bringing an end to the short-lived rebellion which he led against Gusmão. While the larger impact of the rebellion associated with Mauk Moruk on the country was limited, he did manage to accrue a measure of popularity by

tapping into the disenchantment especially of rural populations in Timor-Leste, among whom his criticisms of the Gusmão government did manage to gain some traction.

*see also: Fretilin; Gusmão, José 'Xanana'.*

### **Megawati Sukarnoputri** (Indonesia)

Megawati Sukarnoputri was the first female president of Indonesia, holding high office from 2001 to 2004. Megawati was born on 23 January 1947 in Yogyakarta, then the revolutionary capital of the Republic of which her father was president. She was educated at Padjajaran University in Bandung but suffered personally from President **Sukarno's** fall from political grace from the mid-1960s. She entered politics in 1987 as a parliamentary representative of **Partai Demokrasi Indonesia** (PDI) but without displaying much interest in its proceedings. In July 1993, in reaction to an attempt by President **Suharto** to manipulate the choice of party leader, she was nominated as chairman, capitalizing on her parentage to secure election to that office in December that year. She was removed from office at a stage-managed party conference in Medan in June 1996, which was followed in July by the violent ejection of her supporters from the PDI headquarters in Jakarta by the police and army, which provoked rioting in the capital. Her faction had been excluded from participation in parliamentary elections in May 1997. Moreover, she was not in the forefront of agitation prior to the political downfall of President Suharto in May 1998.

With the restoration of the democratic process, Megawati appeared as a symbol of political reform because of her persecution by the previous regime. Although she attracted substantial support as leader of **Partai Demokrasi Indonesia-Perjuangan** (PDI-P) in parliamentary elections, a reformed PDI led by her *Perjuangan* (struggle) faction, she failed to impress as a potential leader with a concrete agenda for Indonesia's economic and political rehabilitation and also alienated the Islamic constituency because of the large number of Christians on her party list. She was elected vice-president of Indonesia by the **People's Consultative Assembly** (MPR) in October 1999 but, with her passive style, appeared a marginal figure beside an

ailing president. Megawati failed to secure the presidency despite being the front-running candidate since the previous June because of her reluctance to engage in coalition building. Nevertheless, she emerged as an alternative when President **Abdurrahman Wahid's** leadership style gradually alienated domestic and international support. On 23 July 2001, in the wake of strained relations between the president and military and with an economy still reeling from the **Asian Financial Crisis**, the MPR replaced Abdurrahman Wahid with Megawati.

Megawati's presidency proved largely tepid and uninspiring, albeit stabilizing. Due to the political circumstances that shaped her presidency, which saw her party win merely 31 per cent of the seats in the **People's Representative Council** (DPR) and 27 per cent in the MPR, she was forced to form weak alliances which effectively obstructed policy implementation. Nevertheless, she did demonstrate a measure of resolve as she attempted to steer Indonesia through the early post-September 11 years of security challenges posed by terrorist groups. Megawati was the second head of state to visit Washington DC after September 11 and managed to secure the resumption of US military aid, hitherto frozen in reaction to alleged human rights abuses perpetrated by the Indonesian military in East Timor. She also presided over the introduction of an anti-terror mandate that allowed yearlong detention of terrorist suspects without trial and the death sentence for convicted terrorists. This mandate was not well-received by a burgeoning civil society, or the DPR, which saw it as a return to the repressive style of the **New Order**. With her popularity diminished, Megawati's bid to be re-elected in 2004 failed when she lost to her former coordinating minister for political and security affairs, **Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono**. Her disappointment at the loss was evident in her refusal to congratulate president-elect Yudhoyono on his victory.

Megawati attempted a comeback at the 2009 presidential elections. Yet, despite President Yudhoyono's dwindling popularity, she could not unseat him. Nevertheless, her strong performance indicated that she remains a political heavyweight and also revived her status



within PDI-P, which became the only party not represented in President Yudhoyono's Cabinet. Megawati was seen as the force behind the meteoric rise of popular Jakarta governor, **Joko Widodo**, who she eventually anointed in March 2014 to be the PDI-P's presidential candidate for the July 2014 presidential election, thereby quelling rumours that she planned to stand yet again. However, she had an uneasy relationship with Widodo, treating him more like a party functionary than a presidential candidate, or a president for that matter after he won the election. As chairwoman of PDI-P, the ageing Megawati continues to command a loyal following among both party elite and rank and file, and this has allowed her to run the party with almost absolute authority. The fact that her PDI-P has consistently finished in either of the top two positions in every parliamentary election since 1999 further reinforces the view that she is unassailable within the party. So long is the shadow of dynastic politics that has been cast in the party, it is assumed that Megawati will be succeeded by any of three children: her sons from her first marriage, Mohammad Rizki Pratama and Mohammad Prananda Prabowo, or her ambitious daughter from her third marriage, Puan Maharani, the current speaker of the DPR.

see also: Asian Financial Crisis 1997–8; New Order; *Partai Demokrasi Indonesia–Perjuangan*; People's Consultative Assembly; People's Representative Council; Suharto; Sukarno; Wahid, Abdurrahman; Widodo, Joko; Yudhoyono, Susilo Bambang.

### **Mekong River Commission** (Cambodia/Laos/Thailand/Vietnam) see **Mekong River Project**

### **Mekong River Project** (Cambodia/Laos/Myanmar/Thailand/Vietnam)

The Mekong River rises in Tibet and flows south through southern China. It then continues in the same direction, serving as the boundary between Myanmar and Laos and most of that between Laos and Thailand, before passing through Cambodia and then southern Vietnam from where it empties into the **South China Sea**

at the end of a course of some 2,600 miles. The lower Mekong River Basin, including Thailand, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam, attracted the attention of the United Nations Economic Commission for the Far East (ECAFE) in the early 1950s as offering great potential for harnessing its resources for irrigation and energy purposes. The Committee for the Coordination of Investigations of the Lower Mekong Basin was set up in September 1957. Some progress was made during the 1960s, when a consortium of states began to collaborate in planning under UN aegis, with ECAFE subsequently becoming the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). The progress of the undertaking was obstructed by the **Indochina Wars**, with the government in Saigon presuming to speak for Vietnam. Cambodia withdrew from the undertaking when the **Khmer Rouge** seized power in 1975, while after its invasion by Vietnam in 1978, the government in Phnom Penh was excluded from the Mekong Committee.

The project was revived after the political settlement of the Cambodian conflict had been signed at the **International Conference on Cambodia** in Paris in October 1991. Acrimony then arose because of unilateral measures by Thailand to dam the river upstream, but a joint communiqué was signed between the four riparian states on 5 February 1993. The terms of that communiqué committed the signatories to continued cooperation in the exploitation of the Mekong River and to the establishment of a Mekong Working Group with the task of drafting a framework agreement for future cooperation on the Mekong River based on an equitable and reasonable utilization of mainstream water. That agreement was concluded among the riparian states at a meeting in Thailand in April 1995 which set up a Mekong River Commission (MRC) with a regulatory mandate replacing an interim secretariat. The first official meeting of the Commission was convened in Phnom Penh in August 1995 to which Myanmar and China, as riparian states, were invited as dialogue partners. In 2001, the MRC passed new policies such as data sharing protocols. Subsequently, in 2002, China began to provide the MRC with daily water level data, and in 2003, it agreed to scale back plans to blast rapids. However,

China has not been cooperative in providing information concerning dam operations, and refused to attend emergency meetings that were held in 2004. In 2005, China finally agreed to hold technical discussions under the framework of cooperation with the MRC in Beijing, as a consequence of which China provided the MRC with data for flood forecasts in 2007, in exchange for monthly flow data. In April 2010, an MRC Summit was held in Thailand, with the attendance of all six riparian states. China remains the only country to have built hydro-power dams on the main stream of the upper Mekong. In September 2012, the first power-generating unit was switched on at China's Nuozhadu hydroelectric dam, which will be the largest dam on the Mekong River upon completion in 2014. In contrast, in September 2011, the Myanmar government announced that it would suspend work on the US\$3.6 million Myitsone dam project on the Irrawaddy River, partly in response to strong public opposition.

A key role in promoting the cooperative endeavour has been played by the United Nations Development Programme but, in June 1996, ASEAN (**Association of Southeast Asian Nations**) launched a complementary Mekong Basin Development Cooperation (AMBDC) programme with a second ministerial meeting convening in Hanoi in July 2000. Plans have been advanced for dams for hydroelectric power, irrigation, and flood control. However, in some riparian states, especially in China and Laos, these dams have not always been established in consultation with downstream counterparts. In consequence, upstream reservoirs hold back vital waters in the dry season with serious environmental consequences such as silting up of Cambodia's Tonle Sap Lake and the intrusion of salt water into Vietnam's delta region. In late 2012, the government of Laos confirmed progress in constructing the US\$5.2 billion **Xayaburi Dam**, which will be the first dam to be constructed on the lower Mekong River. The electricity generated from this dam is expected to be sold mainly to Thailand, thus generating critical income for Laos (estimated at more than US\$2.5 billion a year). In doing so, Laos violated the 1995 Mekong Agreement (that all six riparian countries are signatories

to) which requires consultation between these states prior to initiation of large projects on the Mekong River. Despite MRC requests for a delay to study the environmental impact of the Xayaburi Dam, and Laos' initial suspension of the project in compliance, Laos later moved ahead with project-related construction and signed a power purchasing agreement with Thailand, claiming that the decision was an internal affair. Environmentalists are concerned that the project could threaten the livelihoods of communities downstream, as key industries such as rice production and fishing could be affected, compounded by the resettlement of people living near the dam site. In response, the Laotian government has proposed several solutions such as a system that would flush sediment downstream, and a revised 'fish ladder' to help fish bypass the dam and reach spawning grounds.

see also: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Indochina Wars; International Conference on Cambodia, Paris 1991; Khmer Rouge; South China Sea; Xayaburi Dam.

### ***Melayu Islam Beraja*** (Brunei)

*Melayu Islam Beraja* (MIB) is a Brunei-Malay term which translates as Malay Islamic Monarchy. When Brunei resumed independence in January 1984 and joined the United Nations, Sultan **Hassanal Bolkiah** described his country in those terms in his address to the General Assembly. The concept of a Malay Islamic Monarchy was subsequently elevated into a national ideology by the sultan in July 1990 on his 44th birthday. The ideology, which has been explained by the sultan as an attempt to return to national roots, has mixed functions. It serves to fend off any appeal from externally inspired Muslim fundamentalism. It also serves to legitimize the royal absolutism of Brunei by linking conservative values of Islam and traditional Malay culture with the unifying role of monarchy. MIB, which has become a compulsory subject in the university and schools, has been accompanied by a number of Islamic prohibitions within Brunei, giving rise to social tensions.

see *also*: Bolkiah, Sultan Hassanali; Islam.

### **Memali Incident 1985** (Malaysia)

On 19 November 1985 members of the Malaysian Federal Reserve Unit (the elite anti-riot squad) and of the paramilitary Field Force became engaged in a violent confrontation with armed villagers while seeking to arrest an Islamic religious teacher and 36 other men in Kampung (village) Memali near Baling in the state of Kedah. Ibrahim Mahmud had been an official and a parliamentary candidate of the Malay opposition **Parti Islam Se-Malaysia** (PAS) and had refused to surrender to an arrest warrant issued in September 1984 under the Internal Security Act. He had studied for a time in Tripoli and was commonly known as Ibrahim Libya. During the exchange of fire, which lasted for five hours, 18 people were killed, including Ibrahim Mahmud and four policemen. After the event, Prime Minister **Mahathir Mohamad** claimed that all 37 wanted men had concentrated in Ibrahim Mahmud's house prior to the attempt by the security forces to arrest them. A curfew was imposed on the entire Baling area, and the government took steps to control religious feelings from being further inflamed. However, the villagers of Kampung Memali insisted on burying the dead according to the rights due to those who had died as martyrs for the sake of **Islam**. In the event, the bloody incident proved to be an isolated one. At the time, there was deep concern that it might spark off further violent challenges to government by Islamic activists, especially in the rural areas where there were economic grievances.

see *also*: Islam; Mahathir Mohamad, Tun; *Parti Islam Se-Malaysia*.

### **Min Aung Hlaing, Senior General**

(Myanmar)

Commander-in-Chief of the Myanmar Armed Forces, or *Tatmadaw*, and leader of the February 2021 coup that deposed the **National League for Democracy** government in Myanmar, Min Aung Hlaing was born on 3 July 1956 in Dawei, southeastern Myanmar. A student of law at the University Yangon, Myanmar's oldest university, he eventually joined the Defence Services

Academy on this third attempt in 1974. He would rise up the ranks to replace Senior General **Than Shwe** for the post of commander-in-chief of the Myanmar armed forces in March 2011, leapfrogging several more senior generals in the process.

A soft-spoken military officer in possession of a reserved personality, there was little that was exceptional in Min Aung Hlaing's career progression. By all accounts, he was an average cadet, and the pace of his promotions was not extraordinary. Nevertheless, he acquired a reputation of something of a hardliner while serving in Eastern Shan State. There, he had to fight and negotiate against the United Wa State Army as well as the National Democratic Alliance Army, both part of the larger fabric of ethnic insurgencies that bedevilled Myanmar for decades (see **Insurgencies, Myanmar**). The experiences fighting in Eastern Shan State shaped his views of China, believed to be a source of major supplies for the rebel armies in the region. Min Aung Hlaing assumed power just at the point in time when the Myanmar military was reluctantly scaling back its presence in national affairs with the transition to democracy and election of a nominally civilian government in 2011, led by **Thein Sein**. Known to be a conservative who advocated a continued role for the military, he began assuming a more public persona especially through the adroit use of social media, which documented his diplomatic and political engagements as military commander. As his profile grew, so too did his political ambition. In the event, hopes for an extension of his term as military commander were obstructed by lukewarm response received from the *Tatmadaw*. This in turn paved the way for him to nurse ambitions of assuming the presidency via the vehicle of the **Union Solidarity and Development Party** at the November 2020 election. His personal relationship with the popular **Aung San Suu Kyi** reflected the uneasy balance between the powerful military and the civilian government which she led. The balance eventually broke down with the February 2021 coup, which he led, and which installed him as leader of Myanmar. He has remained defiant under international pressure, including from neighbouring ASEAN states, to bring about an end to

the ongoing violence. In August 2021, the **State Administration Council** of the junta was recast as a caretaker government while martial law was extended for another two years. It subsequently appointed Min Aung Hlaing as Prime Minister.

As Commander-in-Chief, Min Aung Hlaing oversaw the campaign against the **Rohingya** ethnic minority in Rakhine State, which displaced more than 700,000 people between 2016 and 2017, leading to a genocide case lodged at the International Court of Justice against Myanmar. He is close to Senior General Than Shwe, who he succeeded, and also the late Thai general, **Prem Tinsulanonda**, who was known to have been his godfather.

see also: Aung San Suu Kyi; Insurgencies, Myanmar; National League for Democracy; Prem Tinsulanonda, General; Rohingya; State Administration Council; Than Shwe, Senior General; Thein Sein; Union Solidarity and Development Party.

### Misuari, Nur (Philippines)

Nur Misuari was the founding leader of the **Moro National Liberation Front** (MNLF) and has led it ever since it took up arms against the government of President **Ferdinand Marcos** in 1972. He spent decades in exile, primarily in Libya where he enjoyed the patronage of Colonel Gaddafi. Although his movement made a military impact in the mid-1970s, they failed to sustain their initial success because of tribal differences and the ability of the Philippines government to exploit them and to neutralize external Islamic support.

Nur Misuari was born in 1940 in the southern island of Sulu. He won a scholarship to the University of the Philippines, and after graduating in arts he worked as an instructor in Asian philosophies in the Institute of Asian Studies. At the University of the Philippines, he was drawn towards both Islamic and left-wing causes and, in the late 1960s, secured funding from traditional leaders on Sulu to enable him and other like-minded young Muslims to travel abroad for military training. He was party to an abortive agreement on Muslim autonomy negotiated by **Imelda Marcos** on behalf of the

government in Manila. This **Tripoli Agreement** was concluded in December 1976. Nur Misuari has always maintained that President Marcos and his successors never kept to their side of the bargain. After Marcos's political downfall, Misuari resumed negotiations with representatives of President **Corazón Aquino** and signed a new accord in Jeddah in January 1987, but it failed to hold. From October 1993, he began negotiations with the government of **Fidel Ramos**, which were facilitated by Indonesian mediation. A political breakthrough was achieved in June 1996 leading to an agreement signed by Nur Misuari for MNLF on 2 September in Manila, which established the Southern Philippines Council for Peace and Development (SPCPD) to supervise the peace process in those provinces with significant Muslim populations to be established as a Special Zone for Peace and Development to be funded from presidential funds. It also confirmed the retention of a controversial four-province Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), previously opposed by Misuari. On 9 September, he stood unopposed for the office of Governor of the Autonomous Region and was sworn in at the end of the month. In October 1996, Misuari was appointed chairman of SPCPD. In July 1997, he assumed a mediatory role leading to a temporary ceasefire in government talks with the rival **Moro Islamic Liberation Front** (MILF), which had not endorsed the peace agreement of September 1996. He was also involved in negotiations following the abduction of foreign tourists from a Malaysian-held resort by members of the **Abu Sayyaf Group**.

In November 2001, Misuari broke the peace pact with the government when he declared war on the government of **Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo**. Misuari was removed from office as governor by the president, being charged with leading attacks in 2001 that killed more than 100 people in Sulu and Zamboanga City. Subsequently, Misuari escaped to Malaysia, where he was arrested by Malaysian authorities. He was then deported to the Philippines in January 2002 and was detained until April 2008. In December 2007, Misuari's petition for bail was denied, and he remained under house arrest in Manila. In April 2008, Misuari was replaced

by Muslimim Sema as the leader of MNLF. In December 2009, a Makati court found Misuari not guilty of rebellion charges. Misuari rejected an invitation to join a Transition Commission that would draft a new law to implement the peace agreement between the Philippines government and MILF, which was intended to create a Bangsamoro entity which would replace the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) (see **Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro**). Misuari claimed such a move was an affront to the 1996 Agreement with MNLF that created the ARMM. In February 2013, he supported the attempt by Sultan Jamalul Kiram to reclaim the Malaysian state of Sabah by force during the **Lahad Datu Crisis**. In September of that year, militants loyal to Misuari raided Muslim villages in the southern province of Zamboanga in a last-ditch attempt to derail the peace process. The rebels' action proved unpopular with the local communities and signalled the demise of Misuari's standing in the south. In truth, Misuari's standing had already diminished considerably by the 1990s, when he was unable to stop the fragmentation of MNLF. He is currently facing trial on corruption charges related to his time as governor of the ARMM. Even so, Misuari was appointed special economic envoy to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation by President **Rodrigo Duterte** in December 2019.

see also: Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG); Aquino, Corazón; Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB); Duterte, Rodrigo; Lahad Datu Crisis 2013; Macapagal-Arroyo, Gloria; Marcos, Ferdinand; Marcos, Imelda; Moro Islamic Liberation Front; Moro National Liberation Front; Ramos, Fidel; Tripoli Agreement 1976.

**Mok, Ta** (Cambodia) see **Ta Mok**

### **Moro Islamic Liberation Front**

(Philippines)

The Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) is a Muslim insurgency with religious-separatist goals based in the centre of the southern island of Mindanao. It established a distinct political identity in 1980 as a result of a split in 1978 within the **Moro National Liberation Front** (MNLF).

MNLF had drawn its initial support from two main tribal constituencies among the Islamic community – the Tausugs from the Sulu islands and the Maguindanaos from central Mindanao. The MNLF leader was **Nur Misuari**, a Tausug. He was challenged by his deputy, Salamat Hashim, who was not only a Maguindanao but also an Islamic scholar who had been trained at Al-Azhar University in Cairo. Nur Misuari had a secular background and also links with the communist movement which counted against him in the struggle to keep MNLF intact; this was decided primarily on tribal-territorial grounds with support being attracted to MILF from the other major Islamic tribal group on Mindanao, the Maranao. The agreement in September 1996 on limited political autonomy between the Philippines government and MNLF was opposed by MILF, which continued to demand an independent Islamic state. By that juncture, it had established a territorial redoubt with a military headquarters in central Mindanao. Moreover, a *modus vivendi* had been worked out with elected provincial and municipal authorities. Prior to securing a peace agreement with the Philippines government, the military wing of MILF had assumed a warlord role providing 'protection' in return for contributions from foreign companies and also engaged in kidnapping to ensure compliance. Recruitment to its ranks was mostly facilitated by local unemployment. MILF advocates a political agenda with strong religious flavour, and this had allowed it to attract external assistance in the form of funds and manpower for much of its early struggle. In January 1997, however, MILF entered into peace talks with the government and signed a ceasefire. Those talks and the ceasefire were interrupted by recurrent hostilities, partly as a result of MILF attempting to expand its territorial base and the determination of the security forces to reduce its operational zone. In clashes in the late 1990s, MILF suffered heavy casualties, which may have provoked its announcement that its insurgents would come to the aid of the Communist **New People's Army** should it be hard pressed by army attacks. It disavowed any connection, however, with the fundamentalist-Muslim **Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG)** responsible for murderous raids against civilian settlements

and hostage taking in the southern Philippines. Formal peace talks resumed in October 1999 but were interrupted by ceasefire violations. In March 2000, MILF launched a major offensive against six military bases in Lanao del Norte Province in Mindanao, which was countered by a ground and air assault by government forces. The intensity of the fighting produced over 100,000 refugees, while MILF demonstrated its ability to set off bombs, grenades, and rockets in several towns in Mindanao. In July 2000, government forces overran the MILF headquarters, Camp Abubakar.

In June 2001, MILF signed a peace agreement with the government of President **Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo**. Subsequently, relations between them and the Philippines government improved progressively, and in December 2004, the two groups announced that they had formed a joint organization to clear the southern Philippines of two terrorist groups – ASG and **Jemaah Islamiyah (JI)**.

Despite the peace agreement, terrorist attacks alleged to have been instigated by MILF continued periodically, though these allegations have been denied by its leadership. In July 2003, MILF leader Salamat Hashim passed away due to a heart attack and was succeeded by military chief and vice-chair for military affairs, Murad Ebrahim. In July 2008, representatives from the Philippines government and MILF proposed the Memorandum of Agreement on Ancestral Domain (MOA-AD), which aimed to bring fighting to an end and begin formal talks that would lead to the drafting and signing of a Final Comprehensive Compact between the two groups. The agreement met with strong public opposition, and in October 2008 the Philippine Supreme Court declared it unconstitutional and illegal by an 8–7 vote. The Court's decision triggered attacks by MILF rebels on Christian communities in Mindanao, and the violence displaced 750,000 people and left nearly 400 dead. These attacks were instigated by break away elements of MILF, indicating the emergence of a split within the movement over Murad Ebrahim's willingness to strike a compromise with Manila. In March 2010, Commander Kato was ousted from MILF for disobeying orders, and he went on to establish the Bangsamoro

Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF), later renamed as the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Movement (BIFM) with Commander Bravo among those who pledged loyalty to him. In August 2011, secret talks were held between President **Benigno Aquino III** and Murad Ebrahim in Japan, leading to the signing of the **Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB)** in March 2014, ending almost three decades of its armed struggle. In January 2019, residents of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) voted overwhelmingly in favour of the Bangsamoro Organic Law, a constituent part of the CAB, paving the way for the creation of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao to replace the ARMM. This also initiated a disarmament process of MILF, although residual suspicions and distrust has affected its pace.

see also: Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG); Aquino, Benigno Simeon Cojuangco, III; Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB); *Jemaah Islamiyah*; Macapagal-Arroyo, Gloria; Misuari, Nur; Moro National Liberation Front; New People's Army.

## Moro National Liberation Front (Philippines)

The Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) was set up in 1969 with the object of securing a separate state for Muslims concentrated in the southern islands of the Philippines. It had its own army known as the Bangsamoro Army, which is organized as a conventional army. At its height in the early 1990s, the Bangsamoro Army was believed to have around 17,000 fighters.

Longstanding Muslim alienation in Catholic-majority Philippines was acutely reinforced in the late 1960s after the **Corregidor Affair**, an alleged massacre of recruits in training for armed infiltration into Malaysia's state of Sabah, became public knowledge. Additional causes of grievance were acts of violence by Christian gangs acting on behalf of landed interests which culminated in bloodletting in a mosque in 1971 in Cotabato. MNLF was founded by a group of young secular Muslims who had become disillusioned with a traditional elite who had set up a Mindanao Independence Movement in 1968

without notable effect. They received some military training in Malaysia, whose government was determined to retaliate against the seeming bad faith of President **Ferdinand Marcos**. Their leader, **Nur Misuari**, had been an instructor in Asian philosophies at the University of the Philippines and a one-time member of the radical Marxist *Kabataan Makabangan* (Patriotic Youth). The pejorative term Moro was included in the name of the separatist movement as a deliberate gesture of defiance. A Central Committee was established in Libya and produced a manifesto in April 1974 calling for political independence for the southern islands of Mindanao, Sulu, Palawan, Basilan, and Tawi Tawi. Formal recognition from the Organization of the Islamic Conference was accorded in July 1975.

MNLF began armed rebellion in October 1972 with an attack on the headquarters of the Philippine Constabulary in Marawi City in the wake of President Marcos's proclamation of martial law the month before. That proclamation had required all unregistered firearms to be handed in to the authorities and was construed in the south of the Philippines as a deliberate attempt to place the Muslims in a defenceless position against armed gangs of Christian settlers. Within 24 hours, the insurrection had spread with extensive violence and considerable loss of life, especially on the island of Sulu, where a major confrontation took place with security forces.

Negotiations in Tripoli took place under Libyan auspices in 1976 between Nur Misuari and **Imelda Marcos**, representing her husband. A compromise **Tripoli Agreement** was reached on Muslim political autonomy in 13 provinces and nine cities, but it was never implemented because of charges of bad faith in the way a facilitating plebiscite had been conducted. The insurrection revived in 1977 but was weakened, as President Marcos was able to play on tribal and regional divisions among the Muslim community to contain their challenge. He was able also to attract international Islamic diplomatic and financial support for alternative ways of providing for Muslim needs. It became evident that MNLF was a loosely knit entity with the emergence of contending alternative leaderships. Indeed, in 1978 Nur Misuari's main rival

**Salamat Hashim** set up the **Moro Islamic Liberation Front**. Muslim insurrection rumbled on without any attempt at resolution until **Corazón Aquino** succeeded Ferdinand Marcos in 1986. Nur Misuari returned to the Philippines in September 1986 to begin negotiations on Muslim autonomy. In January 1987 an agreement was signed in Jeddah between President Aquino's brother-in-law, Agapito Aquino, and Nur Misuari, but once again, implementation with the cooperation of both parties was frustrated. President Aquino insisted that political autonomy be made conditional on a plebiscite involving all inhabitants of the 13 provinces, irrespective of religion. In addition, the cleavages within the Muslim community served to undermine Nur Misuari's claim to speak on behalf of all Filipino Muslims.

The Philippines government went ahead with the plan for political autonomy through a plebiscite in November 1989 in the 13 provinces identified in the Tripoli Agreement in 1976. The outcome was the establishment in 1990 of an Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) in four provinces only – Maguindanao, Lanao del Sur (on the island of Mindanao), Sulu, and Tawi Tawi. Elections were held in that region in February 1990 and a governor appointed to whom limited executive powers were accorded. MNLF continued to oppose the new constitutional arrangement, but with minimal effect. At the end of 1993, Indonesian good offices were employed for direct negotiations, which were transferred to the southern Philippines in early 1994. At the end of January 1994, the Philippines government and MNLF signed a ceasefire agreement as a basis for proceeding with an accord on political autonomy in the southern islands. In September 1996, a compromise agreement was reached whereby MNLF came to terms with the ARMM with Nur Misuari as its governor and also endorsed the establishment of a Southern Philippines Council for Peace and Development (SPCPD) with Misuari as its chairman. As a result, hundreds of MNLF guerrillas were incorporated into the Philippines National Police and into its armed forces, which marked its transformation into a legitimate political entity. However, the agreement failed to live

up to expectations. Economic crisis held up promised development assistance, while rampant corruption under Misuari's leadership prevailed. Meanwhile, Misuari's leadership of MNLF was coming under heavy criticism for its authoritarian disposition. Matters came to a head in 2001 when MNLF split into four factions: the Misuari group, the Alvarez Isnaji group (which nevertheless remained supportive of Misuari), and two groups that were anti-Misuari, the Executive Council of 15 (EC-15) group, and the Islamic Command Council. The EC-15, led by MNLF secretary-general Muslimin Sema, was recognized by the Philippines government as the official leadership of MNLF.

An uprising orchestrated by Misuari in November 2001 failed and resulted in his being jailed until his acquittal in December 2009. In January 2002, the four factions signed a declaration of unity and conferred on Misuari the otiose title of chairman emeritus. Meanwhile MNLF continued periodic attacks on Philippine security forces, notably in 2001, 2005, and 2007, even as it also clashed with other southern Philippines-based Muslim separatist groups such as MILF and the **Abu Sayyaf Group**. However, it was becoming increasingly clear that it no longer had the capacity to pose the threat it did in the 1970s. Chronic factionalism compounded by ethnic and tribal fault lines and battlefield fatigue has seen MNLF eclipsed by MILF as the largest and most organized Moro armed resistance movement. In 2014, the MNLF found itself left out in the cold as the Philippines government concluded a landmark peace agreement with MILF that, among other things, conceived a new political entity to replace the ARMM, hitherto the symbolic pinnacle of the MNLF's struggle. In September 2013, almost 200 disgruntled fighters aligned with Nur Misuari raided five coastal villages in Zamboanga. The outbreak of violence displaced more than 30,000 residents while the Philippine military claimed to have killed more than 30 rebels. The raids proved unpopular and signalled MNLF's demise as an actor of consequence in southern Philippine affairs.

see also: Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG); Aquino, Corazón; Corregidor Affair 1968; Islam; Marcos, Ferdinand; Marcos, Imelda; Misuari,

Nur; Moro Islamic Liberation Front; Tripoli Agreement 1976.

**Move Forward Party** (Thailand) see **Future Forward Party**

***Muhammadiyah*** (Indonesia)

*Muhammadiyah* (Followers of the Prophet Muhammad) is an urban-based religious organization which was set up in the Javanese city of Yogyakarta in 1912 by a mosque official, K. H. Ahmad Dahlan. He was inspired by the ideas of the Egyptian theologist Mohammed Abduh, who had urged a cleansing of Islamic thought through a return to original texts. This enterprise in renewal was an attempt through education and social welfare to reconcile Islam with the modern world. *Muhammadiyah* was not engaged in politics under the Dutch, but with the proclamation of independence in 1945, it became a constituent part of **Masyumi** and aspired to create an Islamic state. *Masyumi* was banned in 1960 because of its implication in the regional revolts of the late 1950s. *Muhammadiyah* had continued in existence in pursuit of its original purposes, with an overlapping connection with the **Partai Persatuan Pembangunan** founded in 1973 by merging all Islamic parties. During the **Suharto** era, *Muhammadiyah* was obliged to dilute its Islamic identity by adhering to the state philosophy of **Pancasila** as its sole philosophy. In the wake of Suharto's political downfall, its leader, Amien Rais, established the **Partai Amanat Nasional** (PAN) with a reformist agenda directed beyond a narrow Islamic constituency, which secured some 7 per cent of the vote and 35 out of 462 elective seats in parliamentary elections in June 1999. Through forging a coalition of Islamic-based parties, Amien Rais was elected speaker of the **People's Consultative Assembly** (MPR) in the following October. PAN never progressed beyond a marginal role in Indonesian politics, and its electoral support base has declined gradually. The lacklustre performance compelled a section of younger *Muhammadiyah* members to establish a new party, *Partai Matahari Bangsa* (the National Sun Party). In the event, the National Sun Party fared worse than its parent party, securing less



than 1 per cent of the vote in the 2009 legislative elections, thereby failing to secure representation in the **People's Representative Council** or DPR. Though *Muhammadiyah's* experience with electoral politics has not been particularly successful, it remains an important provider of social services in the form of educational institutions and medical facilities. It also plays an important role as a bulwark against the encroachment of religious conservatism and intolerance into Indonesia's pluralist society since the end of the **New Order**. Yet, although known for its progressive views, segments within *Muhammadiyah* have also taken more conservative positions on various issues, thereby suggesting that the organization is not monolithic even as the tide of conservatism that is evident in the Indonesian Islamic community has been growing. Illustrative of this was the participation of *Muhammadiyah* members in the **Anti-Ahok Protests** in 2016 even though they were prohibited from doing so by their leadership.

see also: Anti-Ahok Protests 2016; Islam; *Masyumi*; New Order; *Pancasila*; *Partai Amanat Nasional*; *Partai Persatuan Pembangunan*; People's Consultative Assembly; People's Representative Council; Suharto.

### **Muhyiddin Yassin, Tan Sri** (Malaysia)

Following the shock resignation of **Mahathir Mohamad** and collapse of the **Pakatan Harapan** government, Muhyiddin Yassin, president of **Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia** (or *Bersatu*) and erstwhile Mahathir ally, was summoned to the *Istana Negara* (Royal Palace) for an audience with the **Yang di-Pertuan Agong** on 29 February 2018. After the meeting with the monarch, it was announced that Muhyiddin would be appointed Malaysia's eighth prime minister the next day. His quiet, unassuming manner, often mistaken for weakness, meant no one expected during Malaysia's political impasse of late February 2020 that Muhyiddin would ascend to power when in fact, it was precisely this quality that rendered him the most feasible candidate at the time. Nevertheless, in precarious command of only a paper-thin parliamentary majority and without a popular

mandate, Muhyiddin's government eventually collapsed after he resigned on 16 August 2021, when **UMNO (United Malays National Organization)** formally withdrew its support. The tumultuous 18 months Muhyiddin served as prime minister made him the shortest-serving head of government in Malaysian history.

The son of an Islamic scholar, Muhyiddin was born in Muar, in the southernmost state of Johor, on 15 May 1947. He graduated from the University of Malaya in 1970 with degrees in economics and Malay studies. Not given to theatrics and controversies unlike some of his contemporaries, Muhyiddin has had extensive experience in both party and national politics. He joined UMNO in 1971 and won his first parliamentary election in 1978 in Pagoh. He would go on to serve that constituency for eight consecutive terms. He was also chief minister of his home state of Johor from 1986 to 1995, during which time he developed strong relations with the local Malaysian Chinese business community as well as with Singapore across the causeway. Muhyiddin has also held various positions in the federal government, such as the parliamentary secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, before rising up to hold ministerial positions in trade, youth and sports, domestic trade and consumer affairs, agriculture, and education. Within UMNO, Muhyiddin had been a Supreme Council member and former vice-president (which he lost and won several times) before becoming deputy president to **Najib Tun Razak** in April 2009 after prevailing in a three-way contest with two prominent UMNO warlords, Muhammad Taib, a former chief minister of Selangor, and Malacca's former chief minister Ali Rustam, who was disqualified for suspected corruption involving his assistants. By virtue of securing the deputy presidency of UMNO, Muhyiddin also rose to assume the position of deputy prime minister, which he held until his unceremonious removal from office via cabinet reshuffle in July 2015 for publicly criticizing Prime Minister Najib Tun Razak's handling of the brewing **1MDB** crisis. Within a year, he would be expelled from UMNO as well. As deputy prime minister, Muhyiddin was widely seen to favour conservative Malay nationalists within UMNO and

Malay right-wing groups even though he was known to have worked well with ethnic Chinese businesses when he served as chief minister of Johor earlier in his career. Muhyiddin is arguably best known today for his controversial proclamation to be 'Malay first' rather than 'Malaysian first' when questioned by media after a parliamentary session. These public remarks sparked an outcry among non-Malays and appeared to contravene Prime Minister Najib's **One Malaysia** policy of multiculturalism. As education minister, he courted further controversy when he overturned an earlier policy on the use of English as the medium of instruction for the study of science and mathematics in national schools, returning these subjects to the previous Malay curriculum.

Following his expulsion from UMNO, Muhyiddin formed a new party, *Bersatu*. He was joined in the venture by several UMNO luminaries, the most prominent being Mahathir Mohamad. As president of *Bersatu*, he brought the Malay-based party into the *Pakatan Harapan* coalition which unseated the **Barisan Nasional** coalition government at the 2018 election. Muhyiddin would return to cabinet to assume the portfolio of minister of home affairs. A falling out occurred with Mahathir, however, over the matter of collaboration with UMNO, an option Muhyiddin was prepared to entertain but which Mahathir adamantly opposed. In the event, Muhyiddin would play a pivotal role in bringing about the downfall of the *Pakatan Harapan* government when he broke ranks with Mahathir and, by dint of his presidency of *Bersatu*, formed a coalition with **Parti Islam Se-Malaysia** (PAS) that aligned with BN by way of a 'confidence and supply' agreement to form the **Perikatan Nasional** government. His wafer-thin parliamentary majority was always at risk of eroding, however, as UMNO parliamentarians threatened to break the agreement in retaliation for being left out of senior positions in his cabinet. The declaration of an emergency and accompanying suspension of Parliament in January 2021, ostensibly to control the **Covid-19** pandemic, provided some reprieve for the embattled Muhyiddin, but eventually UMNO would formally withdraw support for his government, leading to his resignation in

August 2021. He was succeeded by his deputy, **Ismail Sabri Yaakob**. A subsequent effort to be retained in cabinet as a minister mentor failed to win widespread support.

Muhyiddin was diagnosed with early-stage pancreatic cancer in August 2018 and sought treatment in Singapore. He was declared in remission in 2020.

see also: 1MDB; Badawi, Tun Abdullah Ahmad; *Barisan Nasional* (BN); Covid-19; Ismail Sabri Yaakob, Datuk Seri; Mahathir Mohamad, Tun; Najib Tun Razak, Datuk Seri Mohamad; One Malaysia; *Pakatan Harapan*; *Parti Islam Se-Malaysia*; *Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia*; *Perikatan Nasional*; UMNO (United Malays National Organization); *Yang di-Pertuan Agong*.

**Muoi, Do** (Vietnam) see **Do Muoi**

**Murdani, General L. B.** (Indonesia)

General Benny Murdani was commander of Indonesia's armed forces between March 1983 and February 1988 and minister of defence between March 1988 and March 1993. Leonardus Benjamin Murdani was born on 2 October 1932 in Cepu, Central Java, to Catholic parents. He was literally a boy soldier during the national revolution, beginning his professional military training as a student reserve officer only after independence. As a young infantry officer with para-commando training, he distinguished himself in operations against regional rebels in Manado in northern Sulawesi and then survived a parachute drop into the jungles of Dutch-held West New Guinea (now **Irian Jaya**) which brought him to the attention of the regional commander and future president, General **Suharto**. He then began a career in military intelligence working directly for Colonel (later Lieutenant General) **Ali Murtopo** in clandestine negotiations to bring an end to Indonesia's ill-fated **Confrontation** of Malaysia. Diplomatic postings in Kuala Lumpur and Seoul were followed in 1974 by a series of senior military intelligence positions in Jakarta in which he served directly as security advisor to President Suharto, whose confidence he enjoyed for his personal loyalty and his dynamic style of leadership.

As commander of the armed forces, Murdani was responsible for revising their military doctrine and enhancing their professionalism. However, his relationship with President Suharto became subject to strain, in part because of attempts to restrict the business activities of the president's children, which were causing political alienation, together with his support for **Partai Demokrasi Indonesia** (see *Partai Demokrasi Indonesia –Perjuangan*). General Murdani was removed from military office in February 1988 shortly after his period of active service had been renewed in a calculated act of public humiliation by the president. He was subsequently appointed minister of defence in March 1988 without any powers of command in an evident attempt by Suharto to control any maverick political ambitions. With his removal from high office, his influence within the armed forces was undermined deliberately by Suharto through loyalist senior military appointments. However, with Suharto's fall from political grace, Murdani re-established close links with the former president. He passed away on 29 August 2004, aged 72.

see also: Confrontation; Irian Jaya; Murtopo, General Ali; *Partai Demokrasi Indonesia–Perjuangan*; Suharto.

### **Murtopo, General Ali** (Indonesia)

General Ali Murtopo played a key role as an advisor to President **Suharto** in helping him to consolidate his power in the **New Order** of the late 1960s and early 1970s. He was responsible for the manipulation of the political system and also for the management of the so-called 'act of free choice' in **Irian Jaya**, which confirmed Indonesia's entitlement to the former Dutch possession. Ali Murtopo was born on 23 September 1923 in Blora, Central Java. He was a student member of the revolutionary army from August 1945 and after independence continued as a professional soldier. He was educated in part at the Army Command and Staff School in Bandung, rising to battalion commander by the end of the 1950s. His career became entwined with that of the future president when General Suharto was in command of the Central Javanese Diponegoro Division.

Ali Murtopo was active as an intelligence officer in the operations to recover Irian Jaya and more significantly played a key clandestine role in negotiating an end to Indonesia's **Confrontation** of Malaysia in the mid-1960s. He was appointed minister of information in March 1978, but three months later he suffered a heart attack during a visit to Malaysia. He never fully recovered and in March 1983 was relieved of his portfolio and made a member of the ceremonial Supreme Advisory Council. He died after a further heart attack on 18 May 1984.

see also: Confrontation; Irian Jaya; New Order; Suharto.

### **Musa Hitam, Tun** (Malaysia)

Musa Hitam was deputy prime minister and minister of home affairs of Malaysia between July 1981 and February 1986, when he resigned after a personal conflict with Prime Minister **Mahathir Mohamad**. He then became engaged in an abortive challenge to Mahathir's leadership with a former political rival, **Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah**. Musa Hitam was born on 18 April 1934 in Johor. He was educated at the University of Malaya in Singapore and came into politics through involvement in international student affairs. After a short period in the civil service, he became executive secretary of **UMNO (United Malays National Organization)**, entering Parliament in May 1969. Together with Mahathir, he was publicly identified with criticism of Prime Minister **Tunku Abdul Rahman** in the wake of intercommunal violence (**May 13 Racial Riots**) which followed the 1969 election. He then spent a year in virtual exile at the University of Sussex in England, but he was able to return to political life and achieve ministerial office when **Tun Abdul Razak** became prime minister. After the failure to unseat Mahathir in 1987, Musa resigned his parliamentary seat in October 1988. He rejoined UMNO in January 1989 when Mahathir underwent a heart bypass operation. After he had made a complete recovery, a reconciliation of a kind took place with the prime minister, which led to Musa's appointment as Malaysia's Special Representative to the United Nations with ministerial rank and then as representative to

the UN Human Rights Commission. In April 2000 he was appointed chairman of Malaysia's newly formed Human Rights Commission. He also chaired the Eminent Persons Group that drafted the **ASEAN Charter**, as well as the World Islamic Economic Forum. He has been a vocal critic of the culture of defections which he claims has seized Malaysian politics in recent years.

*see also:* Abdul Rahman, Tunku; ASEAN Charter (Charter of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations); Mahathir Mohamad, Tun; May 13 Racial Riots 1969; Razak, Tun Abdul; Razaleigh Hamzah, Tengku; UMNO (United Malays National Organization).

**Muslim Unity Front** (Malaysia) *see*  
**Angkatan Perpaduan Ummah**

**Mustapha bin Datuk Harun, Tun**  
(Malaysia)

Tun Mustapha was chief minister of Sabah between May 1967 and April 1976, during which he governed in the style of a Suluk chieftain and entertained ideas about taking Sabah out of Malaysia. Mustapha was born on 31 August 1918 in Kudat, where he succeeded his father as a native chief. He was the founding president of the **United Sabah National Organization (USNO)**. He was appointed head of state on Sabah's entry into Malaysia in September 1963, holding the office for two years before becoming minister for Sabah affairs in the federal government. In April 1967 he secured election to the Sabah legislature and became chief minister in May. As chief minister, he encouraged mass conversion to Islam and also promoted Muslim insurgency in the south of the Philippines.

In the face of political challenges inspired from Kuala Lumpur which led to defections from the ruling party, Mustapha resigned as chief minister but remained head of USNO. He retained his parliamentary seat in elections in April 1976 won by dissidents from USNO grouped in *Berjaya* (Sabah People's Union), but he remained in the political wilderness. In April 1985 he mounted an abortive constitutional coup which delayed the appointment as chief minister of Joseph Pairin Kitingan, whose *Parti Bersatu Sabah (Sabah United Party, PBS)* had won a clear majority of elective seats. After Kitingan's party defected from the federal **Barisan Nasional** (National Front, BN) just before the general elections in October 1990, Mustapha became reconciled with the government in Kuala Lumpur. In May 1991 he stood as a successful candidate in a by-election for the Sabah legislature on behalf of **UMNO** within which USNO had been subsumed. The federal constitution was then amended specifically so that he could resume the office of minister for Sabah affairs. However, in January 1994 in a shock decision, he resigned his portfolio and also his party membership in a personal reaction to the failure of Ghafar Baba to retain his position as deputy president of UMNO and as deputy prime minister. In late February 1994 he joined PBS, which had just won a narrow victory in state elections but was then overturned by defections from among its ranks. He died on 2 January 1995, aged 76.

*see also:* *Barisan Nasional* (BN); Sabah United Party; UMNO (United Malays National Organization); United Sabah National Organization (USNO).

# N

## **Nacionalista Party** (Philippines)

The *Nacionalista* Party was the first Philippine political organization advocating independence which was permitted after the imposition of US colonial rule in 1898. It represented a vehicle for the prosecution of elite family interests and as such was vulnerable to fragmentation. The party was formed in March 1907. From elections in June that year, it came to dominate Philippine political life up to the advent of the Pacific War in 1941 under the leadership of Manuel Quezón and Sergio Osmena. These two political rivals split the party over the struggle for the presidency in the early 1930s. The two factions healed the breach in June 1935 shortly before the establishment of the self-governing Commonwealth in November with Quezón as president. After the war, the *Nacionalista* Party split again as a result of personal rivalry and its so-called 'Liberal Wing' assumed power as the **Liberal Party**. *Nacionalista* continued as a mirror-image elite network and a vehicle for personal political ambitions and patronage. Both **Ramón Magsaysay** and **Ferdinand Marcos** became presidents under its banner in 1953 and 1965 respectively after defecting from the rival Liberal Party. Marcos was re-elected in 1969 as *Nacionalista* candidate, but after the introduction of martial law in 1972, it became defunct. Later in the decade, Marcos established his own alternative New Society Movement to manipulate the electoral process until his downfall in 1986.

The party was revived in 1989 to serve as the electoral vehicle for Salvador Laurel who, as **Corazón Aquino's** running mate, had been elected as vice-president in 1986. In the presidential elections in May 1992, he secured a mere 3.4 per cent of the vote, which left the party politically moribund. Laurel was succeeded as party leader by Senator Manuel Villar Jr in 2003. In the 2005 general election, the party secured five out of 235 seats. *Nacionalista* was a member of the K-4 coalition in the 2004 presidential election and supported the candidacy

of **Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo** for president and Nolide Castro for vice-president, both of whom emerged victorious. In the May 2007 election, the party won six seats. In April 2010, *Nacionalista* and the Nationalist People's Coalition (NPC) formed an alliance for the upcoming elections that year. The party put forward as its candidate Manuel Villar for presidency and supported the NPC vice-presidential candidate, Loren Legarda, but both campaigns ended in defeat. In May 2010 the Supreme Court declared the *Nacionalista*-NPC null and void on grounds that the parties' respective national conventions failed to approve the coalition. As far as executive office is concerned, the oldest political party in the Philippines is now a shadow of its former self. It has managed to secure some measure of representation in congress via coalitions. see also: Aquino, Corazón; Liberal Party; Macapagal-Arroyo, Gloria; Magsaysay, Ramón; Marcos, Ferdinand.

## **Nahdlatul Ulama** (Indonesia)

*Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU), which translates as Religious Scholars, is a traditional Islamic organization which was founded in East Java in 1926 in reaction to the modernism represented by **Muhammadiyah** (Followers of the Prophet Muhammad). It commands the support of some 40 million Indonesian Muslims mainly in Java and has been associated with iconic Indonesian religious scholars such as **Abdurrahman Wahid**, who led it from 1984 to 1999 until he assumed the post of president in 1999. President Wahid's grandfather, Hashim Ashiri, founded the movement in 1926. Active in education and welfare, it became part of the wider **Masyumi**, set up first under Japanese auspices in 1943 and then reconstituted as a political party after the proclamation of independence in 1945. NU split from *Masyumi* in 1952 and contested the first national elections in 1955 in its own right, securing third place with 18.4 per cent of the vote. Religious prerogative was its priority, and its leadership supported President

Sukarno's attack on parliamentary democracy, thus securing preferment under his political system of **Guided Democracy**. Alienation set in with the growing influence of the Communist Party of Indonesia and after an abortive coup (see **Gestapu**) in October 1965, NU members joined with the military in exacting a bloody retribution.

NU held its 1955 level of support in parliamentary elections in 1971. In 1973 it was forcibly merged with three other Islamic parties into **Partai Persatuan Pembangunan** (United Development Party, PPP), which had been permitted only a perfunctory political role at elections every five years. In 1984, NU withdrew from PPP to devote itself to its educational and welfare roles when the government's policy obliging all organizations to accept the state philosophy of **Pancasila** as their sole principle appeared to threaten its identity. Nonetheless, in the following year, when the law making *Pancasila* the sole philosophical principle was passed, NU endorsed it. When, in December 1990, President **Suharto** sought to counter military resistance to his continuation in office by mobilizing Islamic support through ICMI (Association of Indonesian Muslim Intellectuals), NU was not a party to this initiative. In mid-1991 Abdurrahman Wahid set up an alternative *Forum Demokrasi* (Democracy Forum) as a counter to the attempt to mobilize the Islamic community on confessional grounds for President Suharto's political purpose. He also visibly displeased the president by refusing to have NU nominate him for a further five-year term of office from March 1993. Under the leadership of Abdurrahman Wahid, NU was guided in the direction of religious tolerance and away from an Islamic political exclusivism. In the wake of Suharto's political downfall, Abdurrahman Wahid founded **Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa** (National Awakening Party, PKB), which drew on his NU constituency. In parliamentary elections in June 1999, PKB secured some 17 per cent and 51 out of 462 elective seats. In the following October, Abdurrahman Wahid attracted support from a coalition of Islamic-based parties to secure presidential office. A paramilitary youth wing of NU was deployed to intimidate critics of President Wahid in the media. NU

and PKB were brought even closer by the NU president, Muhaimin Iskandar, through patronage, collaborative funding programs, and cross-pollination of leadership. Consequently, unlike at the 2004 and 2009 elections when relations between the two were frosty, stout support from the NU accounted for the strong electoral showing by PKB at the 2014 elections. NU would feature even more prominently in politics during the presidency of **Joko Widodo**, particularly during his second term. As president, Widodo carefully cultivated NU to buttress his support among activist Muslims, especially after the **Anti-Ahok Protests** against his political ally, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama in 2016 and 2017. Indeed, there are currently seven NU members (known as *Nahdliyyin*) who serve in the Widodo cabinet. Widodo also chose NU president and chairman of the influential **Majelis Ulama Indonesia, Ma'aruf Amin**, as his running-mate for the successful 2019 presidential campaign.

NU continues to be one of the two largest socio-religious organizations in Indonesia that administer thousands of medical facilities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and educational institutions even as it has become more heavily involved in mainstream politics. It also has members who function as key agents of mainstream Javanese religious culture, such as mediators, healers, spiritual guides, and martial arts exponents. Thus far NU has shaped Indonesia's socio-political and religious landscape by being the dominant voice for Islam in the **New Order** and post-New Order period while working within the parameters of the state ideology of *Pancasila* and upholding the principles of pluralism and democracy. However, it has experienced an erosion of its hitherto considerable influence in the face of a recent proliferation of more fundamentalist and conservative Islamic organizations, which led it to articulate the concept of *Islam Nusantara*, which draws from indigenous Javanese Islamic tradition in opposition to Arab Islamic influences that have been creeping in to shape expressions of religious piety in Indonesia. Recent years have also witnessed the emergence of an internal debate within NU over its involvement in politics as evidenced, among other things, in the appointment of Ma'aruf Amin as vice-president and

Yaqut Cholil Qoumas as religious affairs minister. Against this backdrop, the 34th NU Congress, eventually held in December 2021 after several postponements because of **Covid-19**, witnessed the election of Yahya Cholil Staquf, former general secretary, as chairperson. Notably, Yahya, who comes from a long genealogical line of NU clerics, campaigned to move NU away from politics in order to focus on civil society activism.

see also: Anti-Ahok Protests 2016; Covid-19; *Gestapu*; Guided Democracy; Islam; Ma'aruf Amin; *Majelis Ulama Indonesia*; *Masyumi*; *Muhammadiyah*; New Order; *Pancasila*; *Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa*; *Partai Persatuan Pembangunan*; Suharto; Sukarno; Wahid, Abdurrahman; Widodo, Joko.

### **Najib Tun Razak, Datuk Seri Mohamad** (Malaysia)

Najib Tun Razak assumed high office in Malaysia on 3 April 2009 when his predecessor **Abdullah Ahmad Badawi** was pressured to step down after being held responsible for the ruling **Barisan Nasional** (National Front, BN) coalition's poor showing at the general election the year before but eventually presided over an even more devastating downfall of BN when he led them to a resounding defeat at the 2018 polls.

Najib was born on 23 July 1954 in Kuala Lipis in the state of Pahang. His father, **Tun Abdul Razak**, became prime minister of Malaysia in 1970 but died prematurely in 1976. Najib was educated at the University of Nottingham in England and on his return to Malaysia began his career with the national oil company Petronas. He entered Parliament at the tender age of 23 after winning his late father's Pekan (Pahang) parliamentary seat unopposed and has held the seat since. He subsequently held a series of junior ministerial appointments, including education and finance. In 1982 he stood successfully for the Pahang state legislature and was then appointed chief minister. He returned to national politics after the elections of 1986 and held the portfolio of youth and sports and subsequently that of defence. During the intense struggle within **UMNO (United**

**Malays National Organization)** in 1986–7, which led to an unsuccessful challenge to the position of Prime Minister **Mahathir Mohamad** by **Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah**, Najib's position was somewhat ambivalent. He avoided committing himself irrevocably to either figure, but after Mahathir's victory, he was able to use his Pahang state base to revive his political career. He was appointed minister of defence and oversaw the modernization of the Malaysian armed forces, and was later switched to the important post of minister of education. In 1999 he suffered a major setback at the federal elections when he barely scraped through in his parliamentary seat with a 241-vote majority. Nevertheless, his standing within **UMNO**, where he held one of the three vice-presidential posts, remained strong.

In January 2004, Najib was appointed deputy prime minister, and he was elected deputy president of **UMNO** in July. In April 2008, Prime Minister Abdullah Badawi identified Najib as his probable successor. Meanwhile, Najib remained loyal to Badawi despite attempts by Mahathir to cast aspersions at the sitting prime minister and precipitate a challenge to his leadership in **UMNO**. From September 2008, Najib carried the concurrent responsibility of minister of finance and navigated the Malaysian economy through the global financial crisis with several stimulus packages. However, Najib's prospects for high office were tainted by revelations that a close advisor was embroiled in an extra-marital affair with undertones of corruption, and which ended with the murder of a Mongolian model and translator, Altanthuya Shaariibuu, in October 2006, allegedly by two members of Najib's security team. While both were eventually convicted, their conviction was overturned in August 2013.

In March 2009, Najib ascended to the position of **UMNO** president unopposed and became Malaysia's sixth prime minister a month later. He moved swiftly to cast himself in the role of reformist. He announced the implementation of the **New Economic Model** in March 2010, which was an economic plan to accelerate Malaysia's transition to a high-income country. In September 2010, Najib rolled out the **One Malaysia** campaign for

ethnic harmony, national unity, and efficient governance. He also repealed the controversial Internal Security Act in 2011, although facets of it were subsequently reinstated. Despite these attempts to placate grassroots discontent, the Najib-led BN managed to secure only 47 per cent of the popular vote and 133 parliamentary seats at the elections in May 2013. The opposition **Pakatan Rakyat** coalition secured 51 per cent of the popular vote and 89 parliamentary seats. Not surprisingly, the loss of the popular vote piled pressure on Najib, as did the loss of considerable Chinese support. In July 2015, the *Wall Street Journal* ran an article on debts that were accumulated by state development fund **1MDB** and linked them to Najib and the 2013 election campaign. The article prompted deeper investigations that uncovered a massive scandal with Najib and his influential spouse, Rosmah Mansor, at its heart. Within UMNO, veterans such as Mahathir, Daim Zainuddin, and Rafidah Aziz began to criticize Najib publicly, as did party deputy president **Muhyiddin Yassin** and vice-president Shafie Apdal. In an effort to head off any prospect of a revolt from within party ranks, Najib moved to expel Muhyiddin and Mukhriz Mahathir, *menteri besar* of the state of Kedah and son of Mahathir Mohamad, and also suspended Shafie. He also actively intervened in ongoing investigations by removing the attorney general, Abdul Gani Patail. These measures failed to alleviate the mounting pressure, and a catastrophic election campaign culminated in defeat for the BN coalition for the first time since independence. Led by Mahathir Mohamad, arguably Najib's staunchest critic, the **Pakatan Harapan** government hastened investigations. Najib was subsequently charged and convicted of money laundering, abuse of power, and criminal breach of trust. He has been sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment and a fine of RM210 million but has appealed the conviction and is out on bail. His conviction was upheld by the Court of Appeal on 8 December 2021 and a final appeal was filed with the Federal Court the following day. Bizarrely, his personal popularity increased on the back of his 'Bossku' moniker that has gone viral on social media, and despite his graft convictions, he remains

a political force within UMNO and Malaysian politics.

see also: 1MDB; Badawi, Tun Abdullah Ahmad; *Barisan Nasional* (BN); Mahathir Mohamad, Tun; Muhyiddin Yassin, Tan Sri; New Economic Model; One Malaysia; *Pakatan Harapan*; *Pakatan Rakyat*; Razak, Tun Abdul; Razaleigh Hamzah, Tengku; UMNO (United Malays National Organization).

### **Nasakom** (Indonesia)

*Nasakom* is an acronym and slogan conceived by President **Sukarno** to indicate the trinity of socio-political elements which were legitimately part of the political system of **Guided Democracy** that he inaugurated in July 1959. The acronym was drawn from the Indonesian *nasionalisme*, *agama*, and *kommunisme*, meaning nationalism, religion, and communism, represented as the three dominant strains in society. It reflected the syncretic disposition of Sukarno, who had published an essay entitled *Nationalism, Islam and Marxism* as early as 1926. The prime function of the slogan was to justify the political participation of the Communist Party of Indonesia, which served as a mobilizing vehicle for Sukarno against the armed forces. In the wake of an abortive coup (see **Gestapu**) in October 1965 in which the communists were implicated, which discredited Sukarno politically, and which led to the dismantling of Guided Democracy, *Nasakom* soon disappeared from Indonesia's political lexicon.

see also: *Gestapu*; Guided Democracy; Sukarno.

### **Nasution, General Abdul Haris** (Indonesia)

General Nasution was a distinguished military leader during and after the period of national revolution in Indonesia who conceived of the 'middle way' doctrine (see **Dwi Fungsi**) justifying the prerogative political role of the armed forces. Abdul Haris Nasution was born in 1918 in Sumatra and trained before the Pacific War as an officer in the colonial army. During the Japanese occupation, he was involved with militant youth organizations in Bandung and then, in the period of national revolution, distinguished himself as a young commander of the West Java



Siliwangi division. After independence, as head of the army, he was responsible for a display of force before the non-elected Parliament but backed away from a coup. He resigned office at the end of 1952 but was reinstated in 1955. He played a critical role in crushing regional uprisings in the late 1950s and encouraged President **Sukarno** to introduce his authoritarian **Guided Democracy** in July 1959, but he was then manoeuvred away from the centre of power. In October 1965 General Nasution narrowly avoided assassination during an abortive coup (see **Gestapu**), which claimed the life of his young daughter. He threw his weight behind General **Suharto**, who took the lead in restoring order, but he did not play a central role in shaping the new political system based on military power. He served for a time as speaker of the **People's Consultative Assembly** but went into early retirement in the 1970s, becoming an open critic of Suharto's **New Order**. He signed the Petition of Fifty to Parliament in 1980 complaining of the perversion of the constitution, which angered the president into denying him foreign travel, among other restrictions. In mid-1993, however, in the wake of his further reelection in March, President Suharto received General Nasution, his former commander, in an act of reconciliation. He was then allowed to travel abroad for medical treatment. General Nasution died on 6 September 2000. He leaves behind a mixed reputation as a military commander and thinker and also as someone who was always out of his depth in politics, in which he was incapable of decisive action.

see also: *Dwi Fungsi*; *Gestapu*; Guided Democracy; New Order; People's Consultative Assembly; Suharto; Sukarno.

### **Natalegawa, Raden Mohammad Marty Muliana (Marty)** (Indonesia)

A highly competent diplomat, Marty Natalegawa was appointed foreign minister of Indonesia in October 2009 after a long and distinguished career in the foreign service. Born in Bandung, West Java, Natalegawa received his tertiary education at the London School of Economics and Corpus Christi College, University of Cambridge. He eventually obtained

a doctoral degree from the Australian National University in 1993. Natalegawa was an activist during his student years, when he was a member of various anti-apartheid and nuclear disarmament movements. He joined the Indonesian foreign service in 1986 after obtaining his master's degree from the University of Cambridge and has held a number of senior positions, including as Indonesia's permanent representative to the United Nations in New York and ambassador to the United Kingdom. In Jakarta, he served as chief of staff of the Office of the Minister of Foreign Affairs and as director-general for ASEAN Cooperation between 2002 and 2005, during which Indonesia chaired **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)**. As Indonesian foreign minister, Natalegawa played an instrumental role in shuttle diplomacy during the **South China Sea** crisis in July 2012 which had led to ASEAN's failure to agree on a joint communiqué for the first time in the organization's history. In the wake of the crisis in Phnom Penh, Natalegawa shuttled between the capitals of the region to push for an ASEAN consensus on the issue. His efforts resulted in ASEAN's cobbling together a face-saving collective position on the importance of a code of conduct in governing differences over South China Sea claims. He was also involved in efforts to resolve the stand-off between Cambodia and Thailand over the **Preah Vihear Temple Dispute**.

see also: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Preah Vihear Temple Dispute; South China Sea.

### **National Congress for Timorese Reconstruction** (Timor-Leste)

The National Congress for Timorese Reconstruction (*Conselho Nacional de Reconstrucao de Timor* (CNRT)) is a political party in Timor-Leste that champions the ideologies of anti-communism and social democracy. It was founded in March 2007 by former president **José 'Xanana' Gusmão**. Although the CNRT was founded in 2007, Gusmão ingeniously ensured that it effectively drew inspiration from two earlier resistance entities that were active during the independence war, the National Council of

Revolutionary Resistance (CRRN) and *Conselho Nacional da Resistência Maubere* or the National Council of the Maubere Resistance (CNRM). In the June 2007 general election, the CNRT captured 24 per cent of the vote and 18 parliamentary seats, coming in second to **Fretilin**, which won 29 per cent of the vote and 21 seats. Given that no party commanded an absolute majority, the CNRT moved to form a governing coalition with the next two largest political parties, the Social Democratic Party-Timorese Social Democratic Association (PSD-ASDT) and the Democratic Party, in July 2007. The resulting coalition mustered a combined majority of 36 seats and 51 per cent of the vote. Later that month it was announced that negotiations between the CNRT-led coalition and *Fretilin* had begun with the purpose of forming a national unity government. However, talks were unsuccessful given the lack of consensus over who should lead the government. In August 2007, the CNRT-led coalition announced that it would form the government, and that its leader, 'Xanana' Gusmão, would be proposed as prime minister. Though the move was declared unconstitutional by *Fretilin*, Gusmão was sworn in as the new prime minister in August 2007, while the president of the Democratic Party became the president of the National Parliament. The move prompted violent protests by *Fretilin* supporters and led to the destruction of property and other acts of violence in the following weeks. In February 2008, rebel soldiers attacked Prime Minister Gusmão and shot and seriously wounded President **José Ramos-Horta**. Subsequently, Gusmão declared a 48-hour state of emergency (later extended to two months) and described the events as an attempted coup. However, strong disagreements regarding the attacks emerged, and former prime minister **Mari Alkatiri** was among those who expressed doubts about the government's narrative of events surrounding the attacks.

During the CNRT-led coalition rule, Prime Minister Gusmão proposed a Strategic Development Plan to address issues of poverty and inequality. This policy generated considerable controversy both within Parliament and during public consultations due to the lack of an environmental impact assessment or any publicly

released assessment of its financial viability. In the July 2012 general elections, the CNRT won 36.6 per cent of the vote, improving its share of parliamentary seats to 30. This victory was achieved despite accusations that the CNRT-led coalition government was in a state of disarray and engaged in systemic corruption and mismanagement. However, it still fell short of a majority and had to once again form a coalition government with the Democratic Party, which came in third with 10.3 per cent of the vote and eight seats. Prior to his retirement as prime minister in 2015, Gusmão persuaded his CNRT party to work with political adversaries, especially *Fretilin*, towards the formation of a national unity government, and later in 2017, to support the presidential candidature of the *Fretilin* nominee, **Francisco 'Lu'Olo' Guterres**. At the parliamentary elections that same year, CNRT polled just under 30 per cent of the popular vote on the way to securing 22 seats. Disputes over who was constitutionally empowered to lead the government led to fresh elections in May 2018 in which CNRT led a coalition of two other parties, the People's Liberation Party and Khunto, to secure a clear mandate to form the government, but subsequently found its candidates for cabinet posts blocked by the President Guterres, who was aligned with *Fretilin*. The coalition government, known as the 'Alliance for Progress', was nevertheless thrown into disarray when CNRT voted down the 2020 budget proposed by its allies, ostensibly in retaliation for the lack of coalition support for plans that CNRT leader Gusmão had for the financing of gas industry infrastructure. In consequence, Gusmão and CNRT found themselves sidelined as the reconfigured government replaced it with *Fretilin*.

Notwithstanding a brief period of cooperation under the umbrella of a national unity government, the chaotic post-independence politics of Timor-Leste has been – and continues to be – shaped by the competition between CNRT and *Fretilin*, which is in turn driven in no small part by personal differences and rivalries between its leaders, most of whom hail from the '75 Generation' of resistance fighters.

see also: Alkatiri, Mari; *Fretilin*; Gusmão, José 'Xanana'; Guterres, Francisco 'Lu'Olo'; Ramos-Horta, José.

### National Council for Peace and Order (Thailand)

On 22 May 2014, the Thai military launched a coup to oust the government of Prime Minister **Yingluck Shinawatra**. The coup, Thailand's 19th in its modern history, brought to an end six months of demonstrations against the embattled sister of **Thaksin Shinawatra**, himself a former prime minister who was forcefully removed by a putsch in 2006.

After seizing power, the Thai military established the National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO) for the declared purpose of restoring order and restructuring the political system in the country to head off the prospects of populism. These statements were interpreted by detractors to be a euphemism for efforts to cement the dominant role of the military while depoliticizing the public sphere. As an institutional expression of the junta government led by generals **Prayuth Chan-ocha** and **Prawit Wongsuwan**, the NCPO enacted policies that allowed for, among other things, stringent control of the media, tighter regulation of the local economy, and the institutional reform of Buddhism to which the vast majority of Thai nationals subscribed. The junta government was controversial not only for how it came to power, but arguably more so, how it exercised power during its five-year term. Empowered by the Interim Constitution of 2014, Prayuth appointed a National Legislative Assembly comprising 250 members to replace Parliament. While the junta claimed that this assembly provided for a better cross-sectional representation of Thai society, critics decried it as a collection of junta loyalists and sympathizers. The junta also created the National Reform Steering Committee, tasked with setting the legislative agenda. As for the cabinet, it was configured such more than a third of the positions were occupied by military officers. Another controversial feature of the exercise of power by the NCPO was its move to swiftly summon opponents for questioning and, in the terminology of the junta, 'attitude adjustment'. By the same token, laws such as a National Cybersecurity Law were drafted that accorded the junta sweeping powers and prompted concern for freedom

of expression. Meanwhile, political activities were banned, thereby rendering political parties paralyzed. Constitutionally enshrined laws designed to punish the act of insulting the monarchy, in place since 1908 and referred to in popular parlance as *lèse majesté*, were invoked with growing frequency and enforced with vigour – and with more severe penalties – during this period. At the same time, the NCPO launched a popular anti-corruption campaign.

Promises to return political power to the ballot box were postponed on several occasions while the junta consolidated and formed its own political party, the **Palang Pracharat Party**. The junta strategy for expanding its political influence in preparation for elections was predicated on efforts to recruit former parliamentarians from rival parties such as the **Pheu Thai Party** and the **Democrat Party**. This strategy of co-optation would eventually prove instrumental to the performance of *Palang Pracharat* at the polls. In the event, the ban on political activities were gradually lifted beginning in November 2018, eventually paving the way for campaigning in preparation for general elections which were eventually held on 24 March 2019. The NCPO relinquished its power to the new cabinet that was sworn in on 16 July.

In all, the NCPO was in power for five years, longer than any other military government since the uprisings of October 1973. Yet, while it managed to place something of a lid on the sharply polarized politics of Thailand during its tenure, its ability to control the undercurrents was far less evident, as the resurgence of youth movement protests and demonstrations since June 2020 attest.

see also: Democrat Party; *Palang Pracharat Party*; *Pheu Thai Party*; Prawit Wongsuwan, General; Prayuth Chan-ocha, General; Thaksin Shinawatra; Yingluck Shinawatra.

### National Democratic Front (Philippines)

The National Democratic Front (NDF) was established by the Communist Party of the Philippines on 24 April 1973 in an attempt to capitalize on opposition to President

**Ferdinand Marcos's** declaration of martial law in September 1972. The object was to create a political wing under which diverse opposition groupings could be mobilized in the party's interest. A manifesto was proclaimed in April 1973 which called for the unity of all anti-imperialist and democratic forces in order to establish a coalition government that would be truly democratic. NDF attracted interest from left-wing clergy, intellectuals, students, and labour groups and became especially active after general elections in 1978. It made a major strategic blunder in early 1986 in failing to appreciate the measure of popular support which had brought **Corazón Aquino** to high office in succession to President Marcos. In negotiations with her government, unrealistic demands were made for inclusion in a national coalition as the price for a political settlement. NDF remained outside of the national political consensus; parties attracting its support failed abysmally to make any impact in the February 1987 referendum on a new constitution and also in elections in May for a new Congress. The main threat to Corazón Aquino came from the right and not from the left; after **Fidel Ramos** succeeded her, he was confident enough to permit the legalization of the Communist Party in September 1992. That party and NDF suffered an evident marginalization reinforced by internal divisions.

Since the late 1980s NDF has enjoyed more of a presence in the Netherlands than in the Philippines; it has maintained an office in Utrecht for fundraising and international public relations. The intellectual head of the party, **José María Sisón**, has lived in the Netherlands in exile for a number of years, ever since he was released from prison by Corazón Aquino under an amnesty. Negotiations between NDF and the government in Manila were initiated in the early 1990s through the good offices of Vietnam in an attempt to find a place for the communist front in national political life. However, intra-party squabbles have been an important factor in preventing those negotiations from bearing political fruit. NDF took part in peace talks with the Philippines government in Utrecht in October 1994, which broke down.

They were resumed in Brussels in June 1995 but lasted only one day, ostensibly because Manila refused to release Sotero Llama, a communist military commander arrested the previous May, who had been named subsequently as a member of the NDF negotiating panel. Talks were resumed in the Netherlands in June 1996 after Llama was released, but then broke down after the **New People's Army (NPA)**, the NDF military wing, seized hostages. They resumed again in early 1998. In February, representatives of NDF and the government in Manila met in The Hague, where an agreement on human rights was signed. The following month, they signed a second agreement on social and economic reforms.

Despite this progress, NDF was unwilling to continue negotiations in the Philippines, citing security reasons. Moreover, in May 1999, they called off further talks because the government had entered into a new visiting forces agreement with the United States. Mutual mistrust peaked in May 2013 when NDF accused the government of renegeing on the 1995 Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG) that granted immunity to rebel negotiators, and which required written notice prior to termination by any party. NDF Chair Luis Jalandoni accused the government of unilaterally terminating the peace talks without informing the Norwegian mediators who played the role of third-party facilitator. Peace talks with the government stalled due to inability to arrive at a common understanding over pending criminal cases involving some nominated rebel negotiators. The NDF was dealt a major blow in March 2014 when two of its leaders, Benito Tiamzon and his wife, Wilma Austria, were captured in Cebu. In February 2017, President **Rodrigo Duterte** unilaterally terminated ongoing peace talks with NDF, lifted the government's ceasefire with the communists, and invalidated the JASIG. In 2021 the Philippine Anti-Terrorism Council designated several NDF leaders 'terrorists', including Sisón and his wife, Julieta.

see *also*: Aquino, Corazón; Duterte, Rodrigo; Marcos, Ferdinand; New People's Army; Ramos, Fidel; Sisón, José María.

## National League for Democracy

(Myanmar)

The National League for Democracy (NLD) formed the government of Myanmar between November 2015 and January 2021 before it was removed via a military coup launched by Senior General **Min Aung Hlaing**. NLD had come to power in the first fully democratic election in Myanmar for half a century.

NLD was formed on 27 September 1988 as a political challenge to the **State Law and Order Restoration Council** (SLORC), which had assumed power on behalf of the military establishment six days before. That seizure of power followed a bloody confrontation on the streets of Yangon and other major towns in which the armed forces had opened fire on unarmed demonstrators. NLD was set up by **Aung San Suu Kyi**, the daughter of the nationalist leader and martyr, **Aung San**, and by Aung Gyi and Tin U, former senior officers who had become opponents of **Ne Win**'s regime. Aung Gyi left the party in December 1988, while Aung San Suu Kyi was arrested in July 1989. Yet when NLD participated in general elections in May 1990, it won 392 out of 485 seats for the newly created People's Assembly, with some 60 per cent of the popular vote. In contrast, SLORC's **National Unity Party** (NUP) won only 10 seats. The military establishment refused to convene the legislature until a new constitution had been drafted. SLORC also began to take repressive measures against members of NLD, many of whom were deprived of their parliamentary status on spurious grounds. A National Convention to draft a new constitution began work in January 1993, with the armed forces intending to provide for themselves a prerogative political role. Selected members of NLD were allowed to attend, but the military establishment remained unwilling to recognize the outcome of the elections of May 1990. When Aung San Suu Kyi was released from detention in July 1995, the party had been reduced to a shadow of its former self through repression by SLORC. NLD was subject to recurrent harassment and enforced resignations, although it was permitted to hold a congress in May 1998 to commemorate its electoral victory in May 1990. NLD headquarters were sealed off by

security forces in September 2000 after Aung San Suu Kyi had been forcibly returned to her residence after trying to leave the capital. In 2001, some NLD branch offices were allowed to reopen and in May 2002, Aung San Suu Kyi was released from house arrest. Following several trips upcountry, which were greeted with strong demonstrations of support, her motorcade was set upon by a mob allegedly organized by the junta, during which dozens of NLD members were killed and wounded. Aung San Suu Kyi and Tin Oo were arrested. Tin Oo was later released in February 2010, but Aung San Suu Kyi was not released until November 2010.

On 29 March 2010, the party decided not to register for elections to be held in November that year in protest of election rules which reserved a dominant role for the military in Parliament. The party was subsequently dissolved by the government on 6 May 2010, but it ignored the order and continued to engage in social work. A breakaway faction calling itself the National Democratic Force (NDF) did contest the elections but received only 3 per cent of the vote. In November 2011, political reforms initiated by the government seemed to offer a better chance for collaboration, including talks between Aung San Suu Kyi and **Thein Sein**. NLD proceeded to announce its intention to register as a political party in order to contest future elections. Its application was approved by the Union Election Commission on 13 December 2011. During the 1 April 2012 by-election, the party won 43 of 44 seats it contested, out of 45 seats available, on its way to becoming the largest opposition party in Parliament, albeit with less than 7 per cent of the 644 seats. Myanmar held its first truly open election for half a century in November 2015 and saw NLD ushered into power by way of a landslide victory in which it won 86 per cent of the seats in the National Assembly, 235 in the House of Representatives and 135 in the House of Nationalities. Constitutional stipulations, however, prevented Aung San Suu Kyi from assuming the presidency. In the event, the post of state counsellor was created through which she managed affairs of state as the de facto prime minister.

Upon coming to power, NLD set about reforming the economy and battling corruption

with some measure of success. It failed, however, in an effort to reduce the threshold for constitutional revision from 75 per cent to 70 per cent in June 2015. Efforts to deal with endemic ethnic armed insurgencies made little headway. NLD launched several iterations of peace conferences with ethnic minority groups but failed to achieve any breakthrough. Even more damaging was its handling of the **Rohingya** crisis that unfolded in 2017, for which the government – and Aung San Suu Kyi personally – attracted heavy international criticism. Notwithstanding these shortcomings, NLD obtained another supermajority by way of a landslide victory at the 2020 polls, when it secured even more votes than in 2015. The victory was short-lived, however. Protests by the **Union Solidarity and Development Party**, the military party which was NLD's main adversary, that the polls were marred by electoral fraud were dismissed by the Election Commission. Concerned that Aung San Suu Kyi would use NLD's supermajority to push through constitutional reforms designed to further diminish the military's role in politics, a coup was launched on 1 February 2021, the same day in which the new Parliament was to have sat. The November 2020 election results were nullified, and a one-year state of emergency was imposed as scores of NLD officials and elected representatives, including Aung San Suu Kyi, were arrested.

see also: Aung San; Aung San Suu Kyi; Min Aung Hlaing, Senior General; National Unity Party; Ne Win, General; Rohingya; State Law and Order Restoration Council; Thein Sein; Union Solidarity and Development Party.

### **National Liberation Front of South Vietnam** (Vietnam)

The National Liberation Front of South Vietnam (NLF) was set up on 20 December 1960 through the initiative of the Communist Party to mobilize popular support south of the 17th parallel of latitude against the government of President **Ngo Dinh Diem** in Saigon. In its composition and declared political aspirations, which avoided communist associations and reference to early unification, it replicated the **Viet Minh**

(standing for the League for the Independence of Vietnam), which had served as a corresponding vehicle for the party from 1941. NLF was established in a jungle area close to the Cambodian border under the figurehead chairmanship of Nguyen Huu Tho, a French-educated lawyer of liberal persuasion. It functioned through a myriad of functional groupings headed also by prominent personalities whose nationalist credentials were not touched by communist affiliations. In effect, NLF's activities were soon directly controlled by the People's Revolutionary Party, which was established in 1962 as a southern branch of the national party. In June 1969 NLF, which had attracted a membership of several million, became a constituent part of the **Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam**. This attempt to demonstrate a fuller international identity arose from NLF's participation in quadripartite peace negotiations in Paris from January 1969. After the military collapse of the Saigon government in April 1975, NLF had served its useful political purpose and, much to the chagrin of many of its leading non-communist members, was merged into a northern counterpart, the Fatherland Front.

see also: Ngo Dinh Diem; Paris Peace Agreements 1973; Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam (PRG) 1969–76; Viet Minh; Vietnam War.

### **National Mandate Party** (Indonesia) see ***Partai Amanat Nasional***

### **National Unity Government** (Myanmar)

Following the coup of 1 February 2021, a group of 15 parliamentarians elected at the November 2020 polls formed the Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH) on 5 February. The day prior, 70 elected **National League for Democracy** (NLD) members of the Myanmar Parliament or Pyithu Hluttaw, defied the coup and assembled in **Naypyidaw** to take their oath of office.

Operating as something of a government-in-exile, CRPH established an office in the US state of Maryland on 22 February, through which it

engaged the United Nations as well as international organizations and foreign governments. Replicating the role of the Committee Representing the People's Parliament, which was active in the 1990s engaging actors outside of Myanmar on behalf of the democracy movement, the purpose of CRPH was to lobby the international community to reject the coup launched by the *Tatmadaw* under the leadership of Senior General **Min Aung Hlaing**, and to call for the restoration of democracy and respect for the election results of 8 November 2020, through which NLD was returned to power with an overwhelming majority. On 9 February, CRPH enacted the State Counsellor Law, which extended the term of the state counsellor of Myanmar for another five years, and also issued a statement condemning the violent crackdown of widespread protests by the military. A cabinet was formed in early March, initially consisting of four ministers and an acting vice president, Mahn Win Khaing Than, who had previously served as speaker of the Assembly of the Union of Myanmar.

With elements from the anti-coup protest movement as well as representation from several ethnic minority organizations, CRPH created the National Unity Government (NUG) on 16 April 2021 that would be guided by an interim constitution in the form of the Federal Democracy Charter that was announced in March. The NUG served as a vehicle through which the spectrum anti-coup forces could make common cause to reinforce the mandate conferred on NLD by way of the November 2020 election and marshal international support for its call for the restoration of democracy. Under the NUG, **Aung San Suu Kyi** and U Win Myint retain their positions as state counsellor and president respectively. In an expression of its aspiration to form a federal union, Manh Win Khaing Than, an ethnic Karen, was appointed prime minister and Duwa Lashi La, an ethnic Kachin, vice-president. Notably, however, there is no **Rohingya** representation in the NUG, and this has posed an obstacle to international recognition. Apart from these positions, the NUG also includes a full cabinet of 11 ministers for 12 ministries, along with 12 deputy ministers. Of the 26 total cabinet

members, 13 belong to ethnic nationalities, and 8 are women. Thus far, it remains a government on paper, lacking both military and economic power to press its case against the *Tatmadaw*. In the wake of calls from ASEAN (**Association of Southeast Asian Nations**) neighbours for it to enter into talks with the junta, NUG continues to maintain its position that doing so would be against the will of the people as expressed in the 2020 election. For its part, the junta government has branded NUG as 'terrorists' responsible for the political violence that has engulfed the country.

*see also:* ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Aung San Suu Kyi; Min Aung Hlaing, Senior General; National League for Democracy; Naypyidaw; Rohingya.

### **National Unity Party** (Myanmar)

The National Unity Party (NUP) was set up on 26 September 1988 as the successor to the **Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP)** through the intervention of the **State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC)**. SLORC had seized power eight days previously in an attempt to reinforce the control of the military establishment in the wake of a bloody confrontation between security forces and unarmed civilian demonstrators. NUP was intended to serve as the electoral vehicle for SLORC in polls held in May 1990. In the event, it captured only 10 seats in a People's Assembly of 485 seats, although it secured some 25 per cent of the popular vote. The opposition **National League for Democracy** won 392 seats, but SLORC refused to permit the legislature to convene. Instead, a constitutional convention was held from January 1993 in which NUP participated but only as the unpopular instrument of a resented military establishment.

Because of its close association with former strongman **Ne Win**, NUP played only a marginal role in national politics throughout the 2000s, as their patron was gradually sidelined by Senior General **Than Shwe**. At the 2010 elections, NUP sought to distance itself from the ruling **Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP)** despite its own ties to the junta, and contested as the second largest party in

Myanmar with a surfeit of 999 parliamentary candidates nationwide. This led to speculation that NUP could mount a formidable challenge to the ruling USDP. In the event, the party was soundly defeated by USDP, securing only 63 seats compared to 883 for USDP. The party fared even worse in subsequent elections, winning a solitary seat in 2015 and none in 2020. The octogenarian former deputy commander of the armed forces, Tun Yi, led NUP until his death in 2014. He was succeeded by U Than Tin. *see also:* Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP); National League for Democracy; Ne Win, General; State Law and Order Restoration Council; Than Shwe, Senior General; Union Solidarity and Development Party.

### Natuna Islands (Indonesia)

The Natuna Islands are a group of 272 islands located 400 miles northeast of Sumatra in the **South China Sea**. It is one of the largest natural gas fields in the world and is believed to contain over 210 trillion cubic feet of natural gas with an estimated 46 trillion cubic feet of recoverable natural gas.

Indonesian sovereignty over the islands was unchallenged until 1993, when the People's Republic of China published a map containing a broken line in the South China Sea covering a gas field northeast of the islands. This line, which has entered the lexicon of regional affairs as Beijing's infamous 'nine-dotted line', delineates a Chinese claim over an area close to the Natuna Islands that breaches Indonesia's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). In response, Jakarta dismissed these claims as baseless under international law and continued to assert Indonesia's sovereignty through exploration projects undertaken by the state-owned oil and natural gas corporation, Pertamina. Further demonstrating their strategic concerns about Chinese intentions, Jakarta signed a bilateral security treaty with Australia in 1995 (the treaty was later abrogated over East Timor). Concern about the escalation of tensions gave greater impetus to the Workshop Process on Managing Potential Conflicts in the South China Sea, which was initiated by Indonesia in 1990 as a confidence-building measure with the purpose of providing an informal platform for South

China Sea claimant states to discuss and better understand their respective claims. The efforts of the workshops proved fruitless, however, even though tensions eased between the two governments.

In 2009, the appearance of Chinese fishing vessels off the islands provoked Indonesian navy patrol boats to detain them. In a verbal note to the United Nations in 2009, China asserted its indisputable sovereignty over the islands in the South China Sea and the adjacent waters, laying claim over land territory and maritime areas to the north of the Natuna Islands. In 2010, Chinese fishermen guarded by Chinese fishery administration vessels threatened to fire on Indonesian naval patrols as they attempted to intercept Chinese fishing trawlers in the area. These events prompted Indonesia to send a diplomatic note to the United Nations challenging the Chinese claim as without a legal basis and tantamount to contravention of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) treaty. Under the presidency of **Joko Widodo**, Indonesia has taken a harder line on incursions by illegal fishing vessels into their waters. Since 2014, more than 500 illegal fishing vessels have been apprehended in Indonesian waters and sunk. In June 2016, the Indonesian warship KRI *Imam Bonjol*, which was named after a national hero who fought against the Dutch, fired a warning shot at illegal Chinese fishing trawlers in the Natuna waters. This incident was followed by a visit by President Widodo to the Natuna Islands, where he presided over a symbolic limited cabinet meeting on board his vessel. The appearance of Chinese vessels, this time with a coast guard escort, in December 2020 occurred not long after Indonesian defence minister **Prabowo Subianto** returned from a trip to Beijing.

*see also:* Prabowo Subianto; South China Sea; Widodo, Joko.

### Naypyidaw (Myanmar)

Naypyidaw officially became the new administrative capital of Myanmar on 6 November 2005. The city was cut out of the jungle and shrubland near the town of Pinyinmana in central Myanmar and has grown to become Myanmar's third largest city. Construction of the city



began in 2002 and the government began moving ministries to the city in November 2005. The move was so hasty that government officials were told to relocate their offices within 24 hours, while their families were initially prohibited from relocating with them due to the lack of schools and other infrastructure and basic amenities. The first public event at Naypyidaw was a massive military parade to celebrate Armed Forces Day, held on 27 March 2006 when 12,000 troops marched in a review for Senior General **Than Shwe**. The rationale behind the move was debated for some time in Myanmar. The stated official explanation was that Yangon had grown too congested and there was little room for expansion of government offices, although it is also known that Than Shwe had taken an eccentric personal interest in the project. The new site is more central and strategically located than Yangon, also giving credence to the perception that the generals were concerned about foreign intervention. Most embassies have chosen to remain in Yangon. The city of Naypyidaw and the eight townships around it were collectively established as the Naypyidaw Union Territory under the **2008 Constitution**. It is under the direct administration of the president through a Naypyidaw Council which handles most of the day-to-day administration.

see also: Constitution 2008; Than Shwe, Senior General.

**Naypyidaw Summit (ASEAN) May 2014** (Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/Laos/Malaysia/Myanmar/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand/Vietnam)

Myanmar achieved a milestone when it assumed the chairmanship of **ASEAN (Association for Southeast Asian Nations)** for the first time in 2014. The country was scheduled to chair the Association in 2006 but relinquished the position at the suggestion of several member states concerned for the reputation of ASEAN in the face of pressure from the United States and European Union that they would boycott ASEAN meetings that year if Myanmar assumed the chair in protest of its human rights record. Concomitantly, the 24th summit of ASEAN was held in **Naypyidaw** in May 2014

on the theme 'Moving Forward in Unity to a Peaceful and Prosperous Community'.

The summit saw members reaffirm their commitment to bringing into being the **ASEAN Community** in 2015. Nevertheless, discussions were overshadowed by a standoff between China and Vietnam in the **South China Sea** prior to the summit, when China moved an oil rig into the contested waters of the Paracel Islands causing altercations between Chinese and Vietnamese vessels. Shortly after that incident another arose, when the Philippines seized a Chinese fishing vessel in the vicinity of Half-Moon Shoal in the Spratly Islands. These disconcerting developments leading up to the summit prompted ASEAN to issue a stand-alone document articulating collective concern for the deteriorating situation in an expression of unity on the South China Sea disputes that has sometimes proven elusive. The summit also expressed concern for developments in Thailand, where **Yingluck Shinawatra** was removed from office a week earlier, and called for a peaceful resolution of the political impasse through dialogue.

Significantly, Myanmar acquitted itself well in its first outing in the role of ASEAN chair, demonstrating the progress it had made with political reforms and reconciliation. Concerns that the country may struggle with requisite logistical and operational requirements were allayed with the help of Indonesia, Singapore, and Vietnam, all of which provided study tours for Myanmar officials of previous summit venues as they prepared to host the event.

see also: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; ASEAN Community; Naypyidaw; South China Sea; Yingluck Shinawatra.

**Naypyidaw Summit (ASEAN) November 2014** (Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/Laos/Malaysia/Myanmar/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand/Vietnam)

The 25th summit of **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** was held when heads of government assembled in the Myanmar capital of **Naypyidaw** in November 2014.

In keeping with the norms of the ASEAN diplomatic calendar, corresponding meetings were also held with dialogue partners, as was the **East Asia Summit**.

Whereas the 24th **Naypyidaw Summit** in May 2014 witnessed the adoption of the Naypyidaw Declaration on Realisation of the **ASEAN Community** by 2015, at the November 2014 summit the Association adopted the Naypyidaw Declaration on the ASEAN Community's Post-2015 Vision which mapped out the post-2015 path that ASEAN had envisioned during the Bandar Seri Begawan Summit in 2013, when a high-level task force on strengthening the ASEAN Secretariat and reviewing the ASEAN organs was put in place. The prime minister of India, Narendra Modi, used the occasion of the ASEAN–India summit to declare his 'Look East Policy' that signalled his government's intention to pursue a more action-oriented outreach to Southeast Asia.

The summit marked the successful culmination of a year of regional diplomatic activity in which Myanmar discharged its duties as chair credibly, contrary to speculation at the beginning of the year that they might struggle with expectations. In particular, Myanmar demonstrated admirable ability to maintain ASEAN cohesion amidst simmering tensions over the **South China Sea** between China and Southeast Asian claimant states.

see also: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; ASEAN Community; East Asia Summit 2005–; Naypyidaw; Naypyidaw Summit (ASEAN) May 2014; South China Sea.

### **Ne Win, General** (Myanmar)

General Ne Win was head of a military junta that ruled Burma/Myanmar autocratically and brutally in various guises for more than a quarter of a century. He was primarily responsible for inaugurating a pseudo-socialist order that impoverished the country, provoking popular revolt that was put down in 1988 with great loss of life. Ne Win was born on 24 May 1911 in Paungdale in Prome District in lower Burma to a Sino-Burmese family, who gave him the name Shu Maung. He was educated at the University of Rangoon and, although a member of

the nationalist movement, was not politically prominent. He left without a degree in 1932 to begin his working life as a postal clerk. He joined the *Dobama Asiayone* (Our Burma Association), a militant nationalist movement, and through it he became associated with its leader **Aung San**, who recruited him as a member of a group of 30 comrades who were exfiltrated to Japan in 1940 to undergo military training. Ne Win, who acquired his *nom de guerre* (meaning Bright Son) in this period, returned with the Japanese army when they invaded Burma in December 1941.

Ne Win became a commander in the Japanese-sponsored Burma National Army, which in March 1945 switched to the side of the Allies as Japan's defeat seemed only a matter of time. The nationalist leader, Aung San, won the respect of Admiral Lord Mountbatten, the Supreme Allied Commander, who supported Burma's independence. Despite factional and ideological conflict within the nationalist movement, independence was set for January 1948, but in July 1947 Aung San and several cabinet ministers were assassinated. At the time, Ne Win was deputy to the commander-in-chief, Lieutenant General Smith-Dun, who was from the **Karen** minority which soon after rose in revolt. Smith-Dun was retired in early 1949 and Lieutenant General Ne Win took over as supreme commander of all armed forces. In April he became deputy prime minister in charge of defence and home affairs until the following year, when the insurgent challenge to the Union of Burma was crushed. He returned to government temporarily as prime minister from 1958 to 1960 when civilian government was suspended for two years.

On 2 March 1962, as commander-in-chief, he led a successful coup which established a continuous period of military rule. He set up a ruling revolutionary council and also established the **Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP)** under whose exclusive aegis a Burmese Way to Socialism was promulgated, underpinned by his strong conviction in favour of omens and astrological predictions. This ideology became the blueprint for a rigid system of central planning and bureaucratic control which brought the country to the point of economic collapse,

so that it had to apply to the United Nations for 'least-developed status'. He became president of Burma on its establishment as a socialist republic in 1974, giving up that office in 1981 but remaining as president of BSPP; he resigned in July 1988 in a context of political decay and chaos. Although government was placed in the charge of the **State Law and Order Restoration Council** (SLORC) in September 1988, Ne Win was believed to exercise a continuing influence over the military establishment and matters of political management. After not being seen in public since 1989, he was photographed in Jakarta in September 1997 looking pale and frail, having travelled to Indonesia at the invitation of President **Suharto** for a short stay. He then flew on to Singapore, which he had visited for a medical check-up in 1993. In September 1998, he returned to Singapore for treatment for a clot on the brain. Ne Win's influence on the junta began to wane after 1998 and on 4 March 2002, he was placed under house arrest after an alleged plot to overthrow the government by Ne Win's son-in-law, Aye Zaw Win, was exposed. His favourite daughter and Aye Zaw Win's wife, Sandar Win, was also placed under house arrest. Aye Zaw Win and his three sons were found guilty of treason and sentenced to death, but were kept in custody in Insein Prison in Yangon until their release in January 2012. Ne Win died while under house arrest on 5 December 2002 at his lakeside house in Yangon at the age of 91. His death went unremarked by the junta or state media, nor was he given a state funeral.

see *also*: Aung San; Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP); Karen; State Law and Order Restoration Council; Suharto.

### **Neo Lao Hak Sat** (Laos)

*Neo Lao Hak Sat* (Lao Patriotic Front) was established in January 1956 by the Lao People's Party, in effect the Communist Party, as a national front acting on behalf of the **Pathet Lao** (Lao Nation or State) movement. Headed by Prince **Souphanouvong**, the *Neo Lao Hak Sat* was constituted formally on a functional basis with representation, for example, from trade unions and women's and farmers' groups. It served also as a political party in the late 1950s

enjoying significant success in supplementary national elections, whose outcome had a polarizing effect between right and left in Lao politics instead of promoting national reconciliation as intended by the terms of the **Geneva Agreements on Indochina of 1954**. Throughout its existence, until superseded by a corresponding Lao Front for National Construction in 1979, the *Neo Lao Hak Sat* was controlled by the Communist Party of Laos, initially as the Lao People's Party and then from 1972 in the name of the **Lao People's Revolutionary Party**, which has ruled the country since the end of 1975.

see *also*: Geneva Agreements on Indochina 1954; Geneva Agreements on Laos 1962; Lao People's Revolutionary Party; *Pathet Lao*; Souphanouvong, Prince.

### **New Aspiration Party** (Thailand)

The New Aspiration Party (*Kwam Wang Mai*) was formed in October 1990 as the personal political vehicle of former army commander General **Chavalit Yongchaiyuth**, who had been disappointed in a brief spell as deputy prime minister in the government of Prime Minister **Chatichai Choonhavan**. The New Aspiration Party secured 51 seats in elections conducted in September 1992. It then joined the coalition government headed by Prime Minister **Chuan Leekpai**, with General Chavalit assuming the office of minister of interior. Although not closely identified with the military, which had employed violence against civilian demonstrators in May 1992, his party lost electoral support in September that year and also suffered factional tensions based on regional affiliations. In July 1994, its deputy leader defected to form a new party. General Chavalit was briefly deputy prime minister from October before withdrawing from the government coalition in December 1994 in an abortive bid to topple it. In elections in July 1995, the New Aspiration Party won 57 seats and was invited to join the government headed by **Banharn Silpa-archa**, with General Chavalit given the positions of deputy prime minister and defence minister. It improved its position considerably in elections in November 1996, securing 125 seats, which made it the largest parliamentary party. General Chavalit went on to form a coalition

government but was obliged to step down as prime minister in November 1997 in the wake of the **Asian Financial Crisis**, for which his administration was held responsible. The New Aspiration Party was excluded from the new coalition government headed by the **Democrat Party**, and remained in opposition. In June 2000, a total of 96 of its members resigned from Parliament in an abortive attempt to force a snap election. In the run-up to the 2001 elections Chavalit formed a coalition with the **Thai Rak Thai Party** (TRT). Following TRT's strong win, the majority of New Aspiration Party members merged with TRT, and Chavalit became deputy prime minister in the government of **Thaksin Shinawatra**. Meanwhile, the party itself has faded into irrelevance.

see also: Asian Financial Crisis 1997–8; Banharn Silpa-archa; Chatichai Choonhavan, General; Chavalit Yongchaiyuth, General; Chuan Leekpai; Democrat Party; *Thai Rak Thai Party*; Thaksin Shinawatra.

### **New Economic Mechanism (Laos)**

The New Economic Mechanism (NEM) or *Chintanakan Mai* was a policy introduced by Prime Minister **Kaysone Phomvihhan** in 1985 and announced at the 1986 party congress in response to the disappointing results of the **Lao People's Revolutionary Party's** (LPRP) first decade in power. The new policy was couched in the appropriate socialist phraseology, but in effect amounted to an abandonment of state ownership and centralized control over the economy. Under the NEM, the inflated state bureaucracy was reduced, as was its role in economic management, and state subsidies to industries were abolished. Instead, managers were told to make their enterprises profitable and retail prices were deregulated. The policy was aimed at generating long-term benefits for the economy, but in the short term it resulted in inflation and unemployment, especially among workers in loss-making state sectors. This in turn gave rise to increased resentment and insecurity, especially among the urban population. The standing of the ruling party was hurt by the reforms, especially due to the ideological compromise the NEM entailed. However, opposition forces within the country were too

weak and disorganized to take advantage of the situation. While the collapse of communism in eastern Europe came as a shock to the government, it also vindicated somewhat the wisdom behind the push for economic reforms in Laos. Still, the collapse of the Soviet Union meant the end of a major source of aid, forcing Laos to look to other sources; initially France and Japan, and later the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank. This move required further economic reforms. At the same time, the state of affairs also necessitated that Laos mend fences with its neighbours, particularly Thailand. Since then, Laos' communist leaders have maintained a monopoly on political control but have by and large allowed market forces to dictate the trajectory of the economy.

While the New Economic Mechanism did usher in a period of economic growth, by the 1990s two distinct phenomena were evident. First, an increase in corruption and economic disparity had accompanied this growth. Second, the Sixth Plenum of the Fifth Central Committee, which convened in February 1993, set a new objective of pursuing economic development in order to graduate from the United Nations' list of least-developed countries. This was later codified at the Sixth Party Congress in 1996, when the party specified 2020 as the deadline for achieving this goal. With these two new impetuses, the nomenclature of New Economic Mechanism was changed to 'renovation', in an echo of similar reforms being pursued in Vietnam under the policy of **Doi Moi**. In the event, economic reform policy has since been overtaken by massive Chinese investments, prompting concerns that Laos was becoming overly dependent on China.

see also: *Doi Moi*; Kaysone Phomvihhan; Lao People's Revolutionary Party.

### **New Economic Model (Malaysia)**

The New Economic Model (NEM) constituted one of the four pillars of the National Transformation Programme that aimed to transform Malaysia into a high-income nation with inclusive and sustainable economic growth to achieve the goals envisaged in Vision 2020. It was anchored on an Economic Transformation Programme (ETP) driven by eight Strategic

Reform Initiatives (SRIs) designed to provide a foundation for government policies. The rationale for the NEM stemmed from recognition that deep-seated structural reforms were necessary in order to stimulate sustainable economic growth. After several decades of rapid development, economic growth had stagnated since the **Asian Financial Crisis**. The Malaysian economy was caught in a middle-income trap where it remained heavily dependent on trade and commodities, and as such was vulnerable to global imbalances and fluctuating commodity prices. Furthermore, the wealth gap in the country was widening at the same time, with political implications for any ruling government. Since the Asian Financial Crisis, the share of private investment in the economy has declined. Complex bureaucratic red tape has raised the cost of investing and the competitiveness of the Malaysian economy has therefore eroded. When it was announced, the goal of inclusive growth enshrined in the NEM generated considerable controversy, in particular the notion that the NEM should work to benefit all Malaysians, regardless of race. Under the NEM, economic policies were to be refined in such a way as to encourage equitable growth, but Malay conservatives have expressed concern that this could encroach upon Malaysia's affirmative action policy. Notwithstanding its lofty goals, the fact that it was the brainchild of then prime minister **Najib Tun Razak** meant that with his political demise, the NEM soon lost its relevance.

see *also*: Asian Financial Crisis 1997–8; Najib Tun Razak, Datuk Seri Mohamad.

### **New Economic Policy (Malaysia)**

In the wake of an electoral reverse in May 1969 followed by intercommunal violence, the **May 13 Racial Riots**, the Malay-dominated government of Malaysia introduced a New Economic Policy (NEP) in 1971. The policy, set out within the Second Malaysia Plan, comprised two related themes. These were 'to reduce and eventually eradicate poverty, by raising income levels and increasing employment opportunities for all Malaysians, irrespective of race' and also to accelerate 'the process of restructuring Malaysian society to correct economic

imbalance, so as to reduce and eventually eliminate the identification of race with economic function'. To those ends, the target was set of raising holdings of corporate assets by the Malays from some 2 per cent to 30 per cent by 1990. The NEP was driven by political considerations. **UMNO (United Malays National Organization)** had experienced an electoral seepage from its natural constituency because of Malay apprehension that Chinese economic dominance might be translated into political expression. UMNO acted to protect the political birthright of the Malays and its prerogative guardian role of their interests through economic initiative. Sustained affirmative action to the advantage of the Malay community as well as ensuring that key economic portfolios in government were held by Malay ministers had the desired political effect to UMNO's advantage. It also led to the emergence of a Malay business elite associated with UMNO who enriched themselves to form a virtual new class. In June 1991 the prime minister, **Mahathir Mohamad**, announced details of his government's New Development Policy to replace the NEP which had applied between 1971 and 1990. The new policy was distinguished by an intention to moderate affirmative action in favour of the Malays and to lay greater stress on improved education and training. The target of 30 per cent of corporate assets to be held by the Malays was retained but without a set date for realization. see *also*: Mahathir Mohamad, Tun; May 13 Racial Riots 1969; UMNO (United Malays National Organization).

### **New Order (Indonesia)**

The term New Order was employed to dignify and validate the regime established in Indonesia by General **Suharto** with the support of the armed forces in the wake of an abortive coup (see **Gestapu**) in October 1965. The term was intended also to differentiate that regime based on the values of the 1945 Constitution and the state philosophy **Pancasila** from the alleged political deviations of President **Sukarno**. In July 1966, while Sukarno still occupied presidential office, the provisional **People's Consultative Assembly** endorsed Suharto's seizure of power in March, which was represented as

an *'ordre baru'* or New Order. The unfortunate identification with the language of European fascism of the 1930s was seized on by critics of the regime. In time, the term New Order came to be superseded by that of *Pancasila* democracy as the legitimizing trope. President Suharto's so-called New Order was effectively terminated with his resignation on 21 May 1998.

see also: *Gestapu*; *Pancasila*; People's Consultative Assembly; Suharto; Sukarno.

### New People's Army (Philippines)

The New People's Army (NPA) is the military arm of the Communist Party of the Philippines, founded by **José María Sisón**, which was reconstituted on Maoist lines at a conference held between 26 December 1968 and 7 January 1969 in southern Tarlac Province on the island of Luzón. The New People's Army was established on 29 March 1969 in the same vicinity and drew support not only from a younger generation of political activists but from members of the longstanding communist **Hukbalahap Movement** insurgency which had degenerated into banditry. Bernabe Buscayno (also known as Commander Dante) became the military leader in October 1970 after the capture of Faustino del Mundo (Commander Sumulong), who had switched political allegiance. NPA adopted a strategy of military decentralization, exploiting the archipelagic condition of the Philippines to avoid a vulnerable concentration of forces. This strategy proved to be increasingly successful with the evident failure of the martial law regime of President **Ferdinand Marcos**, inaugurated in September 1972. The deteriorating economic condition of the country and feckless brutality of a rapidly expanded armed forces attracted recruits to the communist cause. That cause was served further by the assassination of opposition leader **Benigno Aquino** in August 1983. By the mid-1980s, NPA had an estimated strength of some 15,000 effectives and had established fighting presences in 63 of the country's 73 provinces where they engaged in ambush and selective assassination. Moreover, it demonstrated an organizational resilience, despite the capture of some of its senior figures.

The momentum of its military challenge was arrested, however, after the fall of President Marcos and the assumption of office by **Corazón Aquino** in February 1986. A miscalculation of political mood, expressed in a rejection of the constitutional process, led to a drain in popular support. Moreover, the communist movement became subject to internal divisions as a consequence of the change in political system. Under new leadership, the security forces improved their performance, and by the time that Corazón Aquino was succeeded as president by former army chief of staff **Fidel Ramos** in elections in May 1992, NPA had declined as a fighting force. President Ramos was helped by the closure of all US military bases, such as the **Clark Air Base** and the **Subic Bay Naval Base**, which had long been a central nationalist demand by the communist movement and in September 1992 he was sufficiently self-confident to persuade the Congress to legalize the Communist Party. The government has been engaged in intermittent negotiations with the **National Democratic Front**, which represents its interests but without being able to bring the limited insurgency to an end. Meanwhile, NPA has shown an ability to attack police stations and to kidnap senior military personnel.

NPA was designated a terrorist group under the European Union Common Foreign and Security Policy, and a Foreign Terrorist Organization by the US State Department in 2002. However, in 2011 the Philippines government delisted NPA as a terrorist organization. In September 2005, President **Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo** signed the Amnesty Proclamation 1377 for the Communist Party of the Philippines and NPA, among other communist rebel groups. Nevertheless, NPA has continued engaging in political violence. NPA membership has declined considerably from the heights of the mid-1980s. Numbers dwindled to 4,000 in 2013 as a consequence of factionalism, defections, and surrenders. Even so, there is no indication that the NPA intends to disband, and it remains engaged in guerrilla activities in rural areas where poverty is rampant. Correspondingly, in response to continued violence, President **Rodrigo Duterte** reneged on a ceasefire initiated in August 2016 and signed a proclamation

designating the Communist Party of the Philippines and NPA terrorist groups on 5 December 2017.

*see also:* Aquino, Benigno; Aquino, Corazón; Clark Air Base; Duterte, Rodrigo; *Hukbalahap* Movement; Macapagal-Arroyo, Gloria; Marcos, Ferdinand; National Democratic Front; Ramos, Fidel; Sisón, José María; Subic Bay Naval Base.

### **New Thinking** (Laos) *see* **New Economic Mechanism**

#### **Ngo Dinh Diem** (Vietnam)

Ngo Dinh Diem was president of the Republic of (South) Vietnam from its proclamation on 26 October 1955 until his assassination on 2 November 1963. Diem was born on 3 January 1901 in Hue in central Vietnam. His family were traditionally mandarins or public servants and had been Catholic for more than two centuries. After a conventional education which culminated in the study of law at the University of Hanoi, Diem entered the imperial service and so distinguished himself that he was appointed minister of the interior by Emperor **Bao Dai** in 1933 but soon resigned in protest at the constraints imposed on his office by French colonial rule. His nationalist credentials assured, he withdrew from public life in keeping with an early ambition to become a priest. Ngo Dinh Diem was a fervent anti-communist which was an extension of his religious faith. He refused to join in cooperation with **Ho Chi Minh** and was embittered by the communists' assassination of his brother Ngo Dinh Khoi, then governor of Quang Nai Province. He also rejected an offer to serve in the government of the former emperor Bao Dai in the late 1940s under French aegis. He left Vietnam in 1950 and travelled in Japan, Italy, the Philippines, the United States, and Belgium, enjoying the hospitality of a network of Catholic associates. He went to France in 1953 and was still there in June 1954 when Bao Dai, influenced by the Eisenhower administration, invited him to become prime minister. He returned to Saigon towards the end of the month in time to oppose the terms of the **Geneva Agreements on Indochina**: the conference concluded its deliberations on 21 July 1954.

Diem built up his political position with US support after crushing the criminal Binh Xuyen organization and two religious sects. In October 1955 he held a spurious referendum whose controlled outcome enabled him to remove Bao Dai as head of the State of Vietnam and to have himself appointed as president of the Republic of Vietnam. Committed to celibacy, Diem came under the powerful influence of his brother (and minister of the interior) Ngo Dinh Nhu and his formidable wife. Their authoritarian regime, within which Diem appeared as a remote figure, failed to contain the revival of communist insurgency by the end of the 1950s. US support began to wane in the wake of Buddhist demonstrations and self-immolations, and the Kennedy administration became persuaded to countenance a military coup by dissident army officers. That coup was mounted on 1 November 1963. Diem and his brother were captured and then killed the next day, but successive military governments failed to do any better against the communist insurgency directed from the northern part of the country. *see also:* Bao Dai, Emperor; Geneva Agreements on Indochina 1954; Ho Chi Minh.

#### **Nguyen Ai Quoc** (Vietnam) *see* **Ho Chi Minh**

#### **Nguyen Co Thach** (Vietnam)

Nguyen Co Thach was Vietnam's foreign minister between February 1980 and June 1991. He had prime responsibility for managing the adverse diplomatic consequences of the invasion of Cambodia, defending his country's interests with skill and determination in negotiations with **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** and the People's Republic of China. He was forced from office at the seventh national congress of the Communist Party as part of the price of Vietnam's rapprochement with China. Nguyen Co Thach was born on 15 May 1923 into a peasant family in northern Vietnam. He entered the revolutionary movement as a young man and was arrested by the French. He rose to become a staff officer in the **Viet Minh** army and took part in the **Battle of Dien Bien Phu** in 1954. He then entered the diplomatic service and spent four years in

New Delhi as consul-general. On returning to Hanoi, he played an important role in a series of international negotiations beginning with the **Geneva Agreements on Laos** in 1961–2. By the end of the 1970s he had risen to become the most senior official in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He was made an alternate member of the party Politburo in 1982 and a full member in 1986, the first diplomat to attain such rank. In March 1987 he was appointed a deputy prime minister, holding that office until June 1991 when all of his party and state posts were relinquished simultaneously. He died on 10 April 1998, aged 77.

see also: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Dien Bien Phu, Battle of, 1954; Geneva Agreements on Laos 1962; Viet Minh.

### Nguyen Manh Cam (Vietnam)

Nguyen Manh Cam was appointed Vietnam's foreign minister in August 1991 in succession to **Nguyen Co Thach**, who had become an obstacle to rapprochement with the People's Republic of China. He was a longstanding career diplomat chosen for his professional skills rather than for his political standing. Nguyen Manh Cam was born in 1929 in central Nghe Tinh Province and joined the Communist Party at the age of 17. He is believed to have received a university education and showed an early aptitude for diplomacy. He served extensively in Europe, including two periods as ambassador in Moscow, where he was in post at the time of his appointment as foreign minister. Possibly because he had not been directly involved in difficult negotiations with Chinese counterparts, Nguyen Manh Cam was regarded as a suitable plenipotentiary for repairing Sino-Vietnamese relations. He has also been active in developing relations with ASEAN (**Association of Southeast Asian Nations**), which Vietnam joined in July 1995. Nguyen Manh Cam became a member of the party's Politburo at its mid-term conference held in January 1994. In September 1997, he was appointed additionally to the office of deputy prime minister, which he retained on being succeeded as foreign minister by Nguyen Dy Nien in January 2000. He remained a member of the Politburo and a

member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam until 2001. In 2005, he joined the Eminent Persons Group that outlined the **ASEAN Charter**.

see also: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; ASEAN Charter (Charter of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations); Thach, Nguyen Co.

### Nguyen Minh Triet (Vietnam)

Nguyen Minh Triet served as president of Vietnam from 2006 to 2011, making him the third in command after the general secretary and the prime minister. A southerner, Triet was born to a farming family in Ben Cat in October 1942, and joined the Communist Party of Vietnam in 1965 after studying mathematics and political science at Saigon University, where he was active in the leftist student movement. As a member of the Communist Party's youth movement, Triet saw military action in My Tho Province during the early years of the **Vietnam War**.

Triet was appointed party chief for Song Be Province in 1992, a post he held until 1997 when he moved to Binh Duong Province. In 2000, he became party chief of Ho Chi Minh City, where he developed a reputation as a crusader against corruption. During his time as president, he was seen to be a strong advocate of market reforms and foreign investments. His political views, however, are more conservative. As president, Triet staunchly defended the government's crackdown on human rights lawyers, the Roman Catholic clergy, and members of an outlawed trade union in 2007.

see also: Vietnam War.

### Nguyen Phu Trong (Vietnam)

Nguyen Phu Trong was elected general secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam at the party's 13th National Congress in February 2021. As general secretary, he is one of the 'Four Pillars' that govern Vietnam although in truth, he doubtless eclipses the rest of the quartet in terms of power and influence and is presently the most powerful leader to have emerged in decades, since **Le Duan**, as he begins an unprecedented third term as party secretary.



Nguyen Phu Trong was born in Hanoi in 1944 and graduated from the linguistics faculty of Hanoi General University in 1967. He joined the party in the same year. An intellectual heavy-weight, Nguyen Phu Trong began his career in the *Tap chi Cong San* (*Communist Review*) in 1967 and was its editor-in-chief between 1991 and 1996. He completed his postgraduate studies at the High-Level Nguyen Ai Quoc Party School and his doctorate in Party Building from the Academy of the Social Sciences of the Soviet Union. He has been a member of the Politburo since 1997 and was elected chairman of the National Assembly in 2006. Nguyen Phu Trong is widely seen as a conservative with a reputation for consensus building. The latter quality has allowed him to play the role of mediator between the late ultra-conservative president, **Truong Tan Sang**, and Prime Minister **Nguyen Tan Dung**, when both were in power simultaneously. Developments during the seventh Plenum of the Communist Party of Vietnam in May 2013 had appeared to indicate that Nguyen Phu Trong's influence may have deteriorated when the Central Committee produced its own list of candidates for election to the Politburo instead of rubber-stamping the general secretary's list as was the previous practice. Moreover, several candidates endorsed by Nguyen Phu Trong failed in their quest for election onto the Politburo. In the event, Trong would prevail over pressure from reformists and the ambitious Prime Minister Dung. Trong has pursued an extensive anti-corruption campaign as chairman of the anti-corruption steering committee since 2013. Known in local parlance as 'Dot Lo' or 'Blazing Furnace', the campaign has seen a broad spectrum of party members come under the spotlight, leading to several high-profile convictions and public reprimands, not a few of whom were allies of Nguyen Tan Dung.

Following the death of previous president **Tran Dai Quang** in September 2018, the Vietnamese National Assembly voted with a virtual consensus to install Nguyen Phu Trong as president on 23 October. In so doing, they made Trong the first person to hold both the positions of state president and party secretary since **Ho Chi Minh**. In April 2019, Trong was hospitalized for a mild stroke and disappeared

from the public eye for a time. Ailing health also prevented him from attending the 75th national day celebrations in September 2020, leading to widespread speculation about his future as party secretary. In the event, Trong laid these concerns to rest in February 2021 when at the age of 76 years he was elected to an unprecedented third term. Of note was the fact that a presumptive successor identified by Trong himself, whom he was believed to have groomed – executive secretary of the Central Committee Secretariat and former head of the Central Commission for Inspection Tran Quoc Vuong – was unable to muster sufficient support to position himself to take over.

As party leader, Trong has been seen as sympathetic to the People's Republic of China despite residual suspicions between the two countries. Trong purportedly has close personal ties with leaders of the Chinese Communist Party and is known to have sent cadres to China to learn from their system. Nguyen Phu Trong has on several occasions also led the Vietnamese government to step back from an overly muscular position on bilateral disputes over competing **South China Sea** claims.

see also: Ho Chi Minh; Le Duan; Nguyen Tan Dung; South China Sea; Tran Dai Quang; Truong Tan Sang.

### **Nguyen Tan Dung** (Vietnam)

Nguyen Tan Dung was appointed prime minister of Vietnam in 2006, replacing **Phan Van Khai** as part of a cabinet reshuffle with the objective of revitalizing the country's leadership. He assumed office at the age of 57, making him the youngest prime minister since Vietnamese unification in 1975. Nguyen Tan Dung was born in 1949 and holds a bachelor of law degree in high-level political theory. He joined the Vietnamese army in 1961, when he was 12 during the country's struggle for reunification, and served in the military for two decades. He started off as a medic and was slowly promoted up the ranks to become a major and head of the personnel board of the military command in Kien Giang Province. During his time in the army, he was involved in the Third Indochina War which eventually led to the fall of the **Khmer Rouge** regime in Phnom Penh. After

the war, he climbed quickly up the party ranks to become a member of its Politburo in 1996. Prior to his appointment as prime minister, he became first deputy prime minister in 1997 and served as governor of the State Bank of Vietnam from 1998 to 1999.

Coming from the more commercial South, Nguyen Tan Dung was a strong advocate of Vietnam's liberal economic reforms. Nevertheless, he was heavily criticized at the January 2011 National Congress by a conservative faction led by the newly appointed president, **Truong Tan Sang**, which drew attention to huge losses incurred by **State Owned Enterprises** (SOE) under the supervision of the prime minister. Further attacks were launched against Nguyen Tan Dung at the fourth Plenum (December 2011) and the sixth Plenum (October 2012). Though these attempts to unseat Nguyen ultimately failed, they did signal a reduction in his influence. As a result of these pressures, Nguyen Tan Dung was compelled to publicly accept personal responsibility for the failure of several SOEs. Dung was also an advocate of a greater role for the United States in the region and sought to cultivate stronger US–Vietnam relations. This set him at odds with conservative factions within the party for whom improved relations with China were a priority. It also further deepened his brewing rivalry with Party Secretary **Nguyen Phu Trong** that was playing out in tussles between the government and the Politburo over authority on matters such as anti-corruption.

Upon his completion of the maximum two terms as prime minister as per party convention, Nguyen Tan Dung's efforts to secure a position in the Central Committee which would have put him in contention for the post of party secretary, which he was known to aspire to, met with stiff resistance from conservative elements concerned about the fact that the growing personal clout of the outgoing prime minister was slowly but surely eclipsing that of the party. In the build-up to the 12th National Congress in late 2015, the Politburo recommended that among the 'four pillars' – party secretary, president, prime minister, and chairperson of the National Assembly – only Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong should be

confirmed for a second term. The recommendation was passed by the Central Committee, thereby inflicting a blow to Dung's prospects. An effort to overturn the process at the January 2016 National Congress proper backfired: Dung was nominated by allies for a Central Committee position which he declined in the hope that a majority of the congress would vote to overturn his withdrawal, thereby providing him a strong mandate to continue. In the event, he failed to secure sufficient support from the 1500 delegates and eventually faded from the political scene.

*see also:* Khmer Rouge; Nguyen Phu Trong; Phan Van Khai; State Owned Enterprise Reform; Truong Tan Sang.

**Nguyen Tat Thanh** (Vietnam) *see* **Ho Chi Minh**

**Nguyen Van Linh** (Vietnam)

Nguyen Van Linh held the office of general secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam from its sixth National Congress in December 1986 until its seventh National Congress in June 1991. In that office, he was responsible for promoting the policy of **Doi Moi** (economic renovation) as well as initiating Vietnam's military withdrawal from Cambodia. His appointment to succeed **Truong Chinh** came as a surprise. Nguyen Van Linh had suffered politically in the late 1970s for his resistance to doctrinaire economic policies for southern Vietnam, losing his Politburo seat in 1982 as a consequence. He was born in Hanoi on 1 July 1915 with the original name of Nguyen Van Cuc, which was changed to avoid arrest by the South Vietnamese authorities after 1954. Linh grew up in the south of the country where he joined the revolutionary movement as a young man. He was imprisoned by the French and spent the Pacific War years in incarceration. After the war, he worked under party luminary **Le Duan**, rising to direct the Central Office for South Vietnam (COSVN) which was the headquarters for communist revolutionary activity against the Saigon administration. After Vietnam's unification, he was made a member of the party's Politburo and headed its committee for Ho

Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon). He fell out of political favour from the late 1970s for his objections to so-called socialist reconstruction in the south. Shortly after losing his Politburo seat, he was returned as party chief in Ho Chi Minh City and then extraordinarily reinstated to the Politburo in July 1985 without the sanction of a party congress when it had become evident that without economic reform, Vietnam faced a major crisis. In retirement, he was an outspoken critic of inefficiency and corruption. He died on 27 April 1998, aged 87. *see also: Doi Moi; Le Duan; Truong Chinh; Vietnam War.*

### **Nguyen Van Thieu** (Vietnam)

Nguyen Van Thieu was president and head of the government of the Republic of (South) Vietnam from September 1967 until April 1975, leaving Saigon for exile overseas shortly before the communists seized power. He was born on 5 April 1923 into a Catholic family. He entered the army under French rule and received his professional training at the National Military Academy in Hue. He continued as an officer under the regime of **Ngo Dinh Diem**, receiving rapid promotion. As armed forces chief of staff and a lieutenant-general, he was a member of the coup group which overthrew Diem in November 1963. He was initially deputy prime minister and then constitutional president during 1965–7. In September 1967, however, he secured election as executive president and held on to power. In that office, he resisted negotiations with the communist insurgents and sought to prevent a private deal between Washington and Hanoi being translated into the **Paris Peace Agreements** for Vietnam in January 1973. It was his decision to order the retreat of southern forces following the communist Ban Me Thuot Offensive in the central highlands in March 1975 which led to a military rout and the speedy collapse of his regime. After his resignation in April 1975 in the face of defeat, Thieu fled to London via Taiwan, and later settled down in Massachusetts in the United States. He passed away on 29 September 2001 at the age of 78.

*see also: Ngo Dinh Diem; Paris Peace Agreements 1973.*

### **Nguyen Xuan Phuc** (Vietnam)

Chosen by the Communist Party of Vietnam as the party candidate for the post of prime minister, Nguyen Xuan Phuc was formally conveyed into high office uncontested by the National Assembly in April 2016. The 61-year-old former deputy prime minister replaced the controversial reformist **Nguyen Tan Dung** following the latter's completion of the maximum two terms in office. In that position, he joined party chief **Nguyen Phu Trong** and President **Tran Dai Quang** (until his passing in September 2018) to form the new triumvirate of the Vietnamese leadership. At the time, Phuc was widely seen as the consensus candidate to bring stability to the party leadership after the acrimonious politicking between Dung and Trong, which cast a long shadow over the 12th Party Congress in 2015.

Born on 20 July 1954 into a family of **National Liberation Front of South Vietnam** (Vietcong) fighters in central Quang Nam Province, Phuc was a graduate of the Hanoi National Economics University, where he read economics. He also spent time in the mid-1990s at the National University of Singapore studying economics. Phuc rose through the ranks of party and bureaucracy in Quang Nam, having served in various offices at the local legislative level on the Quang Nam People's Committee as deputy head, head, vice-chairman, permanent vice-chairman, and eventually, chairman. In 2006, he was elected to the party Central Committee on the occasion of the tenth national party congress. He became a Politburo member, first deputy prime minister, and also cabinet secretary in 2011; the latter position was widely seen as recognition of his managerial ability and political astuteness.

During his term as prime minister, Phuc built strong ties with local politicians as well as the business community as he sought to maintain Vietnam's economic growth momentum. By way of his economics and management background, Phuc has paid considerable attention to maintaining the steady growth rates of the Vietnamese economy and advocated the deepening of regional economic integration in **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)**. He has also made efforts to

accelerate the technology start-up culture in Vietnam and took a personal interest in start-up applications submitted to the Ministry of Science and Technology. Though seen as possessing a lower international profile than his predecessor, Phuc won plaudits for his able shepherding of his country through the coronavirus, when Vietnam was touted as one of the most successful cases where infections were decisively controlled. He was also credited with the effective chairmanship of ASEAN, when the regional organization appeared to hold the line against Chinese encroachment into the **South China Sea**. Phuc was the first Southeast Asian leader to meet the president of the United States, Donald Trump, when he made an official visit to Washington, D.C., in May 2017. As prime minister, he also hosted the second summit between Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in March 2019.

As the 13th Party Congress drew near, Phuc was identified as a favourite to replace Nguyen Phu Trong, who was expected to retire on account of term limits, his age, and his failing health. In the event, Trong secured an unprecedented third term, and Phuc was elected to the office of president of Vietnam by the National Assembly in April 2021. This marked the first time the National Assembly elected an incumbent prime minister to the office of president. He was succeeded by **Pham Binh Chinh**.  
see also: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; National Liberation Front of South Vietnam; Nguyen Phu Trong; Nguyen Tan Dung; Pham Binh Chinh; South China Sea; Tran Dai Quang.

### **Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat** (Malaysia)

Nik Aziz was appointed chief minister of the northern Malay state of Kelantan in October 1990 and held that position until he stepped down, purportedly under pressure, in May 2013. He was also the spiritual leader of **Parti Islam Se-Malaysia** (PAS) and came to personify austerity in contrast to the lavish and venal lifestyles of some senior **UMNO (United Malays National Organization)** politicians. Known endearingly in PAS by the sobriquets '*tok guru*' (teacher) and '*panglima perang*' (war admiral),

he was one of Malaysia's most revered Islamic teachers and commanded a strong following from both sides of the political divide.

Nik Aziz was born in 1931 in Pulau Melaka, Kelantan, and received his education in Malaysia before attending Darul Uloom Deoband in India and Al-Azhar in Egypt, where he graduated with a master's degree in Islamic jurisprudence. He joined PAS in 1967 and quickly became a member of Parliament for the constituency of Pengkalan Chepa until 1986. In 1990, he helped PAS regain the state government of Kelantan, which was lost to UMNO in 1978, and became chief minister.

Nik Aziz's political career was marked by frequent exchanges with UMNO leaders over religious credentials and the role of **Islam** in governing Malaysia. His attacks on UMNO, including during his sermons, were especially visceral, where he prayed for their downfall and lambasted them as heretics and infidels. His exchanges with **Mahathir Mohamad**, in particular, have become Malaysian folklore. Nik Aziz was a strong supporter of closer cooperation between PAS and other opposition parties in the then-**Pakatan Rakyat** coalition, including the **Democratic Action Party**. Nik Aziz was also popular among the non-Muslim community especially in his home state of Kelantan, and was instrumental in drawing greater support for PAS from the Chinese community. He did, however, periodically express views that went against the grain of his presumed moderate, pluralist persona. For instance, he was a vocal proponent of stricter application of *shari'a* law to govern Muslims, and also publicly criticized women who adorned themselves, suggesting that this contributed to sexual crimes. In 2001, Nik Aziz's eldest son, Nik Adli Nik Aziz, was apprehended in a raid on the militant group, **Kumpulan Militan Malaysia**, and was detained without trial under the internal security act for five years. Nik Aziz survived a major heart attack in 2004 but passed away on 12 February 2015. With his demise, progressive elements in the Islamist opposition party lost their most eminent and ardent champion. Not surprisingly, PAS would soon split, with the progressives leaving to form **Parti Amanah Negara**.

see *also*: Democratic Action Party (DAP); Islam; *Kumpulan Militan Malaysia*; *Pakatan Rakyat*; *Parti Amanah Negara*; *Parti Islam Se-Malaysia*; Mahathir Mohamad, Tun; UMNO (United Malays National Organization).

### **Nixon Doctrine 1969 (Vietnam)**

On 25 July 1969 at a press briefing at a US military base on the island of Guam shortly before embarking on a tour of southern Asian countries, President Richard Nixon set out revised criteria for his government's policy in the region. It was made explicit that the object of that revision was to avoid direct US involvement in any future **Vietnam War**-type conflicts. In a speech in November and then in a report to Congress in February 1970, the president spelled out the terms of what had come to be known as the Nixon Doctrine. These terms were that:

The United States will keep all its treaty commitments; we shall provide a shield if a nuclear power threatens the freedom of a nation allied with us, or of a nation whose survival we consider vital to our security and the security of the region as a whole. In cases involving other types of aggression, we shall furnish military and economic assistance when requested and as appropriate. But we shall look to the nation directly threatened to assume the primary responsibility of providing the manpower for its defence.

Nixon's remarks on Guam indicated the future direction of US policy in Southeast Asia leading to military disengagement from Vietnam and the rest of Indochina before the end of 1973, as provided for initially in the **Paris Peace Agreements**.

see *also*: Paris Peace Agreements 1973; Vietnam War.

**Nol, Lon** (Cambodia) see **Lon Nol**

### **Nong Duc Manh** (Vietnam)

Nong Duc Manh was elected general secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam in 2001 at the ninth Party Congress and remained in office until January 2011 when he was succeeded by

**Nguyen Phu Trong**. According to official Vietnamese records, he was born into an ethnic Tay family in 1940 but there has been speculation about his parentage. Nong's meteoric rise since becoming a member of the national party's Central Committee in 1989 raised many questions as to how a minority Tay orphan could have risen so far so fast. Rumours abound that he was one of many illegitimate children of **Ho Chi Minh**, Vietnam's revolutionary leader. Moreover, when Nong succeeded **Le Kha Phieu** in 2001 as general secretary, he was the first from an ethnic minority background, the first to possess a university degree (he studied forestry in Leningrad from 1966 to 1971), and the first to have no military experience. He joined the Politburo in 1991.

Nong Duc Manh is perhaps best known for his nine-year tenure as the chairman of Vietnam's National Assembly from 1992 to 2001. He was credited with elevating the importance of the National Assembly in Vietnam's politics, the fourth of the 'Four Pillars' today, which hitherto had been seen as little more than a rubber-stamping body. Widely considered a moderate reformist, his election as general secretary helped to strengthen the consensus behind further economic liberalization. Anti-corruption and rule of law were key themes of his leadership. He was a strong advocate of tough anti-corruption legislation and the need for greater accountability of party officials. He was also known for his political reform programme which improved the efficiency of state institutions. In recognition of his ability to unite the many factions within the party, he was re-elected by the party's newly expanded Central Committee in April 2006.

see *also*: Ho Chi Minh; Le Kha Phieu, General; Nguyen Phu Trong.

**Norodom Ranariddh** (Cambodia) see **Ranariddh, Prince Norodom**

**Norodom Sihanouk** (Cambodia) see **Sihanouk, King Norodom**

### **Nouhak Phoumsavan** (Laos)

Nouhak Phoumsavan was elected president of the Lao People's Democratic Republic on 25 November 1992 by the Supreme People's

Assembly on the death of **Kaysone Phomvihan**. Nouhak and Kaysone were close colleagues and veterans of the Laotian revolutionary movement. Nouhak was born in the southern town of Savannakhet in April 1910, and was known to have run a transport business between Laos and Vietnam in the early 1940s, so he came into contact with Vietnamese communists who recruited him to their cause. He was in Hanoi at the end of the Pacific War as representative of the Laotian revolutionaries. After the outbreak of hostilities with the French in the **Indochina Wars**, he directed guerrilla operations across the Lao-Vietnamese border. He was a **Pathet Lao** delegate to the conference that resulted in the **Geneva Agreements on Indochina** in 1954, after which he played a prominent role in the **Lao People's Revolutionary Party** following its formation in 1955. Although he engaged in negotiations with successive governments in Vientiane before 1975, his main contribution was as Kaysone's deputy and second-ranking member of the party's Politburo. After the establishment of the communist government in 1975, Nouhak became minister of finance and then in 1982 one of four deputy prime ministers. As president, Nouhak was not believed to occupy as powerful a position as the prime minister, **Khamtay Siphandon**, who replaced Kaysone as head of the ruling party in November 1992. In March 1996, he was removed from the party's Politburo and, in February 1998, he was replaced as president by Khamtay Siphandon, after which he was given the role of advisor to the Executive Committee of the party's Central Committee. Nouhak died on 9 September 2008. *see also*: Geneva Agreements on Indochina 1954; Indochina Wars; Kaysone Phomvihan; Khamtay Siphandon; Lao People's Revolutionary Party; *Pathet Lao*.

### **Nuon Chea** (Cambodia)

Gaining notoriety as 'Brother Number Two', Nuon Chea was second only to **Pol Pot** in the hierarchy of the **Khmer Rouge**. He was born Lao Kim Lorn on 7 July 1926 in Voat Kor, in the northwestern province of Battambang. Nuon Chea studied law at the prestigious Thammasat

University in Thailand in the 1940s. It was during this time that he encountered the Communist Party of Thailand, and through them, he was introduced to communist ideas. Unlike his compatriots in the Khmer Rouge including Pol Pot, Nuon Chea did not study in France. In 1950, Nuon Chea joined the Vietnamese-led Communist Party of Indochina and returned to fight the French colonialists. He would rise to the rank of deputy secretary in the Communist Party of Kampuchea, later known as the Khmer Rouge, in September 1960.

Following the overthrow of the US-backed government of **Lon Nol** in 1975, Nuon Chea played an instrumental role in the brutal regime that the Khmer Rouge would impose on Cambodia. As deputy general secretary, he was primarily responsible for internal party security and organization, thereby making him just as influential as Pol Pot. According to **Chea Sim**, a former Khmer Rouge official who defected, Nuon Chea was effectively the brains behind the disastrous social experiment that took the lives of more than a million Cambodians. Other Khmer Rouge officials would go on record to confirm that Nuon Chea was the mastermind behind the killings. When Vietnamese forces overran Phnom Penh in February 1979, Nuon Chea fled back into the jungles. He was one of the last Khmer Rouge leaders to surrender, in 1998, but avoided prosecution under the government of **Hun Sen**. He was arrested in Pailin in September 2007 to stand trial (*see Khmer Rouge Trials*). Together with Khieu Samphan, Nuon Chea was eventually charged and convicted of crimes against humanity in 2014 and genocide in 2018. Both were given two life sentences. Throughout his trial, Nuon Chea showed no remorse, nor was he prepared to accept any responsibility for the violence. Instead, he defended himself by blaming the killings on competing factions within the Khmer Rouge, although no evidence was mustered to substantiate his version of events. Nuon Chea died on 4 August 2019 while serving his sentence. He was 93.

*see also*: Chea Sim; Hun Sen; Khieu Samphan; Khmer Rouge; Khmer Rouge Trials; Lon Nol; Pol Pot.

## O

### **One Malaysia** (1Malaysia) (Malaysia)

One Malaysia constituted a key pillar of the National Transformation Programme that framed Malaysia's aspirations to attain high-income nation status as envisaged in the goals of Vision 2020. Introduced by former Prime Minister **Najib Tun Razak**, the concept was aimed at fostering a greater sense of national unity amongst Malaysians of all races with the recognition that the country's further economic development would depend on its ability to unite its multiethnic, multireligious population towards that end. It was never clear, however, what concrete forms the concept would take. In part because of this, reactions to the articulation of this concept were mixed. Many were sceptical whether it represented anything more than a hollow political campaign slogan manufactured to win back the support of disenfranchised ethnic Chinese and Indian voters to the **Barisan Nasional** (National Front, BN) coalition. This came after the erosion of support for BN at the 2008 general election. On the other hand, the reference to inclusive goals contained in the One Malaysia concept has also prompted Malay conservatives in the country and within **UMNO (United Malays National Organization)** to demand clarification on what the introduction of One Malaysia would mean for the special position and privileges of Malays and other **Bumiputera**. The flames of controversy surrounding One Malaysia were fanned further by opposition leader **Anwar Ibrahim**, who alleged that its campaign slogan, 'People First', was borrowed from the One Israel campaign of the Ehud Barak government, which utilized a similar slogan. According to Anwar, the similarity was contrived by APCO Worldwide, which consulted for both the Malaysian and Israeli governments. With the collapse of the BN government and Najib's own political downfall, One Malaysia has all but faded into oblivion.

see also: Anwar Ibrahim; *Barisan Nasional* (BN); *Bumiputera*; Najib Tun Razak, Datuk Seri

Mohamad; **UMNO** (United Malays National Organization).

### **Ong Boon Hua** (Malaya/Malaysia) see **Chin Peng**

### **Ong Teng Cheong** (Singapore)

Ong Teng Cheong was the first elected president of the Republic of Singapore and served from 1993 to 1999. Born in Singapore on 22 January 1936, Ong graduated with a degree in architecture from the University of Adelaide in Australia and began his career as an architect there. He later obtained a scholarship to pursue a Master of Civic Design degree at the University of Liverpool in the United Kingdom. Upon graduating in 1967, he joined the planning department of the Ministry of National Development as an architect and town planner. Four years later, he resigned from the civil service after repeated appeals to the Public Service Commission to adjust his salary in line with his qualifications failed. Thereafter, he established his own practice, **Ong & Ong Architects and Town Planner**, together with his wife, who later ran the firm after Ong entered politics.

Ong's political activities began with grassroots movements in the late 1960s. He was appointed chairman of the Resident's Association in Seletar Hills, and subsequently entered politics as a **People's Action Party** (PAP) member of Parliament for Kim Keat in 1972. He remained in Parliament for the same ward for four more terms before leading a team to win the Toa Payoh Group Representation Constituency in 1991. Ong also rose to become a senior member of the cabinet, serving in the communications, culture, and labour portfolios, and also as deputy prime minister. In addition, he held the posts of chairman of PAP and secretary-general of the government-sanctioned labour union, the National Trade Union Congress (NTUC). Ong was also one of the four senior leaders who were considered potential successors to **Lee Kuan Yew**. Educated in Chinese and

well-versed in Chinese poetics and culture, he enjoyed strong support from the Chinese majority. He resigned from Parliament in 1993 to run for president as a PAP-backed candidate. After a somewhat pedestrian campaign against a relatively unknown candidate, Ong won 60 per cent of the vote and became the country's fifth president. Ong was a vocal leader who spoke his mind. As a result, despite being a key member of the establishment, his outspokenness has occasionally placed him at odds with the government. As secretary-general of the NTUC, he sanctioned a two-day strike for workers in the shipping industry in 1986 without prior cabinet approval, irking some of his fellow ministers in the process. Two years after this incident, he led a public demonstration against what was then perceived as American interference in Singapore's internal affairs.

Despite enjoying the support of the PAP in his presidential campaign, Ong spent most of his years in presidential office locked in an antagonistic relationship with former cabinet colleagues over presidential responsibility in the matter of safeguarding Singapore's reserves, which was a key responsibility for the

otherwise ceremonial position. In essence, Ong wanted greater access to information about the reserves than he claimed he was afforded. Ong also argued that the government's decision to sell the Post Office Savings Bank to the Development Bank of Singapore in 1998 without first informing him was inappropriate since, constitutionally, the bank's status as a government statutory board meant that decisions involving its reserves fell within the remit of the elected presidency. At the end of his six years in office, Ong declined invitations to stand for re-election on the grounds of poor health as well as difficulties he had faced in dealing with the government. The cabinet had also, by then, decided to support S. R. Nathan, a former senior civil servant, as the government's favoured candidate. Nathan subsequently succeeded Ong as president in 1999. After stepping down as president, Ong returned to his firm as an advisor until his death in 2002.

*see also:* Lee Kuan Yew; People's Action Party.

***Organisasi Papua Merdeka (OPM)***

(Indonesia) *see* Free Papua Movement



## P

### ***Pakatan Harapan*** (Malaysia)

The *Pakatan Harapan* or Alliance of Hope coalition came into being in September 2015 as a result of the alignment of interests of several Malaysian opposition parties following the demise of its predecessor, **Pakatan Rakyat**, which collapsed after **Parti Islam Se-Malaysia**, popularly known by its acronym, PAS, left following the breakdown of relations with the **Democratic Action Party (DAP)**.

At its inception, *Pakatan Harapan* included **Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR)**, **DAP**, and **Parti Amanah Negara**, a party formed by the faction of PAS that disagreed with the decision to sever relations with the DAP. Its prospects were later given a huge boost in March 2017 when it was joined by **Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia (Bersatu)**, the party formed by former UMNO heavyweights **Mahathir Mohamad** and **Muhyiddin Yassin** and their supporters who vehemently opposed the mismanagement and malfeasance associated with the government of **Najib Tun Razak** over the **1MDB** corruption scandal. The inclusion of *Bersatu* into the coalition was not without controversy. Smarting from residual acrimony towards UMNO in general and Mahathir in particular, several senior members of *Pakatan Harapan* initially refused to work with *Bersatu*. In the event, it was the intervention of **Anwar Ibrahim** and, significantly, his ostensible reconciliation with Mahathir, that paved the way for cooperation.

Drawn together more by a shared opposition to Najib and UMNO than alignment of either broader interests or ideologies, it remained uncertain if *Pakatan Harapan* could maintain unity and muster enough clout and resources to eventually defeat the incumbent **Barisan Nasional** (National Front, BN). It was these residual realities that rendered the accomplishment of May 2018 all the more remarkable, when *Pakatan Harapan* rode a wave of public anger to dislodge BN at the national polls, marking the first time since independence that neither the **Alliance Party** nor BN was in power. The

coalition had entered the election with crucial support from Sabah-based parties, Warisan and the United Progressive Kinabalu Organisation, with which it established an electoral pact, and focused its campaign on the rising cost of living and corruption involving 1MDB. At the election, held on 9 May, *Pakatan Harapan* and its allies managed to win 121 out of 222 electoral seats, giving it a simple parliamentary majority. It also won the state legislatures of Negeri Sembilan, Perak, Johor, Malacca, Kedah, and Sabah, and it retained Penang and Selangor, states held by its predecessor, *Pakatan Rakyat*.

However, the euphoria of electoral triumph soon gave way to the realities posed by the challenges of governing with an eclectic coalition. Catalysing economic recovery proved especially trying for the coalition, given that they had inherited debt from the previous administration. These challenges were rendered more acute by the fact that *Pakatan Harapan* had not expected to win, ergo, a delay in cabinet appointments and eventually, the struggle to keep promises made on the campaign trail. Leadership succession proved to be Damocles' sword hovering over the coalition. In a society weaned on an especially acute flavour of racialized politics, as a multiethnic coalition, *Pakatan Harapan* was always going to struggle to secure support from the crucial ethnic Malay base. This was rendered more acute by the fact that its opponents, UMNO and PAS, were avowed Malay parties. Indeed, the signs were ominous for the coalition government not too long into its short-lived term of barely two years. Of the ten by-elections that took place in Malaysia between May 2018 and February 2020, *Pakatan Harapan* managed to win only five of them. Even more devastating was the fact that with the exception of one by-election, the last five were won by BN candidates. Having overpromised and underdelivered, the coalition ultimately buckled under the weight of expectations and incessant infighting over the unresolved issue of the timeline for an

eventual handover of power from Mahathir to Anwar. During a meeting of the *Pakatan Harapan* Presidential Council on 21 February 2018, which lasted four hours, supporters of Anwar Ibrahim pressed Mahathir for a firm date on which power would be handed over. While the meeting ended cordially with Anwar reaffirming that he would respect Mahathir's decision, the avidity of Anwar and his supporters precipitated countermeasures from detractors from both *Bersatu* and Anwar's own PKR. In the event, *Bersatu* and a PKR faction aligned with deputy president Azmin Ali broke away from *Pakatan Harapan* (see **Sheraton Move 2020**). The move meant that *Pakatan Harapan* no longer commanded a parliamentary majority, thereby triggering a crisis which was ultimately resolved when the Malaysian king appointed to power a new coalition which included *Bersatu*, BN, and PAS.

see also: 1MDB; Alliance Party; Anwar Ibrahim; *Barisan Nasional* (BN); Democratic Action Party (DAP); Mahathir Mohamad, Tun; Muhyiddin Yassin, Tan Sri; Najib Tun Razak, Datuk Seri Mohamad; *Pakatan Rakyat*; *Parti Amanah Negara*; *Parti Islam Se-Malaysia*; *Parti Keadilan Rakyat*; *Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia*; *Sheraton Move 2020*; UMNO (United Malays National Organization).

### ***Pakatan Rakyat*** (Malaysia)

*Pakatan Rakyat* (PR) was a political coalition formed on 1 April 2008 in the wake of Malaysia's 12th general election. The coalition brought together **Parti Keadilan Rakyat** (PKR), the **Democratic Action Party (DAP)** and **Parti Islam Se-Malaysia** (PAS). The Sarawak National Party joined the coalition in April 2010 but quit a year later. While Malaysian parties have entered into various forms of political alliances and cooperative arrangements such as *Gagasan Rakyat* and **Barisan Alternatif**, the creation of PR marked a new and deeper level of cooperation with, among other things, the formation of a leadership council, a common policy framework, and an annual coalition convention.

A key to the early success of PR was its ability to harness a growing popular movement that was mobilizing against the government

of Prime Minister **Abdullah Badawi**. With the help of former deputy prime minister and one-time heir apparent to **Mahathir Mohamad**, **Anwar Ibrahim**, the various opposition political parties managed to set aside ideological differences to form *Barisan Rakyat* (People's Front) in early 2008. At the time of its formation, *Barisan Rakyat* included the three largest opposition political parties – DAP, PKR, and PAS – as well as *Parti Sosialis Malaysia* (Socialist Party of Malaysia or PSM) and the United Pasok Nunukragang National Organization (PASOK). The agreement among these parties to avoid three-cornered fights and to dispense with individual party manifestos and divisive policies laid the groundwork for political collaboration that resulted in the denial of a two-thirds parliamentary majority to the incumbent, the loss of five state legislatures and, eventually, the formation of PR. In December 2009, the first convention of PR was held to formally launch the coalition. PR's political platform and policies were outlined in the *Buku Jingga* (Orange Book). Published in December 2010, the book expanded on the coalition's policy initiatives and ideas that touched on issues such as income distribution, administrative transparency, anti-corruption, improved education, and economic and political parity for the eastern Malaysian states of Sabah and Sarawak. While all constituent parties champion clean governance, justice, and welfare, the common issue that ultimately gelled PR together was their shared opposition to the incumbent **Barisan Nasional** (National Front, BN), and their ambitions to seize federal power. Although PR managed to secure the majority of the vote at the 2013 federal election, it failed in its ultimate objective of unseating BN.

While PR did provide for a stronger, more formalized platform for oppositional coalition politics, it remained the case that its constituent parties still harboured different, and in some instances fundamentally contradictory, aspirations which would return to haunt the coalition. Party discipline posed a challenge. This became evident when the PR coalition state government in Perak lost power after several of their state representatives left the party to become 'BN-friendly' independents.

An attendant challenge was power-sharing agreements between the constituent members, particularly in states where they won control of the legislature. Meanwhile, ideological differences, while managed and contained, could not be eradicated entirely. Indeed, differences surfaced frequently after the coalition's formation, most consequentially between DAP and PAS over the question of *hudud* (the Islamic penal code) implementation and the Islamic state. The inability of coalition partners to set aside these differences ultimately had a devastating effect. At the 2015 PAS party congress, a motion to sever ties with DAP was passed, sounding the death knell of PR. The Central Committee of DAP responded by formally announcing that with this motion, PR 'ceases to exist'. Nevertheless, DAP and PKR continued with efforts at deepening collaboration, which ultimately expressed itself in the formation of the **Pakatan Harapan** in September 2015.

*see also:* Anwar Ibrahim; Badawi, Tun Abdullah Ahmad; *Barisan Alternatif* (BA); *Barisan Nasional* (BN); Democratic Action Party (DAP); Mahathir Mohamad, Tun; *Pakatan Harapan*; *Parti Islam Se-Malaysia*; *Parti Keadilan Rakyat*.

### **Palang Pracharat Party** (Thailand)

Widely seen as the political vehicle of the **National Council for Peace and Order**, the *Palang Pracharat* Party (People's State Power Party) was registered with the Election Commission on 2 March 2018 with the expressed purpose of competing in upcoming elections and extending the reach of the junta into electoral politics. Founded by Suchart Jantarachotikul, a former military classmate of junta leader **Prayuth Chan-ocha**, the party promoted nationalism, predicated on the three pillars of nation, religion, and king, to end the political gridlock that had engulfed Thailand since the government of **Thaksin Shinawatra**, and also to discredit its opponents.

Comprising mostly defectors from existing parties, the conservative *Palang Pracharat* served as a vehicle through which Prayuth eventually retained power after the dissolution of the junta government, and also to continue the populist measures that anchored NCPO's reform plan. Through the efforts of several members of the

cabinet of former prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra, *Palang Pracharat* managed to co-opt former parliamentarians from the **Pheu Thai Party** and the **Thai Rak Thai Party**, which form the 'Three Friends' faction within the party that has provided it a base in the northeast, as well as local networks of vote canvassers from other parties. The party's fortunes also benefited from constitutional amendments that allowed the junta to appoint the entire 250-seat upper house Senate. This afforded Prayuth and *Palang Pracharat* a sizable numerical advantage in the race to secure 50 per cent (376 seats) plus one seat in both houses of Parliament, thus enabling it to appoint the prime minister. In the event, *Palang Pracharat* finished behind the *Pheu Thai* Party with 97 seats at the 2019 general election. It has been estimated that up to 91 *Palang Pracharat* candidates at the election were co-opted from other parties. In any event, of these 97 seats, 37 were won by candidates recruited from other parties, of which 22 had represented parties aligned to Thaksin at some point or other. Negotiations led to the creation of a coalition eventually comprising 19 parties through which a majority was secured, allowing *Palang Pracharat* to put forward Prayuth as their candidate for prime minister (although Prayuth himself is not a member of the party). The party is currently led by 75-year-old **Prawit Wongsuwan**, a deputy prime minister, one of the masterminds behind the 2014 coup, and an ally of Prayuth, who took over the reins of leadership in June 2020. Nevertheless, relations between the party and Prayuth have grown tense as the former pressures the prime minister for key ministerial posts.

*see also:* National Council for Peace and Order; *Pheu Thai* Party; Prawit Wongsuwan, General; Prayuth Chan-ocha, General; *Thai Rak Thai* Party; Thaksin Shinawatra.

### **Pancasila** (Indonesia)

*Pancasila* is a term of Sanskrit derivation for the five principles that comprise Indonesia's state philosophy. Those principles (a belief in one supreme god, humanism, nationalism, popular sovereignty, and social justice) were enunciated by nationalist leader and future president **Sukarno** on 1 June 1945 in a speech before the

Investigating Committee for the Preparation of Independence set up under Japanese auspices. The most important of the five principles is the belief in one supreme deity, qualified by the right of every Indonesian to believe in his or her own particular god. The prescription was employed originally by Sukarno to counter demands by devout Muslims that Indonesia should become an Islamic state and as a way of entrenching religious pluralism and tolerance in a culturally diverse and fissiparous archipelago. Controversial as a threat to Islamic prerogative, *Pancasila* was entrenched as the state philosophy by President **Suharto**, under whose administration the five principles were made the subject of compulsory courses of instruction for civil servants. In 1978 *Pancasila* was incorporated into the republic's constitution, which on promulgation on 18 August 1945 had included its principles only in general terms in the preamble. In 1985 all political parties and organizations became obliged under law to adopt *Pancasila* as their sole ideological basis, described in Indonesian as *asas tunggal*. President Suharto described Indonesia's political system as *Pancasila* democracy, which was represented as an authentic Indonesian alternative to alien Western values. Throughout the **New Order** period, *Pancasila* served as a vague but exclusive ideology which was useful as a demobilizing device against independent political elements seeking to appeal to a national audience. The charge of acting against *Pancasila* had a treasonable implication sufficient to intimidate political dissidents. In practice, President Suharto reserved the monopoly right to determine what constituted an acceptable expression of the state philosophy. *Pancasila* became politically controversial to the extent that it came to be seen as the instrument of Suharto's purpose and not as a unifying neutral symbol. By May 1998, with the political downfall of Suharto, *Pancasila* had become discredited because of the way in which it had been abused. It then lost its political centrality but remained, in principle, Indonesia's state philosophy. The diminution of *Pancasila* was codified in the first sitting of the **People's Consultative Assembly** following the fall of Suharto, where it was decided that concepts such as *asas tunggal* would be abolished,

and state indoctrination based on *Pancasila* ideology and institutionalization of the philosophy banned. Nevertheless, *Pancasila* has enjoyed something of a revival as a national philosophy of late in debates taking place in public and intellectual circles, where the concept has been suggested as a panacea for the centrifugal pull of rising ethnic and religious fundamentalisms unleashed by the demise of the strong New Order state. To that end, the administration of **Joko Widodo** has used *Pancasila* as a basis to circumscribe several radical Islamic groups when, in 2017, it enacted regulations that provided for sweeping powers to ban any organization that contradicts *Pancasila*. In June 2020, **Partai Demokrasi Indonesia-Perjuangan** further tabled a bill on guidelines for the interpretation of *Pancasila*, the most pivotal element of which is that it vests the primary authority of interpretation with the state.

see also: New Order; *Partai Demokrasi Indonesia-Perjuangan*; People's Consultative Assembly; Suharto; Sukarno; Widodo, Joko.

**Panglong Agreement** (Burma/Myanmar) Held in February 1947, in the lead-up to Burma's independence, the second Panglong Conference essentially established the basis for the formation of the Union of Burma. During the meeting, **Aung San** did much to allay lingering fears among ethnic leaders about the possible unequal treatment of minorities in a future Union. Representatives of the Shan States, the Kachin hills, and the Chin hills signalled their willingness to cooperate with the interim Burmese government by signing the final Panglong Agreement on 12 February 1947 and to join a future Union of Burma. The agreement accepted in principle 'full autonomy' in internal administration for the 'Frontier Areas', the colonial term for most of the areas where the country's ethnic minorities lived. The agreement provided for a representative of the Supreme Council of the United Hill Peoples, an ethnic minority organization representing several groups, to be appointed to the Governor's Executive Council and for the Frontier Areas to be brought within the purview of the Executive Council. The agreement meant that ethnicity had become part of the independence

process as the Union of Burma came into being in January 1948. The successful outcome of the meeting convinced the British that Aung San and the **Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League** government would be able to mediate with the ethnic minorities' leaders in the Frontier Areas. The agreement would have far-reaching consequences for ethnic aspirations for self-rule. Clause Five guaranteed: 'Full autonomy in internal administration for the Frontier Areas is accepted in principle'. This formed the basis of the 'Spirit of Panglong' or the idea that the ethnic minorities were entitled to a form of self-rule, even if it was not expressly put into law. The Constitution of 1947, devised later, would contain a clause that the Shan and Kayah States could opt to leave the Union after ten years through plebiscite.

The anniversary of the Panglong Agreement is still celebrated as a national holiday, Union Day, in Myanmar. Importantly, the **Karen** and **Karenni** had not participated in the conference, nor did representatives from other ethnic groups in Frontier Areas, or the **Mon** and **Arakanese** from Ministerial Burma. For many ethnic groups, however, the spirit of Panglong largely dissipated when General **Ne Win** assumed power in 1962 and dispensed with the 1947 Constitution. The coup was justified by the military as a response to ethnic agitation over issues of minority.

The 'Spirit of Panglong' has become almost more important than the agreement itself. Reforms since the 2010 elections have again prompted calls by ethnic minority leaders for another Panglong-style conference, but this time to include all ethnic minorities, to decide the status of ethnic minorities in Myanmar. While the government has shown some acceptance of a new conference, a substantial change in ethnic relations would necessitate amendment of the current **2008 Constitution**. Meanwhile, such an effort did proceed in 2015, resulting in the signing of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement. It did not however manage to encompass all ethnic groups, and in any event, has been all but invalidated with the 2021 coup as signatories have since taken up arms against the junta on grounds that the military has not kept to its terms.

see also: Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL); Aung San; Constitution 2008; Karen; Ne Win, General.

**Papua Freedom Movement** (Indonesia)  
see **Free Papua Movement**

**Paris Peace Agreements 1973** (Vietnam)

On 27 January 1973 a set of agreements to end the war in Vietnam was concluded in Paris between representatives of the United States, the Democratic Republic of (North) Vietnam, the **Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam (PRG)** – set up by the insurgent **National Liberation Front of South Vietnam (NLF)** in 1969 – and the Republic of (South) Vietnam. Formal talks to find a political settlement to the **Vietnam War** had begun in Paris in May 1968 between the United States and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam as a direct consequence of the impact in the United States of the dramatic **Tet Offensive** launched by the NLF in January 1968. Those talks were joined subsequently by representatives of the southern government and their revolutionary challengers who were part of a united Vietnamese communist movement. The talks were deadlocked for some time because of the insistence of the communist side that the United States should remove the incumbent government in Saigon as part of a political settlement. The Vietnamese communists changed their priorities from July 1972 in the wake of their spring military offensive, which had been blunted by US aerial firepower. Their pressing concern then became to end direct US military involvement in Vietnam. That objective served as the centre point of the agreements reached in Paris in January 1973 after an impasse from mid-December 1972 during which the intensive US 'Christmas Bombing' of North Vietnam was authorized in order to overcome opposition from South Vietnam's president, **Nguyen Van Thieu**. The agreements provided for US recognition of the territorial unity of Vietnam and a ceasefire, after which its forces would stop all military activities throughout the country, as well as a total military withdrawal within

60 days of signature. In return, the communist side agreed to return all US prisoners of war, especially air force personnel. Provision was made for a political settlement among contending Vietnamese parties through the establishment of a National Council of National Reconciliation and Concord, which was charged with organizing free and democratic elections. Provision was also made for peaceful reunification between North and South through negotiations. The last US combat soldier left Vietnam by the end of March 1973.

A political settlement did not follow, however, despite the role of an international commission of control and supervision. The Paris Agreements did not make any provision for the withdrawal of northern troops from the southern half of the country. When the contending Vietnamese parties failed to set up the National Council of National Reconciliation and Concord because of irreconcilable political differences, the matter was finally resolved through superior force. The Ban Me Thuot Offensive launched by communist forces in the mountains of South Vietnam in March 1975 led to the rout of Saigon's army and the fall of the capital on 30 April 1975.

The Paris Agreements also made provision for reconciliation between the United States and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, with the former committing itself 'to healing the wounds of war and to post-war reconstruction of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and throughout Indochina'. Normalization of relations was long delayed, however, by American bitterness at their evident defeat and humiliation, by the manner of unification, and by international reaction to Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia in December 1978. In addition, the issue of Vietnam providing a full accounting for US soldiers classified as Missing-In-Action served to delay normalization of relations. It was only in February 1994 that President Bill Clinton announced an end to the longstanding US trade and investment embargo against Vietnam but without authorizing diplomatic relations with the government in Hanoi beyond liaison offices in respective capital cities in the following May. Diplomatic relations were established in August 1995, partly in response

to Vietnam's active cooperation in searching for those Missing-In-Action.

see *also*: National Liberation Front of South Vietnam; Nguyen Van Thieu; Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam (PRG) 1969–76; Tet Offensive 1968; Vietnam War.

### ***Partai Amanat Nasional*** (Indonesia)

*Partai Amanat Nasional* (PAN or the National Mandate Party) is an Indonesian political party founded on 23 August 1998. It is ideologically positioned as a moderate reformist Islamist party which bases itself on principles of religious morality and humanity. PAN was born out of the *Majelis Amanat Rakyat* (MARA or the People's Mandate Council), an organization which was founded on 14 May 1998 and included over 50 prominent intellectuals including Amien Rais, former chairman of the **Muhammadiyah** organization. Upon the fall of the **New Order**, Rais announced the formation of PAN and served as its founding chairman. PAN participated in its first legislative election in 1999 and won 7 per cent of the vote along with 35 seats in the **People's Representative Council** (DPR). Through the forging of a coalition of Islamic-based parties, Rais was elected speaker of the **People's Consultative Assembly** (MPR). In the 2004 legislative election, it won 6 per cent of the votes and 52 seats. Amien Rais was put forward as PAN's candidate for the presidential elections, but only managed to secure 15 per cent of the vote along with vice-presidential candidate Siswono Yudo Husodo. At the 2009 legislative election, PAN managed to win 6 per cent of the votes and 43 seats on the DPR. Its performance at the 2014 polls improved marginally to 7.5 per cent on the back of strong campaigning and visibility, especially in its traditional strongholds of East and Central Java. Initially put forward by his party to be a presidential candidate, PAN's longstanding chairman, Hatta Rajasa, was subsequently nominated by presidential election hopeful **Prabowo Subianto** to be his vice-presidential running mate. In 2019, PAN polled 6.8 per cent and 44 legislative seats as it cast its lot with Prabowo Subianto. Nevertheless, beset by internal strife, in October 2020 founding chairman Amien Rais broke away to

form the Ummat Party, ostensibly to promote a stronger Islamic agenda.

see also: *Muhammadiyah*; New Order; People's Consultative Assembly; People's Representative Council; Prabowo Subianto.

### **Partai Bulan Bintang** (Indonesia)

*Partai Bulan Bintang* (Crescent Star Party, PBB) was founded on 17 July 1998 as an Indonesian Islamist party which drew its legacy from the **Masyumi** Party which was banned by former president **Sukarno** in 1960 following the alleged involvement of several party members in the PRRI rebellion (*Pemerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia* or the **Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia**). Following the fall of President **Suharto**, *Masyumi* was reformulated and renamed as PBB under the leadership of Yusril Ihza Mahendra.

Since its formation, PBB has been a marginal player in Indonesian politics. In the 1999 elections, PBB won barely 2 per cent of the vote and attained 13 seats in the People's Representative Council. Nevertheless, Yusril was appointed minister of laws and legislation in the National Unity Cabinet under President **Abdurrahman Wahid**. PBB could not improve on this performance in subsequent elections. In 2004, it won 2.6 per cent of the popular vote and attained 11 seats in the Council, while in 2009 it only secured 1.8 per cent of the vote and failed to retain any of its seats. It could not fare better in 2014, winning only 1.5 per cent of the vote thereby failing to clear the parliamentary threshold. The slide continued in 2019, where the party secured barely 1 per cent of the popular vote. The election also witnessed differences emerge within the party, whereby the official decision to support the candidature of **Joko Widodo** was contravened by several legislative candidates who declared support for **Prabowo Subianto**. Drawing on its *Masyumi* Islamist legacy, PBB has championed the implementation of *shari'a* law in Indonesia as well as greater attention to Islamic education.

see also: *Masyumi*; Prabowo Subianto; Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia 1958–61; Suharto; Sukarno; Wahid, Abdurrahman; Widodo, Joko.

### **Partai Demokrasi Indonesia** (Indonesia) see **Partai Demokrasi Indonesia–Perjuangan**

### **Partai Demokrasi Indonesia–Perjuangan** (Indonesia)

*Partai Demokrasi Indonesia* (PDI), the Indonesian Democratic Party, was established in January 1973 as part of an attempt by the government of President **Suharto** to remould the political format of the republic. The political parties of the **Sukarno** era were regarded as fractious and nationally divisive. As an alternative vehicle for mobilizing support for President Suharto's **New Order**, a so-called association of Functional Groups, known in acronym as **Golkar**, was rehabilitated for an electoral role. In order to lend legitimacy to elections as well as to control political activity, all legal parties were merged into two groupings. PDI was formed primarily from the Indonesian National Party (*Partai Nasional Indonesia* or PNI), closely associated with Sukarno, and two Christian parties, while all Muslim parties were merged into **Partai Persatuan Pembangunan** (PPP).

With civil servants virtually obliged to support *Golkar*, PDI performed poorly in parliamentary elections in 1977 and in 1982. In consequence, it seemed likely to disappear and to undermine the legitimacy of the electoral process which had been devised to demonstrate the continuing legitimacy of the Suharto government. PDI was revived to an extent in elections in 1987, in part through support from dissident elements in the armed forces and also because of growing urban discontent with the Suharto regime. Its rallies in the capital Jakarta were the most well-attended and it attracted support through its identification with President Sukarno. In parliamentary elections in June 1992, PDI made an impact by its criticism of nepotism, which was construed as an attack on the rapacious business activities of President Suharto's family, as well as calling for the tenure of office of the president to be limited to two terms only. PDI improved further on its electoral position but still managed to secure only some 15 per cent of the total vote. In December 1993 **Megawati Sukarnoputri**, daughter of the late president,

Sukarno, was elected to lead the party despite the known preference of the government for an alternative candidate. In June 1996, President Suharto contrived to remove Megawati from the party leadership at a conference in Medan. She and her supporters were excluded from the PDI list for parliamentary elections in May 1997 in which the party's vote was reduced to 3 per cent. After the political downfall of Suharto in May 1998, her *Perjuangan* (struggle) faction of PDI, known as *Partai Demokrasi Indonesia-Perjuangan* (PDI-P), assumed ascendancy and in parliamentary elections in June 1999 won 37.4 per cent of the vote and 154 of 462 elective seats, making it the largest party in the legislature. Meanwhile, the main PDI managed to secure less than 1 per cent of the vote, relegating it to the periphery of Indonesian politics where it has languished. Having taken over the mantle, the PDI-P's electoral success gave rise to expectations that Megawati would become president, but her path was blocked by a coalition of Islamic parties, and she had to settle for the vice-presidency in October 1999. She did eventually become president in July 2001 after the removal of **Abdurrahman Wahid** from office.

After an unimpressive tenure in office, Megawati failed in her bid to retain the presidency at the 2004 election and was forced to make way for **Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono**. Likewise, her presidential bid in 2009 also faltered. Since the heights of 1999, PDI-P's share of the popular vote fell to 18.5 per cent and 14 per cent in 2004 and 2009 respectively. This has happened despite the party's attempt to position itself as the defender of small-scale farmers, petty traders, and fishermen. The party experienced something of a rejuvenation, however, during the build-up to the 2014 election. This was in no small measure attributable to Megawati's eventual anointing of the hugely popular governor of Jakarta, **Joko Widodo**, as the party's presidential candidate. Following the announcement, the party's popularity skyrocketed according to a number of pre-election polls, particularly outside its traditional support bases in Java and Bali among younger voters. At the 2014 parliamentary poll itself, PDI-P emerged clear winners, although the margin of their victory in the popular vote fell short of the 25 per cent target

which would have allowed them to nominate Joko Widodo for the presidency without having to forge a political coalition. This was in part a result of the party's delayed formal nomination of Widodo as its presidential candidate, and accompanying failure to leverage his personal appeal until fairly late in the campaign. Subsequent rumours of a falling out between Widodo and Puan Maharani, daughter of Megawati and at one point a possible PDI-P presidential candidate as well, after the April election cast further doubt over the party's presidential aspirations. In 2019, the party secured almost 20 per cent of the overall vote as it maintained its position as the largest party in the **People's Representative Council** or DPR even as it secured the presidency with the re-election of Joko Widodo in a replay of the 2014 election, when he defeated **Prabowo Subianto** of the **Gerindra** party. Nevertheless, support for the PDI-P in its traditional base of West Java, the province with the largest concentration of voters comprising up to 33 per cent of the Indonesian electorate, has been declining, which in part accounted for its inability to breach 20 per cent of the popular vote in 2019. In August 2019, Megawati was re-elected chairman by acclamation, thereby extending her leadership of the party for more than 20 years.

see also: *Gerindra*; *Golkar*; Megawati Sukarnoputri; New Order; *Partai Persatuan Pembangunan*; People's Representative Council; Prabowo Subianto; Suharto; Sukarno; Wahid, Abdurrahman; Widodo, Joko; Yudhoyono, Susilo Bambang.

### **Partai Demokrat** (Indonesia)

*Partai Demokrat* (Democratic Party, PD) is an Indonesian political party founded on 9 September 2001. PD served as the vehicle for **Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's** vice-presidential bid in 2001, which he eventually lost to **Hamzah Haz**.

During the 2004 legislative elections, PD won 7.5 per cent of the votes on the way to winning 57 out of 560 seats in the **People's Representative Council** or DPR. At the presidential polls, Yudhoyono stood with **Yusuf Kalla** as his vice-presidential running mate and won 33.6 per cent of the vote. In a subsequent runoff election against the incumbent **Megawati**



**Sukarnoputri**, Yudhoyono secured 60 per cent of the vote to win the presidency.

During Yudhoyono's first term, the visibility of PD increased across the archipelago as it established itself as a formidable party with a national presence. This increased visibility paid dividends at the 2009 legislative elections when PD's performance improved significantly and it won 20.9 per cent of the vote, gaining 148 seats in the legislature. The party's popularity was further underscored by Yudhoyono's re-election with 60.8 per cent of the vote. PD's source of strength has been its broad appeal, anchored on the national ideology of **Pancasila**. This has allowed it to enter easily into political coalitions with other parties of different ideological stripes. At the same time, it is this character of PD that has led many to see it as merely a personal vehicle for President Yudhoyono's political aspirations since the 2004 elections rather than a party with any substantive ideology. To that end, it should be noted that there has been disquiet within the party itself over the centralization of power under Yudhoyono. Anas Urbaningrum's victory over Yudhoyono's preferred candidates, Andi Mallarangeng and Marzuki Alie, in the contest for party chairmanship in 2010 was seen as a reaction within segments of the party against the president's growing influence.

PD's prospects for the 2014 election were considerably diminished by a raft of corruption scandals that have rocked the party. Party treasurer Muhammad Nazaruddin was dismissed by Anas in April 2012 for his role in a graft case involving the provision of logistic support for the Southeast Asian Games in South Sumatra. Sports minister Andi Mallarangeng was forced to resign in December 2012 after allegations surfaced of corruption and mismanagement of a multimillion-dollar sports complex project in Bogor, West Java. Anas himself was forced to resign in March 2013 after being named as a graft suspect. Given how Andi Mallarangeng and Anas Urbaningrum stood out as prominent reformists behind PD's rise to power, their misconduct has left the image of the party severely tarnished. Cognizant of the fact that the party's popularity had always relied on his own personality and popularity, Yudhoyono introduced

a party convention through which to identify new candidates who could lead PD's defence of their presidency. This move however, failed to stem the haemorrhaging of support, and PD secured only around 8 per cent of the popular vote, a far cry from its performance in 2009. At the 2019 election, the party's performance slid further as it secured less than 8 per cent of the vote.

Yudhoyono vacated leadership of the party in March 2020 and was succeeded by his soft-spoken eldest son, Agus Harimurti Yudhoyono. Party elements dissatisfied with the meteoric rise and leadership of Agus and alarmed at the dynastic turn in the party attempted an internal coup in March 2021 by organizing an extraordinary PD congress and electing Moeldoko, then presidential chief of staff in the Joko Widodo government and a former four-star general, as the new party chairman. The move infuriated Yudhoyono and prompted speculation that Moeldoko was acting at the behest of the president. In the event, the Ministry of Law and Human Rights nullified the results of the extraordinary congress election on grounds that the meeting did not fulfil administrative requirements. After providing the occupant of the seat of power for two terms, PD threw its weight behind **Prabowo Subianto** at both the 2014 and 2019 elections. Prabowo lost on both occasions. PD is currently the only other opposition party in the DPR, together with **Partai Keadilan Sejahtera**.

see also: Haz, Hamzah; Kalla, Yusuf; Megawati Sukarnoputri; *Pancasila*; *Partai Keadilan Sejahtera*; People's Representative Council; Prabowo Subianto; Widodo, Joko; Yudhoyono, Susilo Bambang.

### **Partai Keadilan Sejahtera** (Indonesia)

*Partai Keadilan Sejahtera* (Prosperous Justice Party, PKS) was first formed as *Partai Keadilan* (Justice Party or PK) on 28 July 1998. Made up mostly of activists from the **Tarbiyah** movement, the Justice Party contested the 1999 elections and won a modest 1.44 per cent of the total vote. Even so, the party managed to secure a cabinet position when its president, Nur Machmudi Ismail, was appointed minister of agriculture and forestry.

Because electoral laws implemented in 1999 stipulated a 2 per cent threshold for political parties to be eligible for electoral contests, PK would have been barred from the 2004 contests. In order to continue their participation in party politics, members of the *Tarbiyah* movement led by Al-Muzammil Yusuf formed PKS on 20 April 2003. PK subsequently merged with PKS in July 2003.

Under the leadership of Hidayat Nur Wahid, PKS performed admirably in the 2004 election to win 7.34 per cent of the total vote and secure 45 out of 550 seats to become the seventh largest party in the **People's Representative Council** or DPR. Hidayat himself was elected as chairman of the **People's Consultative Assembly** or MPR from 2004 to 2009. For the 2009 election, PKS joined a coalition led by **Partai Demokrat** and won 7.88 per cent of the votes along with 57 seats, becoming the fourth largest party in Parliament and third largest member of **Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's** governing coalition where it occupied three ministerial posts. Hidayat was succeeded by Tifatul Sembiring in May 2005, who served as party president for five years before passing the baton to Luthfi Hasan Ishaq in June 2010. In February 2013, Luthfi was detained by the **Corruption Eradication Commission** or KPK on corruption charges, and in early 2014 was sentenced to 16 years' imprisonment. In consequence, popular support for the party dipped at the 2014 polls, when it secured less than 7 per cent of the vote. Luthfi would be replaced by Anis Matta. Anis was replaced by Sohibul Iman in August 2015. In October 2020, Sohibul handed over the reins of the party to Ahmad Syaikh, former vice-mayor of Bekasi Province in densely populated West Java.

PKS's Islamist credentials rests on its mantra of 'Islam is the solution'. Party leaders have frequently articulated that the party's ideology rests on the inseparability of religion, politics, and morality. The PKS objective of the Islamization of Indonesian society was pursued through proselytization and a strict cadre system. In its earlier years, PKS's agenda of anti-corruption and social justice gained currency especially among the urban electorate in Java, accounting for its impressive electoral performance in 2004

and 2009. Much of the party's appeal rested on the fact that its representatives were seen to be 'clean', as opposed to the rampant corruption entrenched in Indonesian politics. At the same time, PKS has also taken conservative positions on social issues such as public morality, when it pushed a controversial anti-pornography law in 2008. Of note is the fact that while brandishing Islamist credentials, PKS also embraces religious pluralism. This is elaborated in its 1998 manifesto, which endorses the equality of all Indonesians and protects the human rights and dignity of all, regardless of religion, ethnicity, or cultural background. PKS are also advocates of gender equality. However, their championing of gender equality has been questioned in recent times after the party's religious council issued a *fatwa* on women's participation in legislative elections, claiming that women should prioritize family over politics.

The image of PKS as a clean party free of corruption has been undermined, however, by several controversies, the most prominent being the corruption conviction of former party president Luthfi Hasan Ishaq. Other cases included the imprisonment of PKS lawmaker Muhammad Misbakhun for fraud, and resignation of another PKS lawmaker, Arifinto, who was caught watching pornography during a parliamentary sitting. Notwithstanding these internal crises, the electoral performance of PKS does not appear to have suffered. At the 2014 polls the party experienced only a marginal dip of one percentage point, from 7.88 per cent to 6.8 per cent, despite the conviction of Luthfi, while in 2019 it in fact increased its percentage of the popular vote to more than 8 per cent. This was in part a result of the depth of the party's cadre system, effective strategic campaigning (including whistle-blowing on other graft cases), and the efforts of dynamic presidents such as Anis Matta. At both the 2014 and 2019 elections however, PKS found itself supporting **Prabowo Subianto**, who would ultimately lose his presidential bid on both occasions.

see also: Corruption Eradication Commission; *Partai Demokrat*; People's Consultative Assembly; People's Representative Council; Prabowo Subianto; *Tarbiyah*; Yudhoyono, Susilo Bambang.

**Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa** (Indonesia)  
*Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa* (National Awakening Party, PKB) was established specifically to contest parliamentary elections in June 1999 in the wake of the political downfall of former president **Suharto** in May 1998, and counts East Java as its stronghold. It was set up as the political arm of the **Nahdlatul Ulama** (NU), a rural-based Islamic organization of more than 40 million adherents with a pluralist agenda, which had withdrawn from active politics in 1984. Chaired by Matori Abdul Djilil at its formation, its effective leader was **Abdurrahman Wahid**, who headed the NU. In the election of June 1999, it secured third place behind **Partai Demokrasi Indonesia-Perjuangan** and **Golkar** with slightly more than 17 per cent of the vote and 51 out of 462 elective seats. Following the election, Abdurrahman Wahid was elected to the presidency by the **People's Consultative Assembly** (MPR) after **Megawati Sukarnoputri's** aspirations to high office were blocked in October 1999. PKB has been unable to sustain its early momentum, however, securing only 10.5 per cent of the votes in 2004 and 5 per cent in 2009 on the way to 52 and 28 seats respectively. The poor performances can be attributed to internal conflicts and intra-family disputes arising from Abdurrahman Wahid's decision to sack a string of party chairmen, including his own nephew. The party experienced a change in fortunes, however, when Rusdi Kirana, a successful non-Muslim businessman and owner of Indonesia's largest airline, Lion Air, joined the party and became deputy chairman, and when the chairman of NU, Said Agil Siraj, openly endorsed the party in its 2014 campaign. This resulted in a creditable increase in popular support to 9 per cent at the 2014 polls, an achievement it repeated at the 2019 election as the party aligned itself with the winning coalition led by **Joko Widodo**. At the same time, alliance with PKB, the most successful of the political parties that openly identified themselves with an Islamic agenda at the 2014 polls, afforded President Widodo a crucial opportunity to bolster his religious credentials.

The party's current chairman, the ambitious Muhaimin Iskandar or 'Cak Imin' who had made a play to be Widodo's running mate at

the 2019 presidential election, also serves as deputy speaker of the **People's Representative Council** or DPR. Meanwhile Jazilul Fawaid is deputy speaker of the MPR. However, both PKB leaders are embroiled in ongoing graft investigations involving infrastructure projects in Maluku and North Maluku. PKB currently occupies four ministerial posts in Widodo's 'Onward Indonesia' cabinet, including the religious affairs portfolio.

see also: *Golkar*; Megawati Sukarnoputri; *Nahdlatul Ulama*; *Partai Demokrasi Indonesia-Perjuangan*; People's Consultative Assembly; People's Representative Council; Suharto; Wahid, Abdurrahman; Widodo, Joko.

### **Partai Persatuan Pembangunan** (Indonesia)

*Partai Persatuan Pembangunan* (United Development Party, PPP) was established in January 1973 through an enforced merger of four Muslim parties which had participated in national elections in 1971. The object of the merger was to make all political parties subordinate to the priorities of the **New Order**, whereby they accorded it constitutional legitimacy without posing any effective electoral challenge. Over the years, the PPP has had its composite Islamic identity diluted as it has become obliged to give up using the *Ka'abah* (the sacred rock in Mecca) as its electoral symbol and to accept **Pancasila** as its sole ideology. It diminished as a political organization from 1984 when the **Nahdlatul Ulama** (NU) withdrew from formal politics to concentrate on social and educational activities. The effect was demonstrated in parliamentary elections in 1987, in which the PPP won only 61 seats compared to 94 seats in 1982. A marginal improvement in its electoral performance of 62 in 1992 had no impact on the overall political situation whereby parties were permitted to play a limited role only every five years, with the underlying purpose of endorsing the authority of the regime tied to the person of President **Suharto**.

After Suharto's political downfall in May 1998, PPP found itself in electoral competition with a number of newly formed Islamic parties. In parliamentary elections in June 1999, it secured slightly over 10 per cent of the vote

and 58 seats. Nonetheless, it was influential as a member of an Islamic-based coalition in opposing the presidential bid of **Megawati Sukarnoputri**, who was accused of pro-Christian bias. In the event, PPP helped to secure the election of President **Abdurrahman Wahid** in October 1999. Its leader, **Hamzah Haz**, was appointed coordinating minister for people's welfare, but resigned office in November that year, ostensibly to concentrate on leading his party, against a background of allegations of his involvement in corruption. However, the party was not particularly successful in the 2004 legislative elections when its vote share declined to 8 per cent.

The PPP's fortunes have not recovered since. A move to back Megawati in the 2004 presidential election misfired when party president Hamzah Haz was passed over as her vice-presidential running mate. Soon, there was another setback when Megawati, whom the party continued to support after the debacle of the vice-presidential nomination, was defeated by **Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono** in a presidential run-off. At the 2009 legislative elections, PPP secured barely 5 per cent of the vote, although its new leader, Suryadharma Ali, managed to secure a cabinet position as minister of cooperatives and state and medium enterprises, and later as minister of religious affairs. This improved marginally to 6.5 per cent in 2014 mostly on the back of patronage on the part of Suryadharma Ali, who increased funding for Islamic education thereby securing the support of local Islamic scholars and teachers.

By 2019, the popularity of the party dipped below the 5 per cent threshold, although it subsequently joined the coalition government of **Joko Widodo** and secured a ministerial post. Accounting in part for the declining popularity of PPP is the corruption cases that have bedevilled the party in recent years. In 2016, former party chairman Suryadharma Ali was sentenced to six years' imprisonment for embezzling funds for the haj pilgrimage. In January 2020 his successor as party chairman and close ally of President Widodo, Romahurmuziy, was sentenced to imprisonment for two years for corruption and influence peddling. In 2019, the **Corruption Eradication Commission**

initiated investigatory proceedings against PPP party elder and former minister for religious affairs Lukman Hakim Saifuddin on corruption charges.

see *also*: Corruption Eradication Commission; Haz, Hamzah; Megawati Sukarnoputri; *Nahdlatul Ulama*; New Order; *Pancasila*; Suharto; Wahid, Abdurrahman; Widodo, Joko; Yudhoyono, Susilo Bambang.

### **Partai Rakyat Brunei** (Brunei) see **People's Party**

### **Parti Amanah Negara** (Malaysia)

Following a fractious party congress or *mukhtar* of **Parti Islam Se-Malaysia** (PAS) in June 2015 when a decision was taken to cease cooperation with the **Democratic Action Party (DAP)**, pro-**Pakatan Harapan** elements in the Islamic party subsequently found themselves resoundingly defeated in party polls. Until that point, this segment of the party, often simplistically referred to as 'progressives' or 'professionals', had been on a steady ascent since 1999 under the guidance of the late spiritual leader of PAS, **Nik Aziz Nik Mat**. The aftermath of the congress and party election saw these pro-coalition elements break away in September 2015 to form a splinter party, *Parti Amanah Negara* or *Amanah*, which entailed a rebranding of dormant Malaysian Workers' Party.

*Amanah* is led by Mohamad Sabu and Salahuiddin Ayub, both of whom had previously served as PAS deputy president and vice-president respectively. Defined by its Islamic disposition, *Amanah* nevertheless sought to differentiate itself from PAS by assuming a more conciliatory approach to non-Muslims. This was illustrated not only in its membership in *Pakatan Harapan*, which it joined in 2017 and where it works in concert with DAP, but also in the little-known fact that approximately 15 per cent of its membership comprise non-Muslims who are bestowed full voting rights. At the same time, given the proliferation of Malay-Muslim-based parties on the political landscape today, *Amanah* will likely find it difficult to carve a niche for itself, which it requires for its longer-term relevance and viability. *Amanah*

currently has parliamentary representation through 11 seats it secured at the historic 2018 polls. As a member of the ruling government for two years, *Amanah* occupied five full minister and five deputy minister positions, including the portfolio of defence. In October 2020, *Amanah* vice-president Mujahid Yusof Rawa held out the prospect of the party possibility working with PAS.

see also: Democratic Action Party (DAP); Nik Aziz Nik Mat; *Pakatan Harapan*; *Parti Islam Se-Malaysia*.

### **Parti Bangsa Dayak Sarawak** (Malaysia)

*Parti Bangsa Dayak Sarawak* (PBDS) may be translated as the Dayak Race Party of Sarawak. It is a communal-based political organization which seeks to advance the interests of the Dayak peoples of the north Bornean state of Sarawak in Malaysia. The various Dayak peoples constitute the largest indigenous grouping, but politics has been dominated by a Malay-Melanau Muslim leadership since the mid-1960s with support from the Malaysian federal government in Kuala Lumpur. The Dayak party was formed in 1983 as a breakaway group from the mainly Dayak Sarawak National Party through the initiative of Leo Moggie, who then held the federal office of minister for energy. It won seven seats in elections to the state legislature in the year of its formation and in 1984 became a member of the federal ruling coalition, **Barisan Nasional** (National Front, BN). It went on to secure 15 seats in 1987 as part of a major challenge to the leadership of the chief minister, **Abdul Taib Mahmud**, and **Parti Pesaka Bumiputera Bersatu** but then failed to hold on to its political gains in 1991, when its representation fell back to seven. Although Dayak political alienation persists in Sarawak, PBDS has not been successful in mobilizing beyond a limited constituency. In May 1994 it was admitted into the state ruling coalition. PBDS was deregistered in 2004 following a leadership crisis that brought about a split in the party between factions led by Datuk Daniel Tajem and James Jemust Masing. In the aftermath of the split, *Parti Rakyat Sarawak* was formed by Daniel Tajem and Datuk Sng Chee Hua. The party secured six seats at each of the 2008 and 2013 general elections, helping BN

retain its grip on Sarawak. Following the defeat of the BN government in 2018, the party left BN to join the Sarawak Parties Alliance.

see also: *Barisan Nasional* (BN); *Parti Pesaka Bumiputera Bersatu*; Taib Mahmud, Tun Pehin Sri Abdul.

### **Parti Bersatu Sabah** (Malaysia) see **Sabah United Party**

### **Parti Islam Se-Malaysia** (Malaysia)

*Parti Islam Se-Malaysia* (PAS) translates from Malay as the Islamic Party of Malaysia. The party has long sought to entrench the religious values of Islam in the country's constitution, and in November 1993 it secured passage of a law in the Kelantan legislature which provided for an Islamic penal system. The party's origins, with support among a constituency of rural schoolteachers of leftist and pan-Malay disposition, go back to the radical Malay National Party which was founded at the end of the Pacific War. In 1951 it was reformed initially as the Pan Malayan Islamic Party which, with its fundamentalist message, posed the main Malay-Islamic challenge to **UMNO (United Malays National Organization)**. The main political impact of PAS has been in the north-east of the Malay peninsula, where it won control of the Kelantan state legislature on two occasions before becoming a member of the ruling intercommunal **Barisan Nasional** (National Front, BN) in January 1973. That association was short-lived, with PAS being expelled in December 1977 after a revolt within the Kelantan state legislature against a chief minister appointed from Kuala Lumpur. That upheaval culminated in Mohamad Asri Muda's resignation as leader and paved the way for a younger generation more closely attuned to the Islamic resurgence, which had become a global phenomenon, to take over the helm of the party. Following this, the party became more vocal in its agitation for the transformation of Malaysia to an Islamic state.

As part of **Angkatan Perpaduan Ummah** (Muslim Unity Front), PAS scored a notable success in winning all seats at the federal and state levels in Kelantan at the October 1990 election but was unable to prevent BN from being

returned to office with a two-thirds majority. In elections in April 1995, PAS held onto its seven seats in the federal Parliament and was also returned to office in the state of Kelantan. Despite this modest electoral performance, it continued to pose a threat to UMNO, led by **Mahathir Mohamad, Tun** not only because of its Islamic credentials but also because of the probity of its leadership. PAS became the main political beneficiary of the outrage among the Malay community at the dismissal, arrest, detention, trial, and imprisonment of former deputy prime minister, **Anwar Ibrahim**. In elections in November 1999, its federal parliamentary strength was increased to 27 seats, and it gained control of the state legislature and government in Terengganu while holding on to Kelantan. Its president, Fadzil Noor, became leader of the federal parliamentary opposition, while PAS assumed the dominant position within **Barisan Alternatif** (Alternative Front), an inter-racial coalition of opposition parties, which had begun as an electoral pact. For its part, PAS sought to reconcile its religious priorities with a pragmatic approach to business, which drew a positive response from the non-Malay communities.

After the death of Fadzil Noor in 2002, **Abdul Hadi Awang** took over as president of the party. In the 2004 general elections, the party's decision to promote its Islamic State agenda prior to the elections proved to have a deleterious effect. This, in addition to positive popular sentiment towards the new prime minister, **Abdullah Badawi**, resulted in PAS losing Terengganu, narrowly defending Kelantan, and retaining only seven parliamentary seats. PAS improved its showing at the 2008 general election when it formed an alliance with the **Democratic Action Party (DAP)** and **Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR)**. During that campaign PAS significantly toned down its Islamic state agenda, campaigning instead for *Negara Berkeadilan* (welfare state) on the way to securing 23 parliamentary seats. In addition to Kelantan, PAS also wrestled control of the state of Selangor as part of the opposition coalition, which won a total of five states in 2008 (later reduced to four due to defections in Perak).

Paradoxically, PAS's electoral successes up to that point have come on the back of

increased non-Muslim support for the party. This marked a crossroads for the Islamic opposition party which had to grapple with internal discord between a pro-coalition faction harbouring transformative aspirations and conservatives who were wary of compromising PAS's core Islamic agenda for reasons of political expediency. The consequences of this discord were profoundly demonstrated at the 2013 election, where PAS struggled to win in Malay-Muslim majority seats on its way to securing 21 parliamentary seats, the lowest in the **Pakatan Rakyat** coalition. At the same time, conservatives in the party remained sceptical of the choice of Anwar Ibrahim as the favoured candidate for prime minister should the opposition coalition come to power, even as they persisted in pushing their Islamic agenda without consultation with coalition allies. In the event, these internal tensions came to a head after the 2015 party congress when a motion to sever ties with their *Pakatan Rakyat* ally, DAP, prompted the pro-coalition faction to break away from the main party to form **Parti Amanah Negara**. PAS would go on to position itself to lead a 'third force' – *Gagasan Sejahtera*, which included two other minor Islamic parties – at the 2018 general election, where it won 18 parliamentary seats using the PAS banner. Despite a history of acrimony, PAS would later enter into coalition with UMNO in the form of *Muafakat Nasional*, purportedly to defend the interests of Malay-Muslims. In the wake of the political crisis occasioned by the **Sheraton Move** that collapsed the **Pakatan Harapan** government, PAS threw their weight behind **Muhyiddin Yassin** and **Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia** and subsequently became a part of the **Perikatan Nasional** ruling coalition and was rewarded with three cabinet positions.

see also: *Angkatan Perpaduan Ummah*; Anwar Ibrahim; Badawi, Tun Abdullah Ahmad; *Barisan Alternatif* (BA); *Barisan Nasional* (BN); Islam; Mahathir Mohamad, Tun; Muhyiddin Yassin, Tan Sri; *Pakatan Harapan*; *Pakatan Rakyat*; *Parti Amanah Negara*; *Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia*; *Perikatan Nasional*; Sheraton Move 2020; UMNO (United Malays National Organization).

**Parti Keadilan Rakyat** (Malaysia)

*Parti Keadilan Rakyat* (PKR), or the People's Justice Party, has its origins in the civil society reform movement precipitated by the **Asian Financial Crisis of 1997–8** in Malaysia. At the time, policy differences between the prime minister, **Mahathir Mohamad**, and his deputy, **Anwar Ibrahim**, led to the latter's dismissal from office. Anwar's dismissal, incarceration, trial, and subsequent conviction for corruption occasioned a groundswell of popular discontent. In the wake of this political ferment, Anwar's wife, Wan Azizah Ismail, formed *Adil* (the Movement for Social Justice), an umbrella civil society organization that brought together activists from different class, ethnic, and religious backgrounds. In April 1999, *Adil* morphed into a political party, *Parti Keadilan Nasional* (also known as *Keadilan*) or the National Justice Party, and in 2003, it merged with *Parti Rakyat Malaysia*, the Malaysian People's Party, to form PKR.

Since its early years as a civil society organization, PKR has sought to position itself at the centre of Malaysia's political spectrum. While its early membership consisted of a large number of **UMNO** defectors who owed their allegiance to Anwar, it also drew support from non-Malays and non-Muslims, making it a rarity in Malaysian politics: a multiethnic party, albeit one that retains a strong Malay flavour as evidenced in the composition of its current leadership. With strength in urban constituencies across the Malaysian peninsula, PKR made its maiden foray into politics at the 1999 elections as *Keadilan*, when it secured only five parliamentary seats as part of **Barisan Alternatif**. All seemed lost when, as PKR, the party's parliamentary presence diminished even further in 2004 when it managed only a solitary seat when Wan Azizah barely scraped through in Anwar's old constituency.

Unsurprisingly, the poor performance led to predictions of its demise. In hindsight, those predictions proved premature. The party received a huge boost when Anwar was released from imprisonment in September 2004, and immediately positioned himself as the unofficial leader of the opposition, even though he did not officially join PKR until 2006 as the party's advisor.

He formally became president of the party in November 2018. In 2008, PKR contributed 31 seats to the opposition's electoral windfall, which denied the ruling coalition a two-thirds parliamentary majority, while in 2013 the party managed to win 30 seats as part of the **Pakatan Rakyat** (PR) opposition coalition. Neither Anwar nor his PKR colleagues could prevent PR from crumbling under the weight of disagreements between partners **Parti Islam Se-Malaysia** and the **Democratic Action Party (DAP)** in 2015. However, it persisted with cooperation with DAP, and this would soon pay dividends. Joined by DAP and **Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia** (Bersatu), PKR rode the rising tide of opposition to Prime Minister Najib Tun Razak that eventually conveyed them into power via the **Pakatan Harapan** coalition in May 2018, contributing 47 parliamentary seats.

Despite its strong record in recent polls, PKR has also had its fair share of internal disputes. The resignation of two of its members from the Perak legislature paved the way for the 2009 takeover of the Perak state government by the **Barisan Nasional**. In 2014, an internal power struggle played out in Selangor State as pro-Anwar segments of the party, commonly known as 'Anwaristas', attempted but failed to have PKR menteri besar Abdul Khalid Ibrahim replaced by Anwar. Party leaders also differed on the means to the end of winning, and after May 2018 retaining, power. In the main, while some such as former vice-president Nurul Izzah Anwar, daughter of Anwar Ibrahim, took the principled view that the party should not be encouraging defections or accepting defectors, others such as Anwar himself appeared more receptive to that option as a means to bolster the party's numbers in Parliament. The most devastating internal crisis, however, occurred when the party was in power. Nursing residual distrust of Anwar, PKR deputy president Azmin Ali, though a former political secretary to Anwar, masterminded efforts to block his former mentor's ambitions to succeed Mahathir Mohamad as prime minister. These efforts, known as the **Sheraton Move** after the hotel where things were set in motion, culminated in the downfall of the *Pakatan Harapan* government, dissolution of Parliament, and

eventually, the appointment of a **Perikatan Nasional** government by the **Yang di-Pertuan Agong** with **Muhyiddin Yassin** at its helm. Through this machination, PKR found itself back in opposition as Azmin and his faction of ten other parliamentarians were sacked and went on first to form an independent bloc, and then subsequently to join *Bersatu*, which itself had left the *Pakatan Harapan* coalition, to form the new government. Events surrounding the Sheraton Move served as a reminder that notwithstanding its commitment to an agenda of social justice and anti-corruption, since its formation PKR has been seen as a vehicle for Anwar Ibrahim to realize his political ambitions of becoming Malaysian prime minister.

see also: Anwar Ibrahim; Asian Financial Crisis 1997–8; *Barisan Alternatif* (BA); *Barisan Nasional* (BN); Democratic Action Party (DAP); Mahathir Mohamad, Tun; Muhyiddin Yassin, Tan Sri; *Pakatan Harapan*; *Pakatan Rakyat*; *Parti Islam Se-Malaysia*; *Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia*; *Perikatan Nasional*; Sheraton Move 2020; *Yang di-Pertuan Agong*.

### **Parti Pejuang Tanah Air** (Malaysia)

*Parti Pejuang Tanah Air*, or Warriors of the Homeland, was formed in August 2020 by former Malaysian prime minister **Mahathir Mohamad** to carry on his personal struggle against UMNO. Mahathir formed the party after the Malaysian High Court dismissed a lawsuit he brought against his former party, **Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia** (*Bersatu*), for revoking his membership along with several *Bersatu* lawmakers after they sat in the opposition camp (while being *Bersatu* members) on the occasion of the reopening of the Malaysian Parliament in May 2020. This act was in defiance of the move by *Bersatu* to break away from the **Pakatan Harapan** coalition, an act that resulted in the incumbent coalition losing its parliamentary majority.

The ideology of *Pejuang* is to continue the struggle for the interest of the Malays, even though its appearance on the Malaysian political scene effectively meant that it was the sixth political party to claim to represent the Malay electorate. According to Mahathir, *Pejuang* was to also continue the struggle against corruption

especially inside of UMNO. Immediately following its formation, *Pejuang* manage to secure the defection of several *Bersatu* lawmakers at the federal and state levels, including three supreme council members. Nevertheless, unlike UMNO or **Parti Islam Se-Malaysia**, *Pejuang* enjoys considerably less clout among the Malay grassroots beyond the personal popularity of Mahathir, which in any case has also begun to wane. The party's prospects have also been crippled by the breakdown in the relationship between Mahathir and **Anwar Ibrahim**, who has prevented any formal alliance between *Pejuang* and what remains of *Pakatan Harapan*. Moreover, a dismal showing by its presumptive candidate (because the party was not registered in time, its candidate had to contest as an independent) in a by-election in the state of Perak on 29 August 2020 suggests that notwithstanding the leadership of Mahathir, the party will struggle to make an impact nationally.

see also: Anwar Ibrahim; Mahathir Mohamad, Tun; *Pakatan Harapan*; *Parti Islam Se-Malaysia*; *Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia*; UMNO (United Malays National Organization).

### **Parti Pesaka Bumiputera Bersatu** (Malaysia)

*Parti Pesaka Bumiputera Bersatu* (PBB), which translates as the United Indigenous People's Inheritance Party, is the dominant political grouping in the north Bornean state of Sarawak in Malaysia. PBB was formed in 1973 as the result of a merger between the Iban-Dayak *Parti Pesaka* headed by their traditional leader, the Temenggong Jugah, and the Malay-Melanau *Parti Bumiputera* under the leadership of the chief minister, **Abdul Rahman Yakub**, and became a member of the newly established ruling federal **Barisan Nasional** (National Front, BN) coalition. It has been controlled continuously by its Muslim component, currently led by Chief Minister Datuk Patinggi Abang Abdul Rahman Johari Abang Openg ('Abang Jo'), although it has been most closely associated with the current governor of Sarawak and former chief minister, Tun Pehin Sri **Abdul Taib Mahmud**, which was a factor in Iban alienation leading to the splinter **Parti Bangsa Dayak Sarawak** being set up in 1983.



Longstanding party leader Taib Mahmud stepped down in 2014, making way for Adenan Satem. Of a more consultative persuasion than his predecessor, Adenan attempted a more consultative approach to local governance. His term in office was short-lived, however, as he passed away in 2017.

PBB has ruled Sarawak in coalition, the latest being *Gabungan Parti Sarawak* (GPS), which unites PBB with the **Sarawak United Peoples' Party** (SUPP), *Parti Rakyat Sarawak* (PRS), and the Progressive Democratic Party (PDF). In the state elections in September 1991, it won 27 seats and its then coalition partners, known as *Barisan Tiga* or Front of Three, 22 more, to command an overwhelming majority in the 56-seat legislature. It retained its dominant position in state elections in September 1996. In federal elections in April 1995, all of its 11 candidates won their seats. That number was reduced to 10 in federal elections in November 1999. The party's dominance in Sarawak continued at the turn of the millennium. At the state elections, the party won all 30 seats it contested in 2001, later increasing its share to 35 seats in the subsequent 2006 and 2011 elections. In the federal elections, it won 11 seats in 2004, and 14 seats in 2008 and 2013. A long-time member of BN, PBB left the coalition in 2018 following the former's landmark defeat at the polls that year that occurred despite PBB's contribution of 13 parliamentary seats. Despite persistent allegations of corruption especially during the 33-year term of Taib Mahmud, PBB's well-oiled grassroots machinery is still unmatched in rural Sarawak. After the collapse of the **Pakatan Harapan** government, PBB aligned itself with the **Perikatan Nasional** government as part of GPS.

see also: Abdul Rahman Yakub, Tun; *Barisan Nasional* (BN); *Pakatan Harapan*; *Parti Bangsa Dayak Sarawak*; *Perikatan Nasional*; Sarawak United People's Party; Taib Mahmud, Tun Pehin Sri Abdul.

### **Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia** (Malaysia)

As pressure mounted on **Najib Tun Razak** over his handling of the brewing **1MDB** corruption scandal, voices of dissent began emerging

within the incumbent party, **UMNO**. These voices were led by party deputy president and deputy prime minister of Malaysia, **Muhyiddin Yassin**, and were further stoked by **Mahathir Mohamad**. For his vocal criticisms of the party president, Muhyiddin was dismissed from UMNO in June 2016 along with several other senior leaders. On 8 September 2016, *Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia*, better known as *Bersatu*, was formed with Muhyiddin as party president and Mahathir as chairman.

*Bersatu* was formed as a vehicle for disgruntled UMNO politicians, led by former prime minister Mahathir Mohamad, to register their discontent with the leadership of Najib and **Ahmad Zahid Hamidi**. This resistance was carried into the watershed May 2018 general election, when *Bersatu* joined with allies in the **Pakatan Harapan** coalition to oust the **Barisan Nasional** from power for the first time since independence in 1957. While some *Pakatan Harapan* members harboured suspicions of *Bersatu* because of its UMNO roots, residual concern for Mahathir's intentions, and *Bersatu's* tacit policy of encouraging defections from UMNO, others embraced the party on account of its consequential contribution of parliamentary seats. In the event, despite being only the third largest party in the new ruling coalition by virtue of the number of parliamentary seats won, *Bersatu* provided the occupants of both the prime minister and deputy prime minister positions. This was largely because Mahathir was seen as the only acceptable candidate in the eyes of the coalition partners to lead the new government. Underlying this reticence was concern for the ambitions of **Anwar Ibrahim**, an issue that would ultimately break *Pakatan Harapan* apart.

*Bersatu* split into two camps following the **Sheraton Move** of February 2020, initiated by former **Parti Keadilan Rakyat** leader Azmin Ali and supported by *Bersatu* president Muhyiddin Yassin to block the prospect of Anwar succeeding Mahathir as Malaysian prime minister. The move was opposed by Mahathir, who was eventually dismissed by the leadership of *Bersatu* after attempts by Muhyiddin to persuade him to continue leading the party post-*Pakatan Harapan* failed. *Bersatu* proceeded to

form a new government, *Perikatan Nasional*, with *Parti Islam Se-Malaysia*, *Gabungan Bersatu Sabah*, and UMNO, although UMNO did not formally join the coalition. On 15 August 2020, *Bersatu* purged remaining pro-Mahathir party members from its ranks. Notwithstanding the marriage of convenience with UMNO based on the parliamentary concept of ‘confidence and supply’, the relationship was a testy one, with bad blood stemming from *Bersatu*’s unrestrained attacks against UMNO in the run-up to the 14th general election in 2018, its subsequent acceptance of UMNO defectors after the polls, and UMNO’s sense of entitlement with regards to the distribution of cabinet positions. Despite the fact that it formally joined the *Muafakat Nasional* pro-Malay alliance comprising UMNO and PAS in August 2020 in order to deepen relations with these parties, *Bersatu* was the subject of consuming discussions at UMNO’s general assembly in 2021. The assembly concluded with a decision to cease cooperation with *Bersatu*, resulting in the ruling coalition losing its parliamentary majority. This led in turn to the resignation of Muhyiddin Yassin as prime minister in August 2021. He was replaced by UMNO vice-president **Ismail Sabri Yaakob**, and while the composition of the Cabinet hardly changed, *Bersatu* lost its commanding position of the office of the prime minister.

During its time as the anchor party in the *Perikatan Nasional* government, questions persisted over the long-term viability of *Bersatu* given its ideological similarities with UMNO, and the fact that, for reasons of political survival, the party has found itself gravitating closer to its hitherto nemesis even as the latter has started to distance itself from it. Now that it has lost its pole position in the ruling government, *Bersatu* will come under even greater scrutiny.

see also: 1MDB; Anwar Ibrahim; *Barisan Nasional* (BN); Ismail Sabri Yaakob, Datuk Seri; Mahathir Mohamad, Tun; Muhyiddin Yassin, Tan Sri; Najib Tun Razak, Datuk Seri; *Pakatan Harapan*; *Parti Islam Se-Malaysia*; *Parti Keadilan Rakyat*; *Perikatan Nasional*; Sheraton Move 2020; UMNO (United Malays National Organization); Zahid Hamidi, Ahmad.

### ***Partido Demokratiko Pilipino–Lakas ng Bayan (PDP-Laban)*** (Philippines)

The *Partido Demokratiko Pilipino–Lakas ng Bayan*, or *PDP-Laban*, is at present the largest political party in the Philippines, providing 122 members of Congress. *PDP-Laban* came into existence by way of merger between the Luzón-based *Lakas ng Bayan*, which was founded by **Benigno Aquino** in 1978, and the Mindanao-based *Partido Demokratiko Pilipino*, comprising politicians opposed to **Ferdinand Marcos**, in 1986. *PDP-Laban* made its mark immediately when it became the vehicle through which **Corazón Aquino** would oust Marcos from power, acquiring a reputation for standing up to injustice and abuse of power. The party would come to be closely linked to President Aquino through her brother, Jose ‘Peping’ Cojuangco Jr, who was party secretary-general and one of its chief financiers. A long-time central figure in *PDP-Laban* until his death in October 2019 had been the former party president, Aquilino Quililing ‘Nene’ Pimentel Jr, who had poorly disguised national presidential ambitions of his own but which never fully materialized.

In a landscape where political parties are weak, ideologically malleable, and often merely vehicles of personal ambitions, *PDP-Laban* claims democratic socialism, poverty alleviation, and consensus decision-making to be its defining objectives and principles. Following the presidential term of Aquino, *PDP-Laban* suffered from internal dissent which led to the breakaway of a faction that joined Ramon Mitra in **Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino**. Reeling from this factionalism, the party would enter several coalitions in keeping with the nature of Philippine party politics. These included alignment with the **Liberal Party** for the 1992 presidential election and later, the United Nationalist Alliance in 2013. The party continued to struggle in elections, seeing its share of seats in the House of Representatives declined from 43 in 1987 to one in 1995. It has since improved to 84 seats after the 2019 election. In 2010, party president Jejomar Binay ran for the vice-presidency and was successfully ushered into power alongside **Benigno Aquino III**. He left the party to start an ultimately unsuccessful run for the presidency in 2016.

In 2016, it secured the presidency through the successful campaign of **Rodrigo Duterte**, who also serves as party chairman. Meanwhile, former president **Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo** joined the party in 2017 after leaving **Lakas-CMD**, and subsequently became elected speaker of the House of Representatives a year later. A leadership struggle materialized soon after, when a faction within the party led by Rogelio Garcia sought to unseat party president Aquilino “Koko” Pimentel III and chairman Pantaleon Alvarez. In the event, the Commission on Elections ruled that the Pimentel faction was the legitimate leadership of the party. As an extension of President Duterte’s desire for a more independent streak in foreign policy away from traditional reliance on the United States, *PDP-Laban* established party-to-party relations with United Russia and the Chinese Communist Party. In December 2020, the world champion boxer and senator, Manny Pacquiao, was chosen to be president of the party. Brewing tensions between Pacquiao and party chairman Rodrigo Duterte came to a head in 2021 with the national council of the party called for Pacquiao’s resignation. Differences had emerged between the two in June 2021 when Pacquiao suggested that corruption was rampant in the government under the presidency of Duterte. In the event, Pacquiao was replaced as party chair by Alfonso Cusi, a Duterte ally, at *PDP-Laban*’s national assembly on 17 July 2021. In November, the party nominated Senator Christopher Lawrence ‘Bong’ Go as their candidate for the 2022 presidential election.

see also: Aquino, Benigno; Aquino, Benigno Simeon Cojuangco, III; Aquino, Corazón; Duterte, Rodrigo; *Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino* (LDP); *Lakas-CMD*; Liberal Party; Macapagal-Arroyo, Gloria; Marcos, Ferdinand.

### ***Partido Liberal ng Pilipinas***

(Philippines)

The Liberal Party of the Philippines (*Partido Liberal ng Pilipinas*) or LP was established in 1945 by Senate president **Manuel Roxas**, Senator Elpidio Quirino, and Senator Jose Avelino. At the point of its formation, it was considered

a breakaway group from the dominant **Nacionalista Party**. After initially supporting Senator Manuel Roxas III, grandson of the party’s founder, LP eventually provided the vehicle that conveyed **Benigno Aquino III** to the presidency in 2010, during whose tenure it also enjoyed majority control of the House of Representatives. It is considered the second oldest political party in the Philippines, and its membership has included notable politicians including **Benigno Aquino**, the assassinated leader of opposition to **Ferdinand Marcos**, and Manuel Roxas, the first president of the Third Philippines Republic. Two other presidents were elected under this party banner as well – Elpidio Quirino and **Diosdado Macapagal**. LP was an active critic of President Ferdinand Marcos’s rule, and its outspokenness made it a target for political persecution. Consequently, it served as a coalition partner of all presidents in the post-Marcos era, including the first year of the presidency of **Rodrigo Duterte**. However, it did have to endure factionalism and splits during the presidencies of Joseph Estrada and Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. In recent years, the party has been instrumental in pushing controversial political decisions such as the rejection of the renewal of a new treaty on US bases in the country. It also expressed its endorsement of **EDSA II** and was active in support of Aquino’s presidential campaign in 2010. The Liberal Party consolidated power at the 2013 mid-term elections by winning 111 out of 234 seats in the House of Representatives. While the party contested only 3 of the 12 Senate seats that were vacant, it anchored Benigno Aquino III’s ‘Team Pnoy’ coalition that won a total of nine seats. After the Aquino presidency, the membership of LP dwindled as a result of defections to the **Partido Demokratiko Pilipino-Lakas ng Bayan** (*PDP-Laban*) of Duterte. In the event, LP would eventually join *PDP-Laban*’s supermajority, only to withdraw a year later in 2017 because of opposition to the Duterte administration’s policies on extrajudicial killings during the anti-drug campaign, the burial of Ferdinand Marcos in the National Heroes’ Cemetery, and the reimposition of the death penalty. The party suffered a crippling defeat at the 2019 mid-term elections, barely securing any congressional

seats. Despite being party chairperson, Vice-President Leni Robredo has expressed her intention to run for the 2022 presidential election as an independent.

see also: Aquino, Benigno; Aquino, Benigno Simeon Cojuangco, III; Duterte, Rodrigo; EDSA II; Estrada, Joseph Ejercito; Macapagal, Diosdado; Macapagal-Arroyo, Gloria; Marcos, Ferdinand; *Nacionalista Party*; Roxas, Manuel A.

### Patani United Liberation Organization (Thailand)

The Patani United Liberation Organization (PULO) is a militant Muslim separatist group in southern Thailand. PULO was established in 1968 and drew support from a generation of frustrated young ethnic Malays living in Thailand's southern border provinces (see *Islam*), especially a small but significant number who had been educated abroad. It was founded in India by Kabir Abdul Rahman, who had studied at Aligarh Muslim University and who called himself Tengku Bira Kotanila when he went to Mecca to establish a base for overseas recruitment. PULO became an active insurgency with the politicization of Thai students in the early 1970s and mounted a number of military actions during the decade. In the repressive climate after the restoration of military rule in October 1976, Malay-Muslim students and intellectuals were attracted to the idea of autonomy and even independence for the southern provinces of Thailand. Organized attacks on government establishments in the south of the country as well as sporadic bombings in Bangkok continued after young activists had undergone military training in Libya and Syria in camps of the Palestine Liberation Organization. PULO membership reached its height in the 1980s, when it claimed to have several thousand fighters. While it claimed responsibility for sporadic attacks in the 1990s, including the bombing of a railway station in the southern town of Hatyai in 1992, a string of arson attacks on schools in the south in 1993 and the bombing of a bridge between Hatyai and Chana railway stations in 1994, the government's amnesty policy significantly eroded

its support base during this period. The emergence of opportunities for Muslim political representation in the form of the *Santiparb* (Peace) Party and the Wadah faction of the **Thai Rak Thai Party** further undermined the appeal of PULO. In the event, PULO leaders retreated to live in exile in Malaysia, Indonesia, and Europe. The organization also split in 1995 with the formation of New PULO.

International support for PULO has taken the form of Syrian and Libyan pleas before the United Nations as well as informal representation before the Organization of the Islamic Conference. Although a measure of support has come from coreligionists in the Malaysian state of Kelantan, especially from the Malay opposition **Parti Islam Se-Malaysia** (PAS), Muslim partners of Thailand within **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** have never provided encouragement for its separatist goal. Attempts to win support from the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) initially faltered when Thailand was granted observer status in 1997, although OIC sympathy for PULO's cause increased after the resurgence of political violence in 2004. In April 1998, three alleged leaders of a new faction of PULO were extradited to Bangkok after having been arrested in Malaysia. In March 2000, Indonesian sources alleged that arms for rebels in **Aceh** were being shipped across the Malacca Strait by members of PULO.

With the resumption of political violence at the turn of the century, PULO has attempted to reassert its presence as commissars of the insurgency. An attempt to reunite the various factions of PULO towards that end in 2006 proved short-lived, however, as leaders with different interests continued to clash. While much of the violence is believed to be perpetrated by a new generation of fighters purportedly under the loose leadership of the **Barisan Revolusi Nasional-Coordinate**, PULO continues to claim to represent the interests of the insurgents at various peace talks.

see also: Aceh Independence Movement; ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; *Barisan Revolusi Nasional-Coordinate*; *Islam*; *Parti Islam Se-Malaysia*; *Thai Rak Thai Party*.

**Pathet Lao** (Laos)

*Pathet Lao*, which translates as Lao Nation or State, is the name ascribed to the Laotian revolutionary movement aligned with the communist-led **Viet Minh** during the first phase of the **Indochina Wars**. Its origins may be traced to the association established with Vietnam's communists from October 1945 by the radical Lao nationalist Prince **Souphanouvong**. With Viet Minh military support, he organized resistance to the restoration of French colonial rule with conservative nationalists, including his half-brother Prince **Souvanna Phouma**. Driven into exile in Thailand, Prince Souphanouvong returned to Vietnam in November 1949 after an accommodation had been reached between the main body of Lao nationalists and the French. In August 1950, under Viet Minh patronage, he convened a so-called resistance congress close to the Vietnamese border. That congress set up a National Resistance government which adopted a 12-point manifesto, at the bottom of which were the words *Pathet Lao*.

*Pathet Lao* soon became the generally accepted term for describing the Laotian revolutionary movement. The National Resistance government, however, was denied representation at the conference that led to the **Geneva Agreements on Indochina** in 1954. The cease-fire agreement for Laos concluded in July was signed between only French and Vietnamese military representatives, but the latter signed on behalf of the fighting units of *Pathet Lao*. Post-Geneva, the Laotian revolutionaries set up the **Neo Lao Hak Sat** (Lao Patriotic Front) which served as a front for the guiding **Lao People's Revolutionary Party**, believed to have been established in 1951. Nonetheless, the term *Pathet Lao* remained in common usage to describe the revolutionary movement which assumed total power in December 1975.

see also: Geneva Agreements on Indochina 1954; Geneva Agreements on Laos 1962; Indochina Wars; Lao People's Revolutionary Party; *Neo Lao Hak Sat*; Souphanouvong, Prince; Souvanna Phouma, Prince; Viet Minh.

**Paukphaw Relationship** (Burma/Myanmar)

The *Paukphaw* relationship refers to a special association between Myanmar and the People's Republic of China begun in the 1950s. China is the only country for which this Burmese term, which translates as 'sibling,' is used. Chinese leaders, including Zhou En-lai, cemented the relationship through a series of high-level visits. Since its inception the *Paukphaw* relationship has often followed a dual track, allowing both countries to pursue state-to-state relations separate from party-to-party relations, a state of affairs that allowed China and Myanmar to maintain official relations while the Chinese Communist Party provided support for the Burmese Communist Party (BCP) in its struggle against Yangon. Throughout this period China provided various types of economic assistance, although until the 1990s trade with China was limited and the border trade was confined to a few crossings. Myanmar, as the younger brother in the relationship, was primarily concerned with regime preservation, and has skillfully played its China card in a way that allows it considerable space in international forums, while constantly repositioning itself towards China in an attempt to accommodate China's regional interests though resisting Chinese influence and interference in Myanmar's internal affairs.

Since the collapse of the BCP in 1989, relations between China and Myanmar have become closer. Chinese investments and trade have increased considerably, and Beijing has acted to block criticism and proposed Western sanctions in international forums, especially the United Nations Security Council. Most recently, China has refrained from harshly worded responses to the 2021 coup, much to the annoyance of civil society groups and anti-junta forces in Myanmar. At the same time, China still maintains relations with several armed ethnic insurgent groups on the Myanmar–China border, particularly the United Wa State Army (UWSA), the largest such organization in Myanmar.

This relationship has cooled somewhat in recent years due to Myanmar's concern about China's growing influence and its own economic

over-reliance on Beijing. This became apparent in 2011 when the government suspended a large dam project financed and under construction by a Chinese state-owned company. The move was officially in response to public discontent with the project, but behind the scenes disquiet among the ranks of the military over what some perceived as too close a relationship to Beijing was also in play. The move also revealed a growing anti-Chinese sentiment among the Myanmar population. Notwithstanding these apprehensions, the reality is that the asymmetry in this relationship has widened even as Myanmar's economic ties with China continue to deepen. The China–Myanmar Economic Corridor, envisaged as a major part of China's Belt and Road Initiative, is slated to be a major infrastructural investment project that will further integrate Myanmar to the Chinese market. With Myanmar facing international sanctions and isolation after the February 2021 coup, the inherent imbalance in this *Paukphaw* relationship is only going to worsen.

**Pedra Branca** (Malaysia/Singapore) see **Horsburgh Lighthouse**

**Pembela** (Malaysia)

The Organizations for the Defence of Islam (*Pertubuhan-Pertubuhan Pembela Islam*), known by the acronym *Pembela*, is a collection of more than 70 Muslim non-governmental organizations established in 2006 following controversial court cases which involved the conversion of Muslims to other religions. During the height of the **Lina Joy Issue**, *Pembela* was at the forefront of opposition to groups such as the **Article 11 Coalition** which were supporting Joy's freedom to renounce Islam. In that regard, *Pembela* represents the conservative Malay voices in Malaysia who fear the dilution of Islamic identity in the country, especially through Muslims leaving Islam through legal channels. Since its formation, *Pembela* has been a regular and vocal participant on the Malaysian civil society landscape. They are also non-partisan, in that they have criticized politicians from both sides of the aisle for taking liberal positions on conversion away from Islam.

see also: Article 11 Coalition; Lina Joy Issue; *Pakatan Rakyat*.

**Pemerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia (PRRI)** (Indonesia) see **Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia 1958–61**

**People Power** (Philippines)

'People Power' is the term employed to describe the huge non-violent popular demonstration that took place from 22 February 1986 for four days in Epifanio de los Santos Avenue (**EDSA**) in Manila, close to the military camps Aguinaldo and Crame. That sustained demonstration in the wake of conspicuously fraudulent elections played a decisive part in persuading President **Ferdinand Marcos** to leave for exile in the United States and in bringing **Corazón Aquino** to office. The demonstration was precipitated by a revolt against President Marcos led by the minister of defence, **Juan Ponce Enrile**, and the deputy chief of staff of the armed forces, **Fidel Ramos**. With only some 200 supporters initially, they barricaded themselves into Camp Crame in anticipation of an armed attack. At that juncture, the Archbishop of Manila, Cardinal **Jaime Sin**, broadcast a call for people to pray and keep vigil outside the camp. The popular response was dramatic. A huge crowd established a human wall which interposed between the rebels and troops dispatched to crush them by the chief of staff of the armed forces, **Fabian Ver**. The security forces were reluctant to use force, while President Marcos prevaricated over giving an order to fire because he understood that in the event of bloodshed he would not be able to find refuge in the United States. The more he prevaricated, the more the armed forces began to side with the rebels' demand that Aquino be regarded as the rightful winner of the presidential elections. In the event, Marcos accepted the advice of Senator Paul Laxalt, speaking for President Ronald Reagan, that he 'should cut and cut cleanly', which he did in the evening of 25 February. Without the interposing display of People Power, the revolt against Marcos might well have been expeditiously crushed and the

course of Philippine history would have been different.

see *also*: Aquino, Corazón; EDSA (Epifanio de los Santos Avenue); Enrile, Juan Ponce; Marcos, Ferdinand; Ramos, Fidel; Sin, Cardinal Jaime; Ver, General Fabian.

### **People's Action Party (Singapore)**

The ruling People's Action Party (PAP) has been continuously in power since the elections in May 1959 that immediately preceded Singapore's acquisition of self-governing status. The party was founded in November 1954 by English-educated professionals who sought the support of the island's Chinese-educated majority through aligning with radical trade unionists linked to the illegal Communist Party of Malaya. Their platform called for a democratic socialist non-communist united Malaya, to include Singapore. When in 1961 a merger between peninsular Malaya and Singapore (together with British territories in northern Borneo) was sanctioned, tension arose between moderate and radical wings of the party leading to the defection of the latter, who formed **Barisan Sosialis** (Socialist Front). The rump of PAP governed with support in Parliament from right-wing parties. Merger into the Federation of Malaysia took place in September 1963 and in its immediate wake PAP re-established an electoral majority in its own right.

In May 1964 PAP made a provocative and unsuccessful electoral foray into peninsular Malaysian elections, which generated racial tensions. The outcome was Singapore's expulsion from Malaysia in August 1965, which had the effect of reinforcing popular support for the party. From elections in April 1968 until a by-election in October 1981, PAP held every seat in the Legislative Assembly. In general elections in December 1984, two opposition candidates were successful, with the remaining 77 seats going to PAP. The opposition complement increased to four seats in the following elections in August 1991, including three won by the Singapore Democratic Party, in an enlarged legislature of 81, with the PAP holding 77 seats. By then, the reins of leadership had been passed from **Lee Kuan Yew**, who had served as prime minister for 31 consecutive years, to **Goh Chok**

**Tong**. In elections in January 1997, the PAP won 81 seats in a legislature enlarged to 83 seats and raised its vote from 61 per cent to 65 per cent. This improved to 75.3 per cent in 2001, when the party won 82 out of 84 seats, including 55 uncontested seats. The magnitude of victory in 2001 was all the more remarkable given that Singapore was at the time in the throes of a major economic recession.

In August 2004, PAP went through another leadership transition when **Lee Hsien Loong**, elder son of Lee Kuan Yew, succeeded Goh Chok Tong. The younger Lee sought to tone down the interventionist nature of the PAP-run state and also embarked on electoral reforms such as the reduction of the number of group representation constituencies. He also oversaw an increase in the number of non-constituency members of Parliament (NCMPs), positions granted to losing opposition candidates who garnered the highest percentage of votes, and nominated members of Parliament (NMPs), comprising prominent public figures who are not elected and do not have any party affiliation, to nine. In 2006, the PAP obtained 66.6 per cent of the vote, while continuing to hold 82 out of 84 parliamentary seats. Over the years the party has become increasingly elitist, drawing parliamentary candidates from the ranks of successful bureaucrats and businesspeople as well as from the medical and military profession. Because of the longstanding absence of credible opposition, the PAP and the government of Singapore have become virtually indistinguishable. An initial commitment to democratic socialism has given way to an authoritarian pragmatism, justified with reference to outstanding economic achievement, which has been internationally acknowledged. This abiding nature of the party came under considerable strain at the 2011 general election, when PAP saw its share of the popular vote drop markedly to 60.4 per cent. Even more significant was the party's loss of the **Aljunied Group Representation Constituency** to the **Workers' Party**, the first time that PAP had lost a GRC. The erosion of support for PAP was foremost due to growing resentment towards an economic policy that encouraged the influx of migrant labour, a liberal approach towards the granting of permanent residency,

and an alarming increase in the cost of living. Equally significant was the opposition's ability to recruit accomplished candidates of high calibre, something that had eluded them in previous elections. In 2015, the party benefited from a momentary change of the electoral mood occasioned by the passing of one of its founders, Lee Kuan Yew, and the celebration of Singapore's 50th year of independence to record a strong performance in polls, securing 83 of 89 parliamentary seats and close to 70 per cent of the popular vote in the first election of the post-Lee Kuan Yew era. The momentum failed to carry into the election, in 2020, as PAP managed only 83 out of 93 seats and slightly over 61 per cent of the popular vote, losing another GRC, Sengkang, along the way. The result invalidated pre-election predictions that in the face of the **Covid-19** pandemic, a 'flight to safety' effect would hand PAP a landslide. Instead, a combination of failure to connect with young voters, an uncertain economic climate, unconvincing explanations of recent legislation such as the protection from online falsehoods and manipulation act and the reserved presidency, and the perceived unfair targeting of an opposition politician, all contrived to erode the popularity of the party. As secretary-general Lee Hsien Loong completes 18 years as prime minister, leadership succession, hitherto a forte of PAP, remains murky. Initial plans for the present deputy prime minister, Heng Swee Keat, to succeed Lee had to be scrapped when Heng withdrew his name from the succession plan in 2020.

see also: Aljunied Group Representation Constituency; *Barisan Sosialis*; Covid-19; Goh Chok Tong; Lee Hsien Loong; Lee Kuan Yew; Workers' Party.

## People's Alliance for Democracy

(Thailand)

The People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD), also known as the 'Yellow Shirts', was originally a coalition of protestors urging the removal of Prime Minister **Thaksin Shinawatra**. It later demonstrated for the ousting of the Thaksin-aligned **People's Power Party** (PPP)-led government. The movement also later played a prominent role in the border dispute between Thailand and Cambodia over the **Preah Vihear** temple.

PAD arose out of the weekly public political talk shows of **Sondhi Limthongkul**, which gradually turned into protest rallies against Thaksin. PAD was eventually established on 8 February 2006 following the sale of Thaksin's family's shares in Shin Corp to Temasek Holdings of Singapore. It organized mass rallies against the Thaksin government, and dissolved itself two days after the military coup of 19 September 2006. PAD was reconstituted on 28 March 2008 after the Thaksin-affiliated PPP won a majority in the December general election. Large street demonstrations began in May 2008 to pressure the government of **Samak Sundaravej** to resign, accusing PPP of being a proxy party for Thaksin and his dissolved **Thai Rak Thai Party**. PAD protests escalated after Samak was disqualified for violating a law prohibiting government ministers from receiving salaries for other jobs. Violence during this period between PAD supporters, anti-PAD protestors, and police left dozens injured and one PAD protestor dead. In August 2008, PAD seized the grounds of Government House. It went on in November to seize Don Muang and Suvarnabhumi international airports in Bangkok as well as airports in Phuket, Krabi, and Hat Yai. PAD called off its protests on 3 December 2008 and relinquished control of the airports after the Constitutional Court dissolved PPP and banned its leaders from politics. PAD had stated during the height of the protests that the only prime minister they would accept was **Abhisit Vejjajiva** of the **Democrat Party**. PAD members would make recurring appearances in opposition to protests by the **United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship** (UDD) during 2009, often resulting in violence. In April 2009, PAD leader Sondhi was wounded in an assassination attempt in Bangkok. Following their protest victory, PAD leaders claimed popular democracy had failed in Thailand and called for constitutional amendments that would make Parliament a largely royally appointed body. They also suggested that the military and the traditional elite should have a greater role in politics. The issue had originally been used in 2008 as a *cause célèbre* by PAD to attack the Samak government after it agreed to allow the Preah Vihear temple to be listed



as a World Heritage Site. PAD again came out in much smaller numbers in 2011 to protest the perceived soft stance of the Abhisit government over the ownership of Preah Vihear and several other temples along the Thai–Cambodian border. PAD went so far as to call for Abhisit's resignation, using the issue to further its attempt to amend the constitution.

Prominent leaders of PAD included media mogul Sondhi and former major general and Bangkok governor, **Chamlong Srimuang**. PAD drew its core membership from upper and middle class Bangkokians with strong royalist feelings, as well as southerners. The group regularly invoked King **Bhumibol Adulyadej** in its protests, chose yellow as it was the king's colour and regularly denounced opponents as being disloyal to the monarchy. PAD initially received support from factions within the military, and several Democrat Party leaders.

see also: Abhisit Vejjajiva; Bhumibol Adulyadej, King; Chamlong Srimuang, General; Democrat Party; People's Power Party; Preah Vihear Temple Dispute; Samak Sundaravej; Sondhi Limthongkul; *Thai Rak Thai* Party; Thaksin Shinawatra; United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship.

### **People's Constitution 1997 (Thailand)**

Despite having had a long list of constitutions including after 1997, Thailand's 1997 Constitution, popularly called the People's Constitution, stands out for being the first to be drafted by a popularly elected Constitutional Drafting Assembly. As such it was widely acclaimed as a landmark in Thai democratic reform. The constitution replaced the 1991 Constitution put in place by a military junta following a coup that year. The timing of the constitution was also appropriate as it occurred at the height of the 1997 **Asian Financial Crisis** which prompted calls for reform. Among its more significant items, the People's Constitution provided for a bicameral legislature whose members would be directly elected. The document also contained provisions that addressed human rights concerns as well as measures designed to enhance the stability of elected governments. At the same time, the constitution also provoked strong criticism in reaction to clauses

covering the creation of a constitutional court, the decentralization of government functions, and requirements for members of Parliament to possess higher education qualifications. While the People's Constitution was widely praised for how it went further than previous charters in granting greater power to ordinary citizens, it also facilitated the ascent of populist politicians and parties such as **Thaksin Shinawatra** and his **Thai Rak Thai Party**. The 1997 Constitution was abrogated by the military junta that took over the country after the September 2006 coup and later replaced by a new constitution. see also: Asian Financial Crisis 1997–8; *Thai Rak Thai* Party; Thaksin Shinawatra.

### **People's Consultative Assembly (Indonesia)**

The bicameral People's Consultative Assembly or MPR (*Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat*) was initially created to be the supreme constitutional authority to which the president of Indonesia is, in principle, accountable and to whom he or she reports. Provision for the MPR was made in the original independence constitution promulgated on 18 August 1945. That constitution lapsed with the attainment of independence in December 1949 but was reinstated by President **Sukarno** in July 1959 when he inaugurated the political system of **Guided Democracy**. That constitution was retained by President **Suharto**, who restored the MPR, which enjoyed only provisional status, on a partly elected and nominated basis in March 1973. During the **New Order** it comprised between 900 and 1,000 members, more than half of whom were nominated, with the rest drawn from a Parliament elected every five years. That figure has been reduced to around 700 since the end of the New Order era, comprising members of the **People's Representative Council** (*Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat* or DPR) and **Regional Representative Council** (*Dewan Perwakilan Daerah* or DPD). A segment of the MPR comprising serving military and police officers, a legacy of the New Order era, was removed in 2004. During Suharto's tenure, the MPR served as a rubber-stamping electoral college returning him to highest executive office recurrently until March 1998. With his resignation in May

1998, the MPR assumed a more active political role, especially after parliamentary elections in June 1999, which paved the way for radically new membership. In October 1999, faced with competition for highest office, it elected **Abdurrahman Wahid** as president. During the 2002 sitting of the MPR, additional constitutional amendments were introduced, including the establishment of a constitutional court and a direct presidential and vice-presidential election system. Once the supreme constitutional body, since 2003 the MPR's role in the Indonesian political system has been reduced considerably. Much of its previous remit has now been taken over by the DPR, and it now enjoys authority only to amend the state constitution and swear in the president and vice-president. The current MPR speaker, Bambang Soesatyo from **Golkar**, is the 15th leader of the Assembly. *see also: Golkar; Guided Democracy; New Order; People's Representative Council; Regional Representative Council; Suharto; Sukarno; Wahid, Abdurrahman.*

### People's Party (Brunei)

The People's Party of Brunei (*Partai Rakyat Brunei*) was a radical Malay organization which mounted the abortive **Brunei Revolt** in the sultanate in December 1962. It was founded on 22 January 1956, initially as a branch of the left-wing People's Party of Malaya, but was not permitted to register until 15 August after expunging its foreign affiliation. Led by **A. M. Azahari**, the People's Party campaigned for independence within a unitary state of North Borneo under the constitutional auspices of the sultan, Sir Omar Ali Saifuddin. It opposed the agreement reached in September 1959 whereby the British protecting power granted the sultanate self-government and also the proposal in 1961 to incorporate Brunei within a Federation of Malaysia. The People's Party won all 16 elective seats to the Legislative Council of 33 members in August 1962 and put down a motion opposing Malaysia for the meeting arranged for 5 December. It had planned to mount a revolt soon after, for which training had been under way for a year with Indonesian support. The sultan postponed the meeting of the **Legislative Council**, but the revolt went ahead

on 8 December, while Azahari was soliciting support in the Philippines. British troops from Singapore crushed the revolt at the request of the sultan, who banned the party on 10 December. It has remained proscribed within Brunei. In July 1973, however, a number of its leaders escaped from detention with Malaysian complicity. They reconstituted the People's Party in exile in May 1974, setting up an office in neighbouring Limbang in the Malaysian state of Sarawak (*see Limbang Claim*). After reconciliation between Brunei and Malaysia concurrent with the sultanate's independence and membership of **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** in January 1984, the external activities of the party effectively ceased.

*see also: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Azahari, A. M.; Brunei Revolt 1962; Confrontation; Legislative Council; Limbang Claim.*

### People's Power Party (Thailand)

The People's Power Party (PPP) was formed in 1998 but came into prominence following the September 2006 coup which ousted Prime Minister **Thaksin Shinawatra**. Comprising supporters of the former prime minister and members of the **Thai Rak Thai Party** that was dissolved following the coup, PPP contested the 2007 elections, the first after the coup, on a populist platform. It managed to gain 233 out of 480 seats on its own, and with the contributions of five closely allied parties, who collectively won 82 seats, managed to form the government. Party leader and Thaksin ally **Samak Sundaravej** was appointed prime minister in December 2007 but was forced to resign in September the following year when, amidst mounting pressure from the **People's Alliance for Democracy**, he was disqualified by the Constitutional Court for receiving payment for his televised cooking shows. Besieged by growing street protests, Samak was replaced by **Somchai Wongsawat**, brother-in-law of Thaksin Shinawatra. In December 2008, PPP was dissolved by the Constitutional Court along with allies, the Matchima Party and the **Chart Thai Party**, for electoral fraud. Somchai and other senior politicians from the party were sent into political exile and barred from politics for five

years. After the party was dissolved, its members moved on to form the **Pheu Thai Party**.

*see also:* *Chart Thai Party*; *People's Alliance for Democracy*; *Pheu Thai Party*; *Samak Sundaravej*; *Somchai Wongsawat*; *Thai Rak Thai Party*; *Thaksin Shinawatra*.

## **People's Representative Council** (Indonesia)

The People's Representative Council, also known as the DPR or *Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat*, is the Indonesian House of Representatives and a constituent part of the MPR or the **People's Consultative Assembly**. It comprises 575 elected members appointed for five-year terms and is tasked with the responsibility of making and passing legislation as well as formulation of the national budget.

The DPR is divided into 11 separate commissions overseeing every aspect of government including economics, social and religious policy, housing and development, education, domestic security, agriculture, energy, transportation, and foreign and security policy. As an institution representing the will of the people, the DPR evolved from its earlier colonial incarnation, the Volksraad instituted by the Netherlands, to the Central Indonesian National Committee of the post-war independence struggle, to the DPR-*Gotong Royong* (Mutual Assistance) of the **Sukarno** years, to the DPR of the **New Order**, to its present incarnation as a fully elected House of Representatives following reforms that were instituted with the end of **Suharto's** New Order and the advent of democracy. The image of the DPR has been tainted by frequent corruption allegations and in consequence co-exists in an uncomfortable relationship with the **Corruption Eradication Commission** or KPK. In late April 2017, the DPR launched a special investigation into the KPK ostensibly in response to complaints about KPK's conduct of investigations and internal governance issues. Consequently, in its final sitting in September 2019, the DPR passed legislation which effectively curtailed its independence. In April 2018, the chairman of the DPR and chairman of **Golkar**, Setya Novanto, was convicted of stealing US\$170 million in public funds and sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment. Following the 2019

elections, Puan Maharani, the ambitious daughter of **Megawati Sukarnoputri**, was appointed chairperson of the DPR.

*See also:* *Corruption Eradication Commission*; *Golkar*; *Megawati Sukarnoputri*; *New Order*; *People's Consultative Assembly*; *Suharto*; *Sukarno*.

## **Perikatan Nasional** (Malaysia)

Following its withdrawal from the **Pakatan Harapan** coalition on 24 February 2020, **Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia** proceeded to form *Perikatan Nasional*, an informal coalition which linked the party with **Parti Islam Se-Malaysia** (PAS), *Parti Gabungan Sarawak*, and *Gabungan Bersatu Sabah*. While **UMNO** declined the invitation to join the *Perikatan Nasional* 'grand coalition', choosing instead to concentrate its resources on **Barisan Nasional** (National Front, BN) and its newer *Muafakat Nasional* alliance with PAS, it did initially declare its support for a federal government with **Muhyiddin Yassin** at the helm, no doubt expecting a quid pro quo of a considerable number of senior cabinet posts in return. Concomitantly, with the help of the sizable parliamentary bloc that UMNO possessed, *Perikatan Nasional*, led by Muhyiddin, managed to persuade Sultan Abdullah, the **Yang di-Pertuan Agong**, that they had acquired a parliamentary majority and secured his approval for the formation of a new government. In the event, Muhyiddin was sworn into office on 1 March 2020 as prime minister at the helm of a *Perikatan Nasional* 'backdoor' government which possessed a slim parliamentary majority of barely 113 out of 222 parliamentary seats. While it purports to be a multiethnic coalition, the arid reality of Malay dominance is clear from its composition of parties which comprise primarily of Malay parties.

*Perikatan Nasional* was registered officially as a political organization on 7 August 2020 and contested an election for the first time with this new status at the September Sabah state elections when it won 17 out of 29 seats contested. Together with 14 seats won by the UMNO-led BN and another seven by local allies, *Gabungan Rakyat Sabah*, a Sabah-based coalition that brought together *Perikatan Nasional*, BN, and several other Sabah-based parties, was ushered

into power, in the process defeating the *Pakatan Harapan* ally in Sabah, *Parti Warisan Sabah* or the Sabah Heritage Party. Immediate electoral success barely concealed the strains within the coalition, the primary source of which was UMNO. By dint of commanding the largest parliamentary bloc among *Perikatan Nasional* partners and also its longstanding position of dominance in Malay politics, the dissatisfaction of UMNO with the political arrangement was palpable, particularly when the party's overtures for the deputy prime minister position were ignored. Concomitantly, UMNO leaders repeatedly reminded that the party's alliance with *Perikatan Nasional* was equivocal and conditional. In the event, UMNO has contrived to bring down *Perikatan Nasional* leaders with various power plays that involve casting their lot with *Pakatan Harapan* parties including the **Democratic Action Party**. Be that as it may, *Perikatan Nasional* also surprised many as it weathered storms including a non-confidence vote in Parliament, widespread denunciation of its implementation of emergency rule, and vocal criticism of its handling of the Covid-19 pandemic. By January 2021 several UMNO members of Parliament had publicly withdrawn their support for *Perikatan Nasional*, thereby leaving it a withered minority government with only 109 seats in a 222-seat Parliament. As a ruling coalition *Perikatan Nasional* differed from previous ruling coalitions in how it was forged more out of expediency, for the most part by forces opposed to **Anwar Ibrahim**, than by any sense of unity of ideological design and purpose. At any rate, the decision taken at the UMNO general assembly in 2021 to withdraw support for *Bersatu* effectively cast a foreboding shadow over the *Perikatan Nasional* government. With the resignation of Muhyiddin Yassin as prime minister and his replacement by UMNO vice-president **Ismail Sabri Yaakob**, the tenure of *Perikatan Nasional* as the government of the day came to an end as the UMNO-led *Barisan Nasional* returned to power. see also: Anwar Ibrahim; *Barisan Nasional* (BN); Democratic Action Party (DAP); Ismail Sabri Yaacob, Datuk Seri; Muhyiddin Yassin, Tan Sri; *Pakatan Harapan*; *Parti Islam Se-Malaysia*; *Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia*; UMNO

(United Malays National Organization); *Yang di-Pertuan Agong*.

### **Permesta** (Indonesia)

*Permesta* is an acronym drawn from the Indonesian term *Piagam Perjuangan Semesta Alam*, meaning Universal Struggle Charter. The term was applied to the north Sulawesi (Celebes) dimension of abortive regional rebellions, which began formally in February 1958 and had fizzled out by the end of 1961. *Permesta* was the name adopted by a regionalist army council which seized power from civilian governors in eastern Indonesia in March 1957 in order to thwart attempts by the central government to prevent smuggling of copra and rubber. Corresponding army councils had been established in Sumatra from December 1956. When a **Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia** was proclaimed in west Sumatra in February 1958, open support was proffered from *Permesta*. The rebellion in Sulawesi, as well as the more significant one in Sumatra, originated in dissatisfaction with the central government in Jakarta over the maldistribution of political power and of economic returns from regional exports of raw materials, as well as in a resentment of its tolerance of the Communist Party of Indonesia. The rebellions were not secessionist, but an attempt to remould the government of the republic by reducing the rising radical influence of President **Sukarno**. The seizure of power by army councils enabled Sukarno to declare martial law; the failure of the uprisings paved the way for him to introduce his political system of **Guided Democracy** in July 1959.

see also: Guided Democracy; Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia 1958–61; Sukarno.

### **Peta** (Indonesia)

*Peta* is an Indonesian acronym drawn from *Pembela Tanah Air*, which translates as Defenders of the Fatherland. It was the term employed to describe the volunteer force of young Indonesians recruited by the Japanese in Java during the occupation of the Netherlands East Indies in order to supplement their military strength.

Its inauguration was announced on 3 October 1943 by Lieutenant General Harada Kumakichi and attracted Indonesian nationalists who were provided with military training. A revolt by *Peta* forces against the Japanese in the East Javanese town of Blitar in February 1945 served as a prelude to national revolution. *Peta* was dissolved by the Japanese shortly after their surrender, but it provided the nucleus of the army created after the proclamation of independence on 17 August 1945. Japanese training was limited but important in its emphasis on the role of *semangat* (spirit), which inspired the revolutionary army and which has become an integral part of Indonesian military tradition.

### **Pham Binh Chinh** (Vietnam)

A member of the Politburo of the Vietnamese Communist Party, Pham Minh Chinh was elected to serve as Prime Minister of Vietnam at the 11th session of the 14th National Assembly in 2021 by a margin of 462 out of 466 votes. He replaced **Nguyen Xuan Phuc**, who moved on to assume the important but mostly ceremonial position of state president.

From Thanh Hoa Province, Pham Binh Chinh was born on 10 December 1958. An engineer by training, he studied at the Hanoi University of Foreign Studies and the Bucharest Civil Engineering University in Romania. While in Romania between 1982 and 1984, he was active in the communist youth movement, serving as secretary of the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union Committee and president of the Vietnamese Students Association. He began his career in government in the fields of intelligence and external affairs, rising to the rank of director-general and later deputy minister. Significantly, his experience in intelligence covered both the party and government. Prior to his election as prime minister, Chinh held the posts of secretary of the party Central Committee, chairman of the 12th party Central Committee's organizing commission and head of the sub-commission for internal political security.

As he stepped into the role of prime minister which has been an office for which the steering of national economic planning has been paramount, his lack of experience and credentials in the economic management sphere has been

cited as a source for some concern given that the party has set growth rates of up to 7 per cent for the next five years that coincide with his first term. Given the still-unfolding effects of the **Covid-19** pandemic for Vietnam's economic growth, these concerns appear warranted. He did, however, accumulate a commendable record while serving as party secretary of Quang Ninh Province in 2011–15 when he oversaw the introduction of policies that successfully diversified the economy and developed infrastructure. At the same time, with his deep background in public security and intelligence, Chinh is likely to play an active role in containing dissent which the party leadership has grown nervous about in the wake of developments in neighbouring Myanmar, Thailand, and Hong Kong.

Pham Binh Chinh's promotion to prime minister also was significant for the fact that it departed from hitherto prevailing practice where a deputy prime minister usually assumes such a position. Because of the peculiar nature of the appointment, it has been surmised to be the result of negotiations and compromise within the inner sanctum of the party.

see also: Covid-19; Nguyen Xuan Phuc.

### **Pham Van Dong** (Vietnam)

Pham Van Dong served continuously as prime minister of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam from 1955 and then of the reunited Socialist Republic of Vietnam until he retired from office in 1987. He was born on 18 March 1906 in Quang Nai Province into a mandarin family who served the court of Emperor Duy Tan. He was educated at the National Academy in Hue and then at the law faculty in Hanoi, where he came to prominence for organizing a strike in commemoration of the death of a nationalist leader. As a member of the Revolutionary Youth League, he fled to China where he joined in a close collaboration with **Ho Chi Minh**, who placed great trust in him. He was sent back to Vietnam in 1926 to organize communist cells and was eventually arrested and imprisoned until 1936 when, after an amnesty, he returned to southern China to work again in partnership with Ho Chi Minh. Pham Van Dong demonstrated great talent as an administrator and also

as a negotiator. He acted as finance minister from 1946 during the course of the first phase of the **Indochina Wars**. In 1954, as foreign minister, he headed the Vietnamese communist delegation to the conference that resulted in the **Geneva Agreements on Indochina** and became prime minister in 1955. He was reputed to be a skilled conciliator between party factions and sought also to ensure that Vietnam did not align too closely with either China or the Soviet Union.

After Ho Chi Minh's death in 1969, and more so after unification in 1975, his influence waned as **Le Duan** came to dominate party councils. Pham Van Dong announced his retirement from all governmental and party offices in December 1986 on grounds of advanced age and ill health, giving up his posts in June 1987 to be succeeded by Pham Hung. He died in Hanoi on 29 April 2000.

see *also*: Geneva Agreements on Indochina 1954; Ho Chi Minh; Indochina Wars; Le Duan.

### **Phan Van Khai** (Vietnam)

Phan Van Khai was elected Vietnam's prime minister in September 1997 and remained in office until 2006. A southerner, he was born in 1933 in Ho Chi Minh City. Phan Van Khai was a protégé of his predecessor, **Vo Van Kiet**, moving up the party ranks in Ho Chi Minh City before being appointed to the State Planning Committee in Hanoi. Widely considered to be an economic liberal by Vietnamese standards, he was a deputy prime minister prior to his appointment as prime minister and was charged with the responsibility for handling economic affairs. As prime minister, he was well known for pushing hard for the market reforms that drove Vietnam's economy in the 1990s despite resistance from conservative factions within the party, not least General Secretary **Le Kha Phieu**. Phan Van Khai made a landmark trip to the United States in 2005, the first visit by a sitting Vietnamese prime minister since the end of the **Vietnam War** 30 years earlier. His visit marked the tenth anniversary of normalized diplomatic relations and the fifth anniversary of the US–Vietnam Bilateral Trade Agreement, at the same time facilitating

Vietnam's entry into the World Trade Organization and strengthening trade and investment ties with the United States.

As prime minister, Phan Van Khai was leader of the cabinet and formed part of the troika that made up the Vietnamese top leadership at that time. His term in office coincided with **Tran Duc Luong's** as president, and Le Kha Phieu and subsequently **Nong Duc Manh** as general secretary of the party. Phan Van Khai, together with Tran Duc Luong, resigned from the Politburo in 2006 during the tenth Congress of the party as part of a strategy of leadership rejuvenation. He was succeeded by his nominee, Deputy Prime Minister **Nguyen Tan Dung**, who like him, is a southerner and dedicated economic reformer. Phan Van Khai passed away on 17 March 2018 at the age of 84.

see *also*: Le Kha Phieu, General; Nguyen Tan Dung; Nong Duc Manh; Tran Duc Luong; Vietnam War; Vo Van Kiet.

### **Phankham Viphavanh** (Laos)

At the ninth National Assembly, in March 2021, Phankham Viphavanh was elected to replace **Thongloun Sisoulith** as prime minister of Laos after the latter assumed the office of the presidency. A serving member of the Politburo and the Executive Committee of the **Lao People's Revolutionary Party**, Phankham assumed office with relatively little experience in government. Apart from a two-year stint as deputy prime minister, he had also served as vice-president and also minister of education and sports, which is assessed to be a junior appointment in the Laotian cabinet. Within the party, he was previously a standing secretariat member in the powerful position of overseeing party personnel appointments. Born in Huaphan Province in 1951, Phankham possesses a doctorate obtained from the Soviet Union and is known to be a competent technocrat and advocate of Thongloun Sisoulith's anti-corruption drive. Because of this, he is expected to stay loyal to the party secretary as he maintains Laos' present course in both domestic and foreign affairs.

see *also*: Lao People's Revolutionary Party; Thongloun Sisoulith.

**Pheu Thai Party** (Thailand)

The *Pheu Thai* Party was formed on 20 September 2008 in anticipation of the dissolution of the **People's Power Party** (PPP) through a constitutional court ruling implicating several of its party members in electoral fraud. It was the second attempt, after the short-lived PPP experiment, to reconstitute the **Thai Rak Thai Party** after its leader and prime minister, **Thaksin Shinawatra**, was ousted in a coup in September 2006 and the party was dissolved by the Constitutional Court in May 2007. Although party executives were banned from politics for five years, the majority of members of Parliament were unaffected and moved first to PPP and later *Pheu Thai* in the wake of the former's dissolution on 2 December 2008.

Yongyuth Wichaidit was elected the party's first leader the day after the dissolution of PPP. *Pheu Thai* lost the endorsement of PPP's former allies who joined the **Democrat Party** under **Abhisit Vejjajiva** to form a new government, thereby leaving them in opposition. The party called for a national unity government to solve the nation's political problems, but this was rejected by the Democrats and their allies. The party remained in opposition throughout the 2009–10 political turmoil. When the party contested its first elections in July, it won an absolute majority in Parliament, paving the way for **Yingluck Shinawatra**, sister of Thaksin, to become prime minister. The highly populist formula used by the party in its election bid came under fire for allegedly reneging on promises. National reconciliation after years of political strife was a key component of the party's policies, but it was instead accused of using the policy as a vehicle to bring about the return of Thaksin to the country under an amnesty. The party's credibility was further damaged by its inability to effectively deal with massive floods that hit central Thailand later in 2011. The party was closely aligned with the **United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship** (UDD), and several cadres were members of both. Although the party was criticized for its shortcomings it remained popular, partly through the connection with UDD. Under pressure from opposition rallies since October 2013, Prime Minister Yingluck was forced to dissolve

Parliament and call fresh elections on 2 February 2014, which *Pheu Thai* was believed to have won. In the event, the results were nullified by the Constitutional Court, which ruled that they had to be voided because voting failed to take place in all constituencies, and only 47 per cent or 43 million voters cast their votes. The same court later found Prime Minister Yingluck guilty of abuse of power and forced her resignation on 7 May. The entire elected *Pheu Thai* government was removed on 22 May, when the military launched a coup against it.

Despite pressure from the **National Council for Peace and Order**, *Pheu Thai* has managed to maintain a significant presence in its base in the north and northeast of the country, as well as its general popularity. In a show of strength, the party won 136 parliamentary seats at the 2019 election, which made it the largest single party in Parliament. That said, its share of the popular vote has diminished somewhat from previous elections. In turn, this has created fissures within the party. A faction aligned closely to Thaksin have formed a splinter group that goes by the acronym CARE (Creative, Action, Revival, and People Empowerment) while another has rallied around Pichai Nariphaphan and former *Pheu Thai* stalwart Chaturon Chaisang. Meanwhile, party strategist Sudarat Keyuraphan and her followers resigned from the party in another sign of brewing internal unrest. In an effort to restore unity, Thaksin's wife, Khunying Potjaman, was widely believed to have masterminded at his behest changes in the party leadership in October 2020. The party congress saw the re-election of Thaksin ally Sompong Amornvivat, who had resigned earlier, along with 24 new executive board members, most of whom are linked to Thaksin and his sisters, Yingluck and Yaowapha Wongsawat, wife of former prime minister **Somchai Wongsawat**. On the wider political landscape, *Pheu Thai* found itself locked in a testy relationship with the new **Move Forward Party** as both sought to position themselves as standard bearers for the opposition. Rather than unite the opposition, both cast suspicious eyes at each other, with Move Forward accusing *Pheu Thai* of backroom deals with the **Palang Pracharat Party** and in particular, deputy prime minister **Prawit Wongsuwan**.

While *Pheu Thai* sought to leverage on the pro-democracy protests of 2020 to enhance its popularity, it was careful to distance itself from the call for reform of the monarchy.

see also: Abhisit Vejjajiva; Democrat Party; Move Forward Party; National Council for Peace and Order; *Palang Pracharat* Party; People's Power Party; Prawit Wongsuwan, General; Somchai Wongsawat; Thaksin Shinawatra; United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship; Yingluck Shinawatra.

### **Phibul Songkram, Field Marshal (Thailand)**

As a junior officer, Phibul Songkram was a leading military figure in the coup that overthrew Thailand's absolute monarchy in June 1932. He became virtual military dictator during the Pacific War, and again for a decade from 1948, until he was himself removed by a military coup. Phibul Songkram was born in 1897 of Sino-Thai origins and became a professional soldier after graduating from the Chulachomklao Royal Military Academy in Bangkok in 1915. He studied at the French artillery school in Fontainebleau during 1920–7; he became involved in a Thai political circle alienated by the privilege of the monarchy. After the successful coup in 1932, he held a series of command and cabinet positions. Phibul was responsible for stimulating Thai nationalism, in part at the expense of the resident Chinese community. He took Thailand close to an assertive Japan and used its support to secure territorial redress from France in Indochina. Japan invaded Thailand concurrently with its attack on the United States in December 1941. After offering a token resistance, Thailand joined Japan's side under Phibul's direction as supreme commander of the armed forces. He was eased from power in August 1944, however, when it had become apparent that Japan's defeat was only a matter of time. After the Pacific War, he was detained as a war criminal for several months but was then rehabilitated and even restored as army commander. His political fortunes revived considerably because of the Cold War and the United States' interest in an anti-communist government. Following a military coup against the elected civilian government in November

1947, he became prime minister in April 1948, a post which he held until November 1957, when he was deposed. In 1955 Phibul returned from a tour of the United States and Britain apparently enamoured of democracy, especially the practice of free speech which he had observed in Hyde Park in London. The political turbulence that followed provided the context for his deposition by army commander Sarit Thanarat. Field Marshal Phibul was then exiled to Japan, where he died in 1964.

### **Phieu, General Le Kha (Vietnam) see Le Kha Phieu, General**

### **Philippines' Claim to Sabah (Malaysia/Philippines)**

On 22 June 1962 the government of the Philippines, in response to a diplomatic note presented to its ambassador in London on 24 May, pointed out 'there is a dispute between the sultanate of Sulu and the Philippines government on the one side and Her Majesty's Government on the other side regarding the ownership and sovereignty over North Borneo'. When on 16 September 1963 the British Crown transferred sovereignty over the colony of North Borneo (from then on known as Sabah) to the new Federation of Malaysia with its seat of government in Kuala Lumpur, that dispute became a matter of contention between the Philippines and Malaysia. It has remained unresolved ever since. Direct negotiations have proven fruitless, so far, in completely erasing the claim. At issue, in part, has been the question of succession to territorial domain in Southeast Asia, with the Philippines reluctant to make a unilateral concession. In addition, the claim has become enmeshed in the domestic politics of the republic.

The origins of the dispute are to be found in an agreement of January 1878 between the sultan of Sulu, the putative sovereign in the greater part of North Borneo, and representatives of a British commercial syndicate. The territory in question was either leased or ceded (depending on the translation used) in perpetuity in return for an annual payment of 5,000 Malayan dollars. In 1881 the British North Borneo Company took over the concession and began to administer the



territory as well as to assume responsibility for the annual payments to the sultan of Sulu and his heirs. These administrative arrangements were not interrupted by Britain establishing a protectorate over North Borneo in 1888. The territory was occupied by the Japanese during the Pacific War and suffered much damage. In 1946 the British North Borneo Company relinquished all of its responsibilities to the British Crown; the territory became a colony until the transfer of sovereignty to Malaysia in 1963. The prospect of a claim emerged shortly after the independence of the Philippines in 1946, especially when its government successfully negotiated the transfer of the Turtle and Mangsee Islands located in the Sulu Sea, which had been subject to British administration. The primary interest at the time was private, in particular on the part of the heirs of the Sulu sultanate, which had been extinguished in sovereign status during the period of US colonial rule. An attempt to pursue a financial settlement in the form of a lump sum was undertaken by a son of a former president without success. However, the coincidental incumbency of President **Diosdado Macapagal** with the proposal to establish Malaysia by Malaya's prime minister, **Tunku Abdul Rahman**, brought matters to a head. Macapagal had been in charge of the Philippines Foreign Affairs Department in 1946, responsible for his country's side in the negotiations which had led to the transfer of the Turtle and Mangsee islands. An effective press campaign inspired by private interests attracted the attention of the president, who was also doubtful about the credentials of the proposed new Federation of Malaysia, which had been represented as a vehicle for serving British interests. The claim, which he was responsible for presenting, has not been formally withdrawn and has continued to cause tension between the Philippines and Malaysia.

A major rupture occurred in 1968 following a state visit to Kuala Lumpur by President **Ferdinand Marcos**, which was construed as an act of reconciliation as well as a recognition of Malaysia's sovereignty. Reports of the **Corregidor Affair**, an alleged massacre of Filipino Muslim recruits being trained for armed infiltration into Sabah, provoked a temporary suspension of diplomatic relations. Relations between the

two countries improved visibly with the visit by **Fidel Ramos** to Malaysia in January 1993, which was the first by a president of the Philippines since 1968, other than for an ASEAN occasion. Prime Minister **Mahathir Mohamad** paid a reciprocal visit in February 1994.

In February 2001, the Philippines filed for Application to Gain Access to the Pleadings at the International Court of Justice hearing on the **Sipadan-Ligitan** islands dispute between Malaysia and Indonesia with an eye to safeguarding its historical and legal rights arising from its claim to territorial sovereignty over the territory of North Borneo, and a month later petitioned the Court to intervene in their dispute with Malaysia. However, the Court denied the Philippine application in an October 2001 decision. The Philippines' claim to Sabah has been further complicated by disputes over legitimate leadership of the Sulu sultanate. In September 2005, the 'Royal Sultanate of Sulu Archipelago's Supreme Council' issued warnings to the Malaysian government to ignore claims by Sultan Rodinood Kiram regarding the North Borneo territorial dispute. In June 2006, Mohammad Fuad Kiram was installed as the 35th sultan of Sulu and Sabah. In August 2008, President **Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo** issued a Memorandum Circular which stated that there would be no recognition of a foreign state's sovereignty over North Borneo. She later removed the mention of Sabah or North Borneo in the Archipelagic Baselines of the Philippine law in March 2009. Manila's claim over Sabah was further endorsed by the Supreme Court in July 2011. In February 2013, Jamalul Kiram III, a claimant to the throne of the Sulu sultanate, dispatched a group of armed supporters from the 'Royal Security Forces of the Sultanate of Sulu and North Borneo' to occupy a village in the East Coast state of Sabah during the **Lahad Datu Crisis**. This prompted a response by the Malaysian security forces which escalated into an armed conflict in March 2013. The Malaysian government subsequently ceased its cession payment to the heirs of the Sulu sultanate, a practice it had adhered to since 1963 when Sabah joined the Malaysian federation.

see *also*: Abdul Rahman, Tunku; Corregidor Affair 1968; Lahad Datu Crisis 2013; Macapagal, Diosdado; Macapagal-Arroyo, Gloria;

Mahathir Mohamad, Tun; Marcos, Ferdinand; Ramos, Fidel; Sipadan-Ligitan.

### Philippines–US Security Treaty 1951

(Philippines)

On 30 August 1951, the governments of the Philippines and the United States concluded a mutual security treaty, which was inspired by the advent of the Korean War and China's involvement and also by the need to pre-empt resistance to the Japanese Peace Treaty. Both parties agreed to act against any armed attack on the other in the Pacific with such action to be taken in accordance with each country's constitutional processes. Although the treaty has never been invoked, its terms of reference were criticized by nationalist opponents on the grounds that it did not provide the same automatic guarantee as the North Atlantic Treaty. In April 1992, after the United States had given notice of its intention to vacate all of its military bases in the Philippines, foreign minister Raul Manglapus argued that the United States was obliged to come to the defence of the Philippines under the 1951 Treaty in the event of an attack on any of its vessels or possessions in the **South China Sea**. The American ambassador, Frank Wisner, countered by maintaining that his government's security obligations did not extend to islands in the South China Sea, which were disputed territories.

In the wake of the threat of **terrorism in Southeast Asia** after September 11, the US–Philippines strategic partnership was revitalized with the aim of assisting the Philippines government with its counterterrorism and counterinsurgency efforts in the southern islands. Additionally, in the face of Chinese assertiveness in the South China Sea, the United States further strengthened its defence assistance to and security presence in the Philippines. The signal move by US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to refer to the disputed waters around the Spratly Islands as the West Philippine Sea in November 2011 emboldened Manila to take a stronger stand against China. American misgivings about Chinese assertiveness in the South China Sea were further reinforced by President Barack Obama during meetings with Chinese officials in Washington in July 2013. In November 2011, the 60th anniversary of the Security Treaty was celebrated as

the foundation of the US–Philippine bilateral relationship. Further bilateral discussions in the wake of Chinese activities in the South China Sea triggered negotiations to strengthen the defence pact. In April 2014, negotiation on the terms of the strengthened pact were completed, which catered for US access to and use of Philippine military facilities at Manila's invitation. In March 2019, then US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo declared unequivocally during a visit to Manila that 'as the South China Sea is part of the Pacific, any armed attack on Philippine forces, aircraft or public vessels in the South China Sea would trigger mutual defense obligations under Article IV of our Mutual Defense Treaty'. Although Secretary Pompeo's remarks put to rest some ambiguity about American commitment, it was made at a time when it was no longer clear the extent to which the Philippines, which under the presidency of **Rodrigo Duterte** has begun to genuflect towards the People's Republic of China, welcomed it. *see also: Duterte, Rodrigo; South China Sea; Terrorism in Southeast Asia.*

### Phnom Penh Summit (ASEAN) 2002

(Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/Laos/Malaysia/Myanmar/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand/Vietnam)

The eighth meeting of the heads of government of **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** convened in the Cambodian capital on 4–5 November 2002. It marked the first time that Cambodia hosted and chaired an ASEAN summit since it joined the organization in 1999. The Summit took place amidst tight security in the wake of the terrorist bombings in Bali a month earlier, which brought home the reality of **terrorism in Southeast Asia**.

One of the key objectives of the summit was to showcase ASEAN solidarity against terrorism as well as encourage cooperation in counterterrorism efforts in the region to promote security. To that end, ASEAN members adopted the Declaration on Terrorism that condemned the terrorist attacks and declared support for the United Nations in dealing with the issue of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. The Phnom Penh Summit was also notable for the signing of the **Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC)** by

ASEAN member states and China, where they reaffirmed their commitment to resolve their territorial and jurisdictional disputes by peaceful means. While a significant step forward for ASEAN–China relations, the DOC was nevertheless merely a non-binding interim political agreement falling short of the Code of Conduct ASEAN had sought for years. ASEAN and Chinese leaders also signed the Framework Agreement on ASEAN–China Economic Cooperation that set a timeline for the completion of the ASEAN–China Free Trade Area (ACFTA) by 2010 for the original six ASEAN countries and by 2015 for the less-developed ASEAN economies.

*see also:* ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (ASEAN) 2002; Terrorism in Southeast Asia.

**Phnom Penh Summit (ASEAN) April 2012** (Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/Laos/Malaysia/Myanmar/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand/Vietnam)

The 20th meeting of the heads of government of ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) convened in the capital of Cambodia on 3–4 April 2012 on the occasion of the organization's 45th anniversary. At the top of the meeting agenda was a review of progress towards the ASEAN Economic Community as well as the Association's collective call for the lifting of sanctions against Myanmar after the successful conduct of elections in 2011. However, deliberations on economic integration were overshadowed by disagreements within ASEAN over the **South China Sea** territorial disputes. Tensions had been high in the build-up to the meeting over competing territorial and maritime claims that in fact led to naval clashes between claimant states even as ASEAN laboured on a Code of Conduct, a binding document that would codify the **Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea** (DOC). Specifically, members differed over whether China should be included in the drafting process of the code from the outset, or whether ASEAN should first formulate a common position on the proposed Code before entering into discussions with

China. There were underlying tensions between the hosts on one side, and Vietnam and the Philippines on the other, over the extent to which the South China Sea claims should be allowed to dominate proceedings. This prompted concerns that Phnom Penh had gravitated into the Chinese orbit on the back of close economic and political ties. Despite denials by Cambodia's prime minister, **Hun Sen**, circumspection towards Cambodia was reinforced by the fact that Chinese president Hu Jintao had made a surprise official visit to the Cambodian capital a week prior to the summit. The scarcely veiled tension over the South China Sea presaged developments at the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting in July in Phnom Penh, when differences between the Cambodian and Philippine foreign ministers culminated in ASEAN's inability to release a joint communiqué for the first time in its 45-year history.

*see also:* ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (ASEAN) 2002; Hun Sen; South China Sea.

**Phnom Penh Summit (ASEAN) November 2012** (Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/Laos/Malaysia/Myanmar/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand/Vietnam)

The 21st meeting of heads of government of ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) convened in the capital of Cambodia on 18–20 November 2012. The summit was significant for the fact that it took place in the wake of a disastrous ASEAN Ministerial Meeting in July, when the organization failed for the first time in its 45-year history to agree on a joint communiqué because of disagreements between Cambodia on the one hand and Vietnam and the Philippines on the other over how developments in the **South China Sea** should be reflected in the document. Despite attempts by China to divert attention from the South China Sea dispute, the conflicting territorial claims predictably became a central issue during the summit. A replay of the July 2012 ASEAN Ministerial Meeting was averted at the last minute when Cambodia agreed to leave out mention of

the non-internationalization of the South China Sea dispute from its final draft of the closing statement. At issue was Cambodian prime minister **Hun Sen's** claim at the close of the ASEAN–Japan summit meeting that ASEAN had reached a consensus not to internationalize the South China Sea issue, which was immediately contradicted by the Philippines president, **Benigno Aquino III**. Cambodia had also attempted to include in its first draft of the post-summit Chairman's Statement mention of the non-internationalization of the South China Sea dispute, but this was later removed after objection from the Philippines and Vietnam. Predictably, the South China Sea issue overshadowed other notable developments during the summit, including the adoption of an ASEAN human rights declaration, the launch of an ASEAN Institute of Peace and Reconciliation, and the initiation of talks towards the formation of a **Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership**, the largest free trade agreement involving ASEAN and China, Japan, South Korea, India, Australia, and New Zealand.

see also: Aquino, Benigno Simeon Cojuangco, III; ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Hun Sen; Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership; South China Sea.

### **Phuc, Nguyen Xuan** (Vietnam) see **Nguyen Xuan Phuc**

### **Pol Pot** (Cambodia)

Pol Pot was the notorious leader of the Communist Party of Cambodia, who presided over a reign of terror within the country between April 1975 and December 1978, when a Vietnamese invasion drove out his government. More than one million Cambodians died from execution, hunger, and disease under his draconian regime, which was designed to restore the glory of a national past within a Marxist model of society. Pol Pot was a *nom de guerre* made public only in April 1976 when the State of **Democratic Kampuchea** was proclaimed. Pol Pot was born Saloth Sar on 19 May 1928 in a village in northerly Kampong Thom Province, the youngest of seven children in a moderately

prosperous farming family. His early education was in Phnom Penh and Kampong Cham. Possibly because of his family's royal connections through concubinage, Saloth Sar was awarded a scholarship to study electrical engineering in France from 1949. He returned to Cambodia in January 1953 after failing to complete his studies. Saloth Sar's time in France was taken up in political study within a Marxist circle heavily influenced by the Stalinist persuasion of the Communist Party of France. This period is believed to have been formative in establishing a personal bond between him and a small group of politicized fellow Khmers and in developing a sense of mission. After initial involvement in anti-monarchist politics in 1953, Saloth Sar joined a Vietnamese-led insurgency in eastern Cambodia in August. He remained in Cambodia after the 1954 **Geneva Agreements on Indochina**, which recognized the country's independence, and from 1955 to 1963 worked as a schoolteacher in Phnom Penh. When the Communist Party of Cambodia was reconstituted in secret in 1960, he became a member of its Central Committee. When its general secretary disappeared, probably murdered, in 1962, Saloth Sar took his place.

In 1963 Saloth Sar fled the capital in fear of Prince **Norodom Sihanouk's** police. He found refuge in a Vietnamese communist sanctuary in the east and then moved north to spend time with tribal minorities. Their style of life without property, money, and markets provided example and inspiration for his salvationist creed. Indeed, he and party colleagues recruited guerilla fighters from among the deprived ranks of the tribal minorities who had a longstanding animus against urban dwellers. Armed struggle against the rule of Prince Sihanouk began in 1968 but assumed major proportions only after the coup in March 1970 which brought **Lon Nol** to power with US support. The Vietnamese army decimated their Cambodian counterparts, providing a shield behind which a **Khmer Rouge** fighting force could be protected while in recruitment and training. That force seized power in April 1975 and, under the leadership of the pseudonymous Pol Pot, emptied the cities and then began a horrific social experiment. He was revealed as prime minister in April

1976, holding that office with an interruption for a short period later that year that was probably the result of an intra-party power struggle.

Pol Pot escaped to the Thai border after Vietnam's invasion in December 1978, holding the position of the military commander of Democratic Kampuchea until his retirement was announced in September 1985. He was then described as director of a Higher Institute for National Defence, which he gave up in June 1989. In effect, he continued to exercise leadership over the Khmer Rouge insurgents from a base close to Trat on the Thai–Cambodian border. A photograph of him with other Khmer Rouge leaders dating from 1986 was discovered in March 1994 following Cambodian government military operations in the west of the country in March 1994. He is believed to have retained ultimate authority over the Khmer Rouge in its acceptance of the political settlement reached at the **International Conference on Cambodia** in Paris in October 1991. His influence is believed to have been decisive also in the subsequent boycott by the Khmer Rouge of the peace process and the elections conducted under UN auspices in May 1993 (see **UNTAC**). The failure of the Khmer Rouge to make significant military headway against the coalition government in Phnom Penh generated factional divisions within and defections from the Khmer Rouge, with Pol Pot opposed to any accommodation. In June 1997, he ordered the murder of senior colleague **Son Sen**, his wife, and 16 members of his family. After fleeing with supporters into the jungle, Pol Pot was seized by **Ta Mok**, another senior figure also targeted for assassination, and put on trial in July 1997, which was observed by Nate Thayer, an American journalist. It was the first time that he had been seen by an independent observer since December 1979. After this show trial, he was sentenced to life imprisonment in the Khmer Rouge base at Anlong Veng close to the Thai border. In an interview with Thayer in October, Pol Pot was quite unrepentant about his murderous record and claimed that although several thousand may have died in Cambodia, his conscience was clear. He died on 15 April reportedly of a heart attack, although his body was cremated before conclusive evidence of the

cause of death could be established. Pol Pot left a bitter legacy, which affected virtually every Cambodian family. Those who met him have testified to his personal charm and qualities of leadership, but there have been few more reviled men in the history of the 20th century.

see also: Democratic Kampuchea; Geneva Agreements on Indochina 1954; International Conference on Cambodia, Paris 1991; Khmer Rouge; Lon Nol; Sihanouk, King Norodom; Son Sen; Ta Mok; United Nations: Cambodia 1991–3; UNTAC (United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia).

### **Port Klang Free Zone Controversy** (Malaysia)

The Port Klang Free Zone (PKFZ) controversy is a multibillion-dollar financial scandal in Malaysia that has implicated key officials from the **Barisan Nasional** (National Front) coalition that was the government of the day, and in particular the top leadership of the **Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA)**. The 400-hectare PKFZ was originally conceived as a US\$577 million development project that would create an industrial park with extensive and effective distribution and manufacturing facilities, as well as attractive tax exemptions and other investment initiatives. Initiated during the tenure of **Mahathir Mohamad**, MCA was informally given the task of overseeing the PKFZ's development.

Since the project's inception, the PKFZ has been dogged by allegations of corruption and conflict of interests, not to mention problems of poor management and corporate governance. Early requests for a probe into these allegations were ignored by the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission, but they subsequently relented after glaring details of cost overruns emerged in 2009 following a PricewaterhouseCoopers audit which reported that the project costs had run up to RM4.6 billion from the initial estimate of RM1.845 billion. Following the probe, six people were charged in court over the PKFZ scandal, including two former MCA ministers and the former head of the port authority. The six were charged with criminal breach of trust and are alleged to have issued letters of

undertaking and support without the prior approval of the finance ministry, but which the cabinet had later authorized and ratified. The cost overruns have therefore been attributed to the implicit government guarantee attached to these massive loans. Both former MCA ministers were later acquitted.

see also: *Barisan Nasional* (BN); Mahathir Mohamad, Tun; Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA).

### Prabowo Subianto (Indonesia)

Prabowo Subianto is currently the leader of the nationalist party, **Gerindra** (*Gerakan Indonesia Raya*), defence minister of Indonesia, and a two-time unsuccessful presidential candidate. Prabowo was born on 17 October 1951 in Jakarta and hails from one of the richest and most powerful families in Indonesia. He is the son of Sumitro Djojohadikusumo, a prominent economist who served under President **Suharto**, and grandson of the prominent anti-colonialist, Margono. His brother, Hashim Djojohadikusumo, is an oil and gas tycoon and one of the richest men in Indonesia. Prabowo was also once married to Titik Suharto, daughter of the late president.

A businessman with a military background, Prabowo manoeuvred to be a close confidante of the former president, Suharto, towards the end of the latter's 32-year rule. He graduated from the military academy in Malengeng in 1974, the same year as **Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono**, and served in both East Timor and **Irian Jaya**. He rose to the rank of lieutenant-general and, during the final turbulent years of the Suharto administration, commanded Kostrad, the army's Strategic Reserve Command which was first led by Suharto himself in 1961. A clash with then army general Wiranto over the top military position led to Prabowo being discharged from the military in August 1998 on grounds of having kidnapped anti-Suharto activists, and then being sidelined from national affairs. With assistance from his wealthy brother, Prabowo entered the commercial world and gradually built up a business empire with interests in oil, natural gas, oil palm plantations, and fisheries. He resurfaced

in the 2009 presidential race when he ran as the vice-presidential candidate to **Megawati Sukarnoputri**, evidently on the understanding that Megawati would support a future presidential bid, which he publicly announced in 2011. In the event, this arrangement, known as the 'Batu Tulis Pact', was jettisoned by Megawati when she threw her support behind former Jakarta governor and chosen candidate for **Partai Demokrasi Indonesia–Perjuangan, Joko Widodo**. A fiery orator yet given to emotional outbursts, Prabowo campaigned for the 2014 presidency on a platform of firm leadership exemplified by his stated desire to take Indonesia back to the authoritarian 1945 Constitution. However, the projection of strength was insufficient to catapult him into office. Initial indications that Prabowo would challenge the result withered on the vine. As opposition leader, Prabowo prepared for another challenge for the presidency against the incumbent Joko Widodo by building a campaign platform predicated on religious identity and nationalism as he sought to discredit Widodo's religious credentials and draw attention to his adversary's close ties with the People's Republic of China even as he played up his own populist pro-poor, anti-capitalist platform. Meanwhile, in an attempt to shore up his own religious credentials, Prabowo capitalized on the ground sentiments that found expression in the **Anti-Ahok Protests** by actively courting Islamist forces. These efforts failed to convey him into high office at the 2019 presidential election, however, and Prabowo lost by ten percentage points to Joko Widodo. A bid to overturn the result at the constitutional court on grounds of 'systematic electoral fraud' as his supporters took to the streets in violent clashes with police was unsuccessful, and the election outcome was upheld. In a remarkable turn of events, President Widodo extended an olive branch to Prabowo and invited him to join his cabinet as defence minister, an invitation that Prabowo accepted.

Controversies surround Prabowo's military past persistently posed obstacles to his political ambitions. While recognized as an effective military commander, Prabowo has been accused of human rights abuse during his service in East Timor, as well as against democracy activists

during the height of popular protest against President Suharto. Nevertheless, it is believed that Prabowo is positioning himself for a third attempt at the presidency in 2024.

see also: Anti-Ahok Protests 2016; *Gerindra*; Irian Jaya; Megawati Sukarnoputri; *Partai Demokrasi Indonesia-Perjuangan*; Suharto; Widodo, Joko; Yudhoyono, Susilo Bambang.

### **Praphas Charusathien, Field Marshal**

(Thailand)

Field Marshal Praphas Charusathien was deputy prime minister of Thailand in October 1973 when student protest at the lack of constitutional progress erupted into a violent confrontation with security forces. The civilian bloodshed prompted the intervention of King **Bhumibol Adulyadej**, which led to Praphas and the prime minister, Field Marshal **Thanom Kittikachorn**, going into exile as an act of contrition.

Praphas Charusathien was born on 25 November 1912 in Udorn Province. He began his professional military training in 1933 at the Chulachomkhalao Royal Military Academy in Bangkok after the end of the absolute monarchy. As an infantry officer, he rose in rank as a protégé of Field Marshal **Sarit Thanarat**; he served as minister of the interior under his aegis from 1957 and retained the position beyond Sarit Thanarat's death in 1963. Praphas held that post until 1973, with a brief interruption in 1971–2 when the nomenclature of his office was changed following an incumbency coup. He was also commander-in-chief of the Thai army between 1963 and 1973; his replacement by General Krit Sivara signalled a loss of political power. Praphas overshadowed Thanom and was, in effect, the strong man of Thai politics for a decade, acquiring a sinister reputation for financial manipulation and political intrigue. He was able to return to Thailand from exile in January 1977 after a coup in October 1976 (on the same day as the **Thammasat University Massacre**) had re-established military-based rule, but he ceased to play any part in public life. He died in Bangkok on 18 August 1997.

see also: Bhumibol Adulyadej, King; Sarit Thanarat, Field Marshal; Thammasat University Massacre 1976; Thanom Kittikachorn, Field Marshal.

### **Prawit Wongsuwan, General** (Thailand)

A close associate of **Prayuth Chan-ocha**, for whom he served as mentor, and **Anupong Pao-chinda**, Prawit Wongsuwan is currently deputy prime minister and leader of the **Palang Pracharat Party**. He is widely seen to have been an influential leader in the junta government of the **National Council for Peace and Order**. He has carried over much of this influence into his roles in the civilian government led by Prayuth as prime minister.

Born in August 1945 to a military father, Prawit Wongsuwan was educated at St. Gabriel's College and the Armed Forces Academy Preparatory School. A graduate of Class 17 of the Chulachomkhalao Royal Military Academy and the National Defence College of Thailand, Prawit assumed command and staff positions in the Second Infantry Division and the important First Army Region that covered Bangkok and central Thailand. A royalist who was a close associate of **Prem Tinsulanonda**, he was promoted in 2003 to deputy army commander and in 2004 to the powerful post of army commander after having also served with the 21st Battalion of the Royal Guards (the Queen's Guard).

Prawit served as army commander during the height of the **People's Alliance for Democracy** protests against Thaksin Shinawatra in 2004–5, and then was minister of defence from 2008 to 2011, during which time the **United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship** protests occurred. He would return to the defence portfolio in 2014–19. Despite his widely accepted status as the 'father' of the *Burapha Payak* (Tigers of the East or the Queens Guard) faction of the Thai military that dominated the Thai army since 2007, Prawit was also known to have once been close to Potjaman Shinawatra, wife of former prime minister **Thaksin Shinawatra**. In any event, Prawit would play a key role as one of the orchestrators of the 2014 coup that toppled the government of Thaksin's sister, **Yingluck Shinawatra**. As deputy prime minister of the junta government and minister of defence, Prawit exerted strong influence over the police in particular, overseeing promotions while at the same time purging Thaksin loyalists.

During his time in office as deputy prime minister, Prawit was embroiled in a scandal involving an extensive collection of luxury watches, but he managed to emerge from it unscathed after he was cleared by the National Anti-Corruption Commission. In June 2020, Prawit was elevated to the post of leader of the ruling *Palang Pracharat* Party. His ascension to the party's highest post suggests that he remains highly influential in Thai politics.

see also: Anupong Paochinda, General; National Council for Peace and Order; *Palang Pracharat* Party; People's Alliance for Democracy; Prayuth Chan-ocha, General; Prem Tinsulanonda, General; Thaksin Shinawatra; United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship; Yingluck Shinawatra.

### **Prayuth Chan-ocha, General** (Thailand)

Previously the commander-in-chief of the Royal Thai Army, Prayuth Chan-ocha is currently prime minister of Thailand. As military commander, he oversaw the crackdown on so-called 'red shirt' demonstrators of the **United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship** (UDD) in Bangkok's central business district in 2010 and later attempted to improve the military's public profile while still retaining its political influence. As a member of the royalist 'Eastern Tigers' or Queen's Guard military faction which were also involved in the 2006 coup that removed the government of **Thaksin Shinawatra**, Prayuth led the military coup against the government of the **Pheu Thai Party**, led by Thaksin's sister, **Yingluck Shinawatra**, on 22 May 2014.

Prayuth graduated from the Armed Forces Academies Preparatory School with Class 12 and went on to receive his bachelor's degree from the Chulachomklao Royal Military Academy. His professional schooling included attending the National Defence College and the Command and General Staff College. Moving up through the ranks, he became deputy commander of the Second Infantry Division from 2002 to 2003, becoming its commander until 2005. He was promoted to deputy commanding general of the First Army Area providing security for Bangkok in 2005 and then its commanding general from 2006 to 2008. His

Bangkok-based troops were key to the success of the 2006 putsch that ousted Thaksin from office. Prayuth was appointed army chief of staff in 2008, and General **Anupong Paochinda** as commander-in-chief of the Royal Thai Army in October 2010 after a year as his deputy.

As the army's deputy commander, Prayuth played a role in the negotiations that formed the Democrat-led coalition government in December 2008 as well as the crackdown on red shirt demonstrators in April 2009. He also played an important role in suppressing UDD-led anti-government protests in April and May 2010. As commander-in-chief he largely kept the army out of direct politics, although he made it clear that the army could play a role should there be further political instability. Prayuth is a member of the Queen's Guard, a faction within the military close to the palace and associated elites that include **Prawit Wongsuwan** and **Anupong Paochinda**, both of whom are Prayuth's mentors. With the election of the *Pheu Thai* government, he maintained a delicate political relationship with Prime Minister Yingluck. Though a staunch royalist with close ties to the plotters of the 2006 coup, Prayuth initially attempted reconciliatory overtures towards UDD while at the same time taking steps to improve the army's reputation, especially through its efficient handling of disaster relief during severe flooding in 2011. Despite pressure from both sides to intervene in the political crisis that began in October 2013 and the declaration of a state of emergency by the caretaker government of Yingluck Shinawatra, Prayuth repeatedly stated that the military would remain on the sidelines.

Nevertheless, things took an ominous turn predawn on 20 May 2014 when Prayuth, four months away from his own mandatory retirement, announced that the army was declaring martial law in the country to address the worsening security situation against the backdrop of uncertainty surrounding royal succession. Initial denials that he had in effect launched a coup were dispelled two days later when, flanked by military leaders, he declared a *coup d'état*, suspended the constitution, and ushered in a military administration in the form of the **National Council for Peace and Order** or NCPO which appointed him to the position of prime minister.



Politics was suspended, civil liberties and press freedom curtailed, and an interim constitution was introduced which gave the military unbridled power. Known for his discomfort before media, Prayuth relied on a social media team to bolster his image, which achieved modest success. A peculiar penchant for poetry and song writing was used to further soften his image. In the event, a hardline approach to political non-compliance, including detention of protesters, not a few under *lèse-majesté* legislation, was balanced by steady economic growth and an uptick in infrastructure building. A new constitution designed by the junta was promulgated in 2017. After several false starts, he eventually fulfilled his promise to hold elections on 24 March 2019. By then, the NCPO had undergone its own transformation, morphing into the **Palang Pracharat Party** that managed to win the most votes on its way to 116 seats, 20 behind *Pheu Thai*. The party moved quickly to form a coalition with the **Democrat Party** and the **Bhumjaithai Party**, giving it the majority it required to nominate Prayuth for prime minister. Prayuth would eventually defeat the leader of the anti-junta bloc, **Thanathorn Juangroongruangkit**, for the appointment by way of parliamentary vote. He would concurrently hold the position of minister of defence. The election did little to relieve pressure on Prayuth. Massive student protests campaigning for his removal from office lasted several months in 2020, along with calls for reforms to the constitution and the monarchy. Meanwhile, he has survived three no-confidence votes in Parliament, the latest on 4 September 2021 in the wake of the unrelenting **Covid-19** pandemic crisis and resumption of street protests.

Prayuth's October 2007 visit to the United States was the first by a Thai prime minister since 2005. The visit was made at the invitation of US president Donald Trump, for whom recognizing a coup-installed leader and government was of little concern. At the same time, Prayuth also cultivated relations with China, often referring to it as Thailand's 'number one partner'. Closer to home, doubtless cognizant of his own path to power and his relationship with Senior General **Min Aung Hlaing**, Prayuth was restrained in his response to the military coup

in Myanmar. His was a noticeable absence from the ASEAN special summit that met in Jakarta in April 2021 to discuss a response to the coup. In February, Min Aung Hlaing had appealed directly to Prayuth for Thailand to 'support democracy' after the coup, and was rewarded with Bangkok's mildly worded response to developments.

see also: Anupong Paochinda, General; *Bhumjaithai* Party; Covid-19; Democrat Party; Min Aung Hlaing, Senior General; National Council for Peace and Order; *Palang Pracharat* Party; *Pheu Thai* Party; Prawit Wongsuwan, General; Thaksin Shinawatra; Thanathorn Juangroongruangkit; United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship; Yingluck Shinawatra.

### **Preah Vihear Temple Dispute** (Cambodia/Thailand)

A dispute over possession of the ruins of the ancient Khmer temple of Preah Vihear became a matter of tension between Cambodia and Thailand from the former's independence in November 1953, continuing even after legal resolution by the International Court of Justice in June 1962. The temple ruins are located to the north of Cambodia along the border with Thailand, on the edge of the Dang Raek escarpment which overlooks the Cambodian plain. This part of the boundary between Thailand and Cambodia (then a French protectorate) was delimited by a joint Franco-Siamese (Thai) border commission between 1905 and 1907. The commission should have based its delimitation on a boundary convention of February 1904, which stipulated that the line of demarcation follow the watershed of the Dang Raek range: this would have placed the temple in Thai territory. In the event, a French officer on the joint commission produced a map covering the area of the temple that showed its location on the Cambodian side of the boundary, which was not disputed at the time. That map was incorporated in an annex to a subsequent boundary convention of March 1907.

Access to the ruins is exceedingly difficult from the Cambodian side, in contrast with its relative ease of access from the Thai side.

Thailand occupied the temple site from time to time and continuously from 1949, but without objecting to the failure of the French-drawn map to reflect the terms of reference of the 1904 convention. The issue of Thailand's occupation of the temple site was raised after the end of the Pacific War, first by France and then by an independent Cambodia. A conference between the two governments in 1958 failed to resolve the issue, which was taken by Cambodia to the International Court of Justice in The Hague in the following year. The court decided in Cambodia's favour in June 1962, despite the terms of the 1904 convention, on the grounds that Thailand had never raised any objections to the authoritative map locating the temple site.

The dispute resurfaced in January 2008 when the Cambodian government announced its intention to apply for UNESCO's designation of Preah Vihear as a World Heritage Site. Thailand opposed this move on the grounds that the application should be a joint effort, and that such an application deemed the land surrounding the temple (which remained un-demarcated) Cambodian territory. A subsequent attempt at a joint communiqué failed as the Thai Constitutional Court declared it unconstitutional. Thailand's lack of enthusiasm, however, could not prevent the World Heritage Committee from listing the Preah Vihear Temple as a World Heritage Site on 7 July 2008. On 15 July, Thai troops were dispatched as a signal of intent to the temple. This was met by a reciprocal mobilization of Cambodian forces, despite talks having been scheduled between senior officials from both countries. Matters came to a head in October when both militaries clashed at the border. Initial attempts at a ceasefire failed, and sporadic skirmishes erupted, resulting in deaths and injuries on both sides as well as damage to the temple complex, even though a full-blown armed conflict did not materialize. Likewise, attempts by ASEAN to mediate, including shuttle diplomacy on the part of Indonesian foreign minister **Marty Natalegawa** and the attempted posting of Indonesian observers to the border, have also floundered in the wake of national sovereignty claims, particularly by Thailand. In April 2013, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) began hearings on the ownership of

the disputed 4.6 kilometres of land adjacent to the temple. On 11 November, the ICJ ruled in favour of Cambodian claims to sovereignty over the entire territory.

The dispute over Preah Vihear reflected mutual suspicions between two states which had been historical adversaries before the advent of colonialism and which adopted different positions in the Cold War. For Cambodia under the leadership of Prince **Norodom Sihanouk**, the temple represented a symbol of a newly won independence and provided an opportunity to challenge a perceived Thai reassertion of historical hegemony. To that end, it also provided a convenient domestic focus for nation-building. From the Thai perspective, the dispute reflected a traditional condescension towards Cambodia which turned into animosity when its foreign policy of neutrality, involving diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China, was viewed as appeasement to communism in Southeast Asia. A lull in the years immediately after the end of the Cold War was broken for purposes of domestic political validation as politicians from first Cambodia and then Thailand mobilized their respective claims and stoked the flames of nationalism in the lead-up to national elections.

see also: Natalegawa, Raden Mohammad Marty Muliana (Marty); Sihanouk, King Norodom.

### **Prem Tinsulanonda, General** (Thailand)

Prem Tinsulanonda served as unelected prime minister of Thailand between 1980 and 1988. He was born on 26 August 1920 and began his career as an army officer, training for the cavalry at the Chulachomklao Royal Military Academy. By 1977 he had risen to become assistant commander-in-chief of the army and served in the military government headed by General **Kriangsak Chomanan**. The **Young Turks** faction of officers, who had supported General Kriangsak, became alienated from him and engineered General Prem's succession. As prime minister, he successfully combined an activist policy towards Vietnam over Cambodia with a sober management of the economy, which flourished during his tenure. Domestically, he played an instrumental role in ending the communist

insurgency by passing a blanket amnesty in 1980 that prioritized a political rather than military solution, offering communist insurgents a pathway to return to civilian life. Thousands subsequently surrendered, leading to the demise of the Communist Party of Thailand. He survived two abortive coup attempts by disaffected officers and earned the respect of King **Bhumibol Adulyadej**, who sought his counsel during the street violence in May 1992 in protest at retired General **Suchinda Kraprayoon** becoming unelected prime minister. One reason Prem gave for his resignation in 1988 was that he believed that it was time the country had an elected prime minister; he had no inclination to participate in electoral politics.

From September 1988 on, Prem held the position of president of the powerful Privy Council. From that vantage point he continued to exercise considerable influence over Thai politics, which was further amplified through his close personal relationship with King Bhumibol. Prem was a critic of Prime Minister **Thaksin Shinawatra** and was accused by the former prime minister of masterminding the September 2006 coup that removed him from office as well as the events that followed, including the establishment of the unelected governments of **Surayud Chulanont** and **Abhisit Vejjajiva**. His role in the 2006 coup has never been verified, however, and suspicions were based on remarks made in June 2006 to military cadets, in which he said: 'Governments are like jockeys. They come to look after the soldiers. But the owners of the soldiers are the nation and the king'. The coup would take place three months later in September 2006. Prem subsequently accompanied King Bhumibol to meet the coup leaders, an act that was interpreted as tacit endorsement. Correspondingly, in response to the 2014 coup, Prem went on record to say that it was 'a great display of loyalty', although by then, Prem had gradually begun to fade into the background of Thai politics. After the death of King Bhumibol, Prem served as regent for a period of 1½ months while **Maha Vajiralongkorn**, with whom he was not known to be close, entered a season of mourning. The delay in the official announcement of succession led some

to speculate that Prem was not supportive of the succession plan and had tried to influence it in other directions, chiefly towards Bhumibol's popular daughter, Maha Chakri Siridhorn, but this remains conjecture.

Prem died on 26 May 2019 at the age of 98. A statesman who exercised substantial of influence in Thai political life, throughout his career Prem was an ardent supporter of the monarchy and championed its role in defending the public interest and as the ultimate authority for the armed forces. For some, he possessed the rare quality of being able to serve as a bridge between conservative and liberal forces in an increasingly polarized Thai political landscape, while for others he was one of the primary causes for the polarization.

*see also:* Abhisit Vejjajiva; Bhumibol Adulyadej, King; Kriangsak Chomanan, General; Maha Vajiralongkorn, King; Suchinda Kraprayoon, General; Surayud Chulanont, General; Thaksin Shinawatra; Young Turks.

### **Pribumi** (Indonesia)

*Pribumi* is the Indonesian term used to identify indigenous citizens in contradistinction to those of ethnic Chinese origin. The term has an undoubted political significance because it is invariably applied to members of the business community and to the need to enable them to compete with Chinese entrepreneurs who came to dominate Indonesia's economy during the rule of President **Suharto**. The more well-known and corresponding term in Malaysia is **Bumiputera**.

*see also:* *Bumiputera*; Suharto.

### **Pridi Phanomyong** (Thailand)

Pridi Phanomyong was the most influential civilian figure in the coup group that removed the absolute monarchy in Thailand in 1932. After the Pacific War, he served briefly as prime minister. He fled into exile in November 1947 following a military coup whose instigators accused him of responsibility for the death of King **Ananda Mahidol** in 1946.

Pridi Phanomyong was born in 1901 into an ethnic Chinese family. He studied law in

Bangkok and then spent seven years at university in Paris, where he was at the centre of radical thinking about Thai constitutional and economic development. On his return to Thailand, he served as an official at the Ministry of Justice before becoming a direct party to the end of the absolute monarchy. As a cabinet minister, he was a member of the constitutional drafting committee and also responsible for a controversial economic plan which led to charges of communist inclination and his temporary banishment to France. On his return, Pridi was restored to cabinet office, including that of foreign minister. At the outbreak of the Pacific War in December 1941, he was appointed to the Regency Council in the absence of the young King Ananda, then living in Switzerland. During Thailand's alliance with Japan, he was the clandestine leader of the Free Thai Movement and was instrumental in having Parliament remove Field Marshal **Phibul Songkram** from the post of prime minister towards the end of hostilities. Pridi played a major part in securing Thailand's post-war international rehabilitation and took on the office of prime minister in March 1946 in difficult economic circumstances, but felt obliged to resign within two months of the violent death of King Ananda in June. He fled the country after the military coup in November 1947 and in February 1949 was implicated in an abortive attempt by the marines to restore him to power. Pridi then went to live in China, where he remained after the Communist Revolution for over 20 years. In 1970 he returned to Paris to spend the remainder of his life, and died on 2 May 1983.

see also: Ananda Mahidol, King; Phibul Songkram, Field Marshal.

### **Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam (PRG) 1969–76 (Vietnam)**

On 8 June 1969 the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam (PRG) was established in 'a liberated zone' of South Vietnam by a self-proclaimed Congress of People's Representatives. The initiative for establishing the government was taken ostensibly by the insurgent **National Liberation Front of South Vietnam** (NLF) in company with a Vietnam Alliance of National Democratic and Peace Forces. In effect, the initiative was taken by the **Lao Dong** (Workers Party), which was the name used by Vietnam's Communist Party. The object was to challenge the legitimacy of the government in Saigon by creating an alternative internationally recognized locus of authority which would be a negotiating equal in talks in Paris. A collateral purpose was to demonstrate that the insurgency in the south of Vietnam was autonomous in origin and control and that reunification between the northern and southern halves of the country would be negotiated and take place on a step-by-step basis. In the event, reunification came on northern terms in July 1976 following the military overthrow of the government in Saigon in April 1975. Moreover, members of the Provisional Revolutionary Government, which was dissolved on reunification, were not accorded any tangible role in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam by the Communist Party, whose seat was in Hanoi.

see also: *Lao Dong*; National Liberation Front of South Vietnam.

**Pulau Batu Puteh** (Malaysia/Singapore)  
see **Horsburgh Lighthouse**

## R

### **Rajaratnam, Sinnathamby** (Singapore)

Sinnathamby Rajaratnam was the first foreign minister of an independent Singapore after it was separated from the Federation of Malaysia in August 1965. In that office, he participated actively in the formative stages of regional cooperation in Southeast Asia and was a strident early voice in challenging Vietnam's occupation of Cambodia in the third phase of the **Indochina Wars**. He played an important part in giving Singapore a regional influence out of proportion to the island-state's geopolitical significance, employing a colourful idiom and prose to that end. Sinnathamby Rajaratnam was born in Ceylon (Sri Lanka) on 23 February 1915 and was brought to Malaya by his parents as an infant. He was educated at Raffles Institution in Singapore and then at King's College in London, where he became politically active in close company with **Lee Kuan Yew**. He worked as a journalist in Singapore during the 1950s and became a founder member of the **People's Action Party** (PAP). He was initially appointed minister of culture and after 1965 held the office of foreign minister continuously until 1980. In June 1980 he became second deputy prime minister with an evident elder statesman role. In January 1985 he was made senior minister within the prime minister's office until retiring from public life shortly before the general elections in September 1988. He passed away on 22 February 2006 of heart failure at the age of 90.

see also: Indochina Wars; Lee Kuan Yew; People's Action Party.

### **Ramos, Fidel** (Philippines)

Fidel Ramos was president of the Philippines between July 1992 and June 1998. His election in May 1992 marked the first peaceful transfer of office in over a quarter of a century. Fidel Ramos has been credited with improving the governance of his country but was prohibited under the terms of the constitution from standing for a second term. He was born on 18 March 1928 in Lingayen, Pangasinan Province, and

spent the greater part of his life in military service. Ramos was educated at the US Military Academy at West Point, from which he graduated in 1950. He received further military training in the United States and saw service with Philippines forces in Vietnam. Ramos rose to become head of the paramilitary Philippine National Constabulary; when President **Ferdinand Marcos** declared martial law in 1972, Fidel Ramos served as a loyal lieutenant, rising to the position of deputy chief of staff of the armed forces. He was trusted by the president, partly because he was a cousin. He achieved fame and popular regard in February 1986 when with the defence minister, **Juan Ponce Enrile**, he led a successful military revolt against Marcos, who had tampered with the results of a snap presidential election. After **Corazón Aquino** had been confirmed as president, Ramos served her loyally, first as chief of staff and then as minister of defence. In the latter capacity, he was primarily responsible for defending constitutional government against a series of military coup attempts. President Aquino's gratitude became evident after the ruling party had rejected Fidel Ramos as their candidate for the presidential election in May 1992. He then formed his own political movement, **Lakas-NUCD**, and, with Aquino's support, won a closely fought contest against five other candidates with around only a quarter of the vote. Fidel Ramos became the first Protestant to occupy presidential office in the Philippines.

In his first state of the nation address in July 1992, he called on the Congress to legalize the Communist Party of the Philippines in an attempt to end more than two decades of insurgency. He was a resolute chief executive but met with congressional obstacles to his programme of macro-economic reform, especially over taxation policy. He was successful, however, in overcoming military dissidence, which had posed a threat to political stability during his predecessor's tenure. Towards the end of his term, he made a controversial and

abortive attempt to revise the terms of the constitution to permit him to stand for a second term. In retirement, Ramos has played the role of kingmaker. He lent his support to calls for the resignation of President **Joseph Estrada** in 2000 due to allegations of corruption. President Estrada was eventually ousted by the **EDSA II** popular revolution in 2001. In 2005, Ramos defended President **Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo** against allegations of election rigging in what has come to be known as the Hello Garci scandal. In a *volte-face*, he later called for her resignation in a move that split the **Lakas –CMD** party into two factions in 2006: one supported Ramos while the other supported President Arroyo. In August 2009, Ramos (with former house speaker Jose de Venecia Jr) led 50 *Lakas*–CMD members in opposition to the merger of the *Lakas*–CMD party with *Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino* (KAMPI) party which had taken place in June 2008 at the instruction of Arroyo, refusing the title of ‘chairman emeritus’ of the merged party which was contrived to marginalize him. Meanwhile, de Venecia filed a resolution at the Commission of Elections for the *Lakas*–KAMPI merger to be nullified. The Supreme Court denied the appeal and upheld the legality of the resolution. In 2012, the *Lakas*–KAMPI merger was dissolved, and Ramos was approached to lead the reformed *Lakas*–CMD party, which by then had also distanced itself from Macapagal-Arroyo, who was under hospital detention at the time. Ramos has been a vocal critic of President **Rodrigo Duterte**, in particular his ‘war on drugs’ campaign and his views on relations with the United States.

see also: Aquino, Corazón; Duterte, Rodrigo; EDSA II; Enrile, Juan Ponce; Estrada, Joseph Ejercito; *Lakas*–CMD; *Lakas*–NUCD; Macapagal-Arroyo, Gloria; Marcos, Ferdinand.

### **Ramos-Horta, José** (Timor-Leste)

José Ramos-Horta was the external representative of East Timorese resistance during the period of Indonesian occupation between 1975 and 1999. He was in Australia at the time of the invasion of East Timor and took **Fretilin**’s case to the United Nations, acting as a vigorous and persistent advocate of its cause as well as lobbying intensively around the world in order to

keep it alive. In recognition of his activities, he shared the Nobel Peace Prize with Bishop Carlos Belo in November 1996. Ramos-Horta was born in Dili in December 1949 of mixed Portuguese and Timorese parentage. He was involved from the outset with the Timorese Social Democratic Association, the forerunner of *Fretilin*. During his long period of exile, he spent much time in Australia where he found political and financial support. He also developed notable diplomatic skills which proved to be integral to his negotiations for an independent East Timor.

Ramos-Horta returned to Dili in December 1999 and thereafter was integral in laying the foundations for an independent East Timor. He worked closely with the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) after his return to Dili, and through his negotiations the various domestic and international stakeholders agreed upon a blueprint for independence. On 27 September 2002, East Timor was admitted into the United Nations, and Ramos-Horta was appointed as the country’s first foreign minister. On 3 June 2006, Ramos-Horta also took on the added responsibility of being the interim minister of defence. He served in these two capacities until June 2006. With the resignation of Prime Minister **Mari Alkatiri**, President **José ‘Xanana’ Gusmão** appointed Ramos-Horta acting prime minister. He was subsequently confirmed as the country’s second prime minister on 10 July 2006. On 25 February 2007, Ramos-Horta announced his candidacy for the April presidential elections and was eventually sworn into office as the second president of an independent East Timor having won 69 per cent of the vote. It was during his term as president that an assassination attempt by rebels attempting a *coup d’état* in February 2008 severely wounded him, and he had to be flown to Australia for emergency medical treatment. Ramos-Horta was in critical condition and was placed in an induced coma. He regained consciousness only ten days later and returned to Dili on 17 April 2008, after recuperating in Australia. Ramos-Horta’s presidential term came to an end on 17 March 2012 when he failed to get re-elected, managing to gain only about 19 per cent of the vote. Since departing office in Timor-Leste, he has assumed

various roles in international diplomacy under the auspices of the UN. In 2022 however, he re-emerged on the political scene to contest the presidential election.

see also: Alkatiri, Mari; *Fretilin*; Gusmão, José 'Xanana'; United Nations: East Timor, 1999–2002.

### **Ranariddh, Prince Norodom** (Cambodia)

Prince Norodom Ranariddh, eldest son of King **Norodom Sihanouk** by a minor wife, was born in Phnom Penh in 1944. He showed intellectual promise as a young man and studied law at the University of Aix-en-Provence, where he obtained a doctorate in public international law. He joined the faculty there in 1976, but in 1983 was drawn into Cambodian exile politics when his father appointed him as his personal representative based in Bangkok. He played a prominent representative role in the protracted negotiations over a political settlement from the late 1980s until the Paris Accords at the **International Conference on Cambodia** in October 1991. When Norodom Sihanouk became chairman of the four-party **Supreme National Council** in mid-1991, Prince Ranariddh succeeded his father as head of **FUNCINPEC** (National United Front for an Independent, Neutral, Peaceful and Cooperative Cambodia). In that role, he demonstrated qualities of leadership and statesmanship that were not sustained after assuming office in Cambodia, however. Indeed, he gave the impression of being more interested in its pomp and circumstance than the details of administration. He was Cambodia's first prime minister from October 1993 until ousted in July 1997. He assumed office in the wake of elections in May 1993 in which his party, **FUNCINPEC**, secured a plurality of votes. He shared power in a coalition with the **Cambodian People's Party (CPP)**, with the former prime minister and his political adversary **Hun Sen** in the office of second prime minister. That coalition proved to be a fragile arrangement in which power was never truly shared by CPP, while Prince Ranariddh was outmanoeuvred politically by Hun Sen and also lost the confidence of Western governments because of

his *dilettante* conduct. Prince Ranariddh became chairman of Cambodia's National Assembly in November 1998 with the formation of a coalition government following general elections in the previous July. Their results, which Prince Ranariddh had initially declared to be fraudulent, confirmed the political dominance of Hun Sen as sole prime minister, which had been established through a violent coup in July 1997. As a result of that coup, Prince Ranariddh was removed as first prime minister, stripped of his parliamentary immunity, and then tried, found guilty, and sentenced to 35 years' imprisonment on charges of illegally importing arms and conducting clandestine negotiations with the Khmer Rouge. He had been out of the country at the time of the coup and only returned to participate in national politics after his father, King Norodom Sihanouk, had granted him amnesty. His diminished role stood in contrast to his prominence in Cambodian politics earlier in the 1990s. His office of chairman of the National Assembly carried with it the right to serve as acting head of state in the absence or incapacity of an ailing King Sihanouk.

Despite an uneasy relationship with his temperamental and vain father, Prince Ranariddh was considered a favourite to succeed him when King Norodom Sihanouk abdicated in October 2004. However, he denied harbouring pretensions to the throne, and later that month was part of a nine-member council which chose **Norodom Sihamoni** to be the next king. In October 2006, Prince Ranariddh was removed from the position as chairman of **FUNCINPEC** by a party vote, a move initiated by his closest advisor, General Nek Bunchhay. Following this, he established the Norodom Ranariddh Party (NRP), which at one point was the third largest political party in Cambodia. In March 2007, Prince Ranariddh was sentenced *in absentia* to 18 months in prison for an illegal property sale of the **FUNCINPEC** party headquarters for \$3.6 million and for using the sales proceeds to purchase private property. However, in 2008, King Norodom Sihamoni granted his half-brother a royal pardon at the request of Prime Minister Hun Sen following the latter's re-election in the 2008 elections, which led to his return from Malaysia. In December 2008, King Norodom

Sihamoni appointed Prince Ranariddh as the chief advisor of the Privy Council. After a short-lived experiment with forming another political party, he returned to FUNCINPEC in 2015 to assume its presidency, but by that time the party was a pale shadow of its former self. Prince Ranariddh died on 28 November 2021 in France, where he had been living since 2019 for medical treatment.

see *also*: Cambodian People's Party (CPP); FUNCINPEC; Hun Sen; International Conference on Cambodia, Paris 1991; Khmer Rouge; Sihamoni, Norodom; Sihanouk, King Norodom; Supreme National Council.

### Razak, Tun Abdul (Malaysia)

Tun Abdul Razak was Malaysia's second prime minister, assuming office in September 1970 in succession to **Tunku Abdul Rahman**, who had lost the confidence of the politically dominant **UMNO (United Malays National Organization)**. Tun Razak was born in Pahang in 1922 and was not able to receive a higher education in Britain until after the Pacific War. He completed his legal studies in 1950 and on returning to Malaya joined the civil service but soon left to enter politics. In Britain he had played a key role in the anti-colonial Malayan Forum and also acted as a mentor to the future prime minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman, whose deputy he became, holding portfolios for defence and rural development but acting also as *de facto* foreign minister. In that latter role, he led negotiations to ward off Indonesia's **Confrontation** and to form **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)**. As prime minister, he was responsible for inaugurating the **New Economic Policy** designed to redress the balance of economic advantage from non-Malays to Malays, in part to entrench the political position of UMNO. He was responsible also for taking Malaysia into the Non-Aligned Movement in 1970 and for establishing diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China in 1974. He died prematurely of leukaemia on 14 January 1976.

see *also*: Abdul Rahman, Tunku; ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Confrontation; New Economic Policy; UMNO (United Malays National Organization).

**Razaleigh Hamzah, Tengku** (Malaysia) Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah, or 'Ku Li' as he is popularly known, narrowly lost a leadership challenge to Prime Minister **Mahathir Mohamad** for the office of president of **UMNO (United Malays National Organization)** in April 1987. The following year, he established an alternative Malay party, **Semangat '46** (Spirit of 1946), which failed to make a significant impact. The party was dissolved in October 1996 when Tengku Razaleigh and his supporters resumed membership of UMNO.

Tengku Razaleigh was born in April 1937 in Kota Bharu to a former chief minister and member of the royal family of the east coast state of Kelantan. He was educated at Queen's University, Belfast, and completed legal studies at Lincoln's Inn, London. He became active in UMNO politics in Kelantan on his return, serving for some years in the state legislature before entering the federal Parliament. He achieved national prominence from 1971 as executive director of PERNAS, the organization established to promote the economic interests of the Malays. He secured the most votes in elections for the three posts of vice-president of UMNO in 1975 but was passed over for the office of deputy prime minister in favour of Mahathir Mohamad in 1976. He was appointed finance minister but in 1984 was demoted to the portfolio of trade and industry after an unsuccessful challenge to the deputy prime minister, **Musa Hitam**, for the office of UMNO deputy president. He resigned from cabinet office in 1986 and, in his abortive bid for the UMNO presidency, ironically had Musa Hitam as his running mate. After his return to UMNO, he was not identified with the political dissidence precipitated by the dismissal, arrest, trial, and imprisonment of the deputy prime minister, **Anwar Ibrahim**. In the elections in November 1999 Tengku Razaleigh won a federal seat in Gua Musang, Kelantan, but was not offered a portfolio in the new cabinet. He made an abortive attempt to stand for deputy president and one of the posts of vice-president of UMNO at its General Assembly in May 2000 but failed to secure sufficient nominations. Tengku Razaleigh again expressed interest in contesting for the UMNO presidency in 2004 but was unable



to obtain enough nominations to do so. He did, however, successfully defend his Gua Musang federal seat at the 2004, 2008, 2013, and 2018 elections. After the 2008 elections in which the ruling coalition performed poorly, Tengku Razaleigh led calls for the reform of UMNO, specifically, the party's internal election mechanism which concentrated party electoral power and influence in the hands of a few, thereby entrenching corruption. After the downfall of the **Barisan Nasional** (National Front, BN) government in 2018, Tengku Razaleigh stepped forward to contest the presidency of UMNO yet again, losing in a three-cornered fight to **Zahid Hamidi**. Following the resignation of **Muhyiddin Yassin** in August 2021, Tengku Razaleigh was named as a possible replacement, but the position eventually went to UMNO vice-president **Ismail Sabri Yaacob**.

see also: Anwar Ibrahim; *Barisan Nasional* (BN); Ismail Sabri Yaacob, Datuk Seri; Mahathir Mohamad, Tun; Muhyiddin Yassin, Tan Sri; Musa Hitam, Tun; Razak, Tun Abdul; *Semangat '46*; UMNO (United Malays National Organization); Zahid Hamidi, Ahmad.

### **Reform the Armed Forces Movement (RAM)** (Philippines)

The Reform the Armed Forces Movement (RAM) played a key role in the mutiny that led to the overthrow of President **Ferdinand Marcos** in 1986. During the rule of his successor, **Corazón Aquino**, it served as a focus for military discontent and was responsible for mounting abortive coups and creating a climate of political instability. Its significance declined with the election to presidential office in May 1992 of the former chief of staff of the armed forces, **Fidel Ramos**.

The movement developed out of a personal rivalry between Marcos's minister of defence, **Juan Ponce Enrile**, and the then chief of staff of the armed forces, **Fabian Ver**. Partly as a vehicle for self-protection, Enrile set out to recruit a private army within the armed forces and attracted a group of discontented young officers to his cause. RAM was set up in March 1985. A plot to seize the presidential palace against the background of a snap election called for February

1986 was discovered by Marcos. Fearing arrest, Enrile retreated with his supporters to Camp Aguinaldo, the site of the Defence Ministry. He was joined there by the deputy chief of staff of the armed forces, General Fidel Ramos, and the two of them shifted their base to the more defensible Camp Crame nearby (see **EDSA [Epifanio de los Santos Avenue]**) which became the focus of the '**People Power**' revolt that led to Marcos giving up office and going into exile.

After Corazón Aquino became president, Enrile was reinstated as minister of defence. But they were soon alienated from one another as Enrile and his youthful military supporters resented her exercise of power, which they regarded as rightfully theirs. Enrile was replaced as defence minister in November 1986 and the first of a number of abortive coups took place in January 1987, with Fidel Ramos appointed initially as chief of staff staying loyal to the president. Perhaps the most serious of the coups took place in August 1987 and was led by Colonel Grigorio Honasan, who had been a close aide to Enrile in February 1986. Honasan evaded capture for several months and subsequently escaped from detention in 1988 to launch another abortive coup in December 1989. Honasan and other dissident officers signed an accord with the government of Fidel Ramos in December 1992, which marked the effective end of challenge by RAM.

see also: Aquino, Corazón; EDSA (Epifanio de los Santos Avenue); Enrile, Juan Ponce; Marcos, Ferdinand; People Power; Ramos, Fidel; Ver, General Fabian.

### **Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership** (Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/Laos/Malaysia/Myanmar/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand/Vietnam)

Proposed at the **Bali Summit 2011** of **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)**, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) is an ASEAN-inspired regional economic integration initiative that brings together the economies of ASEAN and six dialogue partners – China, Japan, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, and India. Once it comes into

force, the RCEP will eliminate as much as 90 per cent of the tariffs on goods traded between its signatories over the next 20 years from the agreement coming into effect.

At its inception during the November 2012 **East Asia Summit**, RCEP was envisaged to reconcile the East Asian Free Trade Agreement which brought together ASEAN, China, Japan, and South Korea on the one hand, and the Comprehensive Economic Partnership in East Asia which also included Australia, New Zealand, and India, on the other. The basic premise of RCEP is an open regionalism where its accession scheme allows other members to join as long as they agree to comply with the grouping's guidelines and rules. These guiding principles were endorsed by the ASEAN economic ministers at their meeting in Cambodia in August 2012. After protracted negotiations, RCEP was signed on 15 November 2020 to usher in the largest trading bloc in the world, but not before the withdrawal of India at the 11th hour at the **Bangkok Summit** of ASEAN in November 2019 because of pressures from its domestic manufacturing and farming industries. RCEP's entry into force was contingent upon ratification by six ASEAN member states and three of the five FTA partners. Once that threshold is passed, RCEP will take effect for those countries after 60 days. At the time of writing, five signatories have ratified the agreement: Singapore, China, Myanmar, Thailand, and Japan. Because of events unfolding in Myanmar after the February 2021 coup, its instrument of ratification has not yet been included in the official entry-into-force threshold.

Comprising 20 chapters, RCEP articulates rules governing such topics as market access for goods and services, rules of origin, standards, temporary movement of persons, investment, e-commerce, competition, government procurement, and intellectual property, albeit with varying degrees of ambition and substance. While some see RCEP as competition to the **Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership** (CPTPP) others have suggested that RCEP can function as a vehicle for states to gradually liberalize their domestic economies in ways that would complement CPTPP.

see also: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Bali Summit (ASEAN) 2011; Bangkok Summit (ASEAN) November 2019; East Asia Summit 2005–; Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership.

### **Regional Representative Council** (Indonesia)

In keeping with the reform efforts following the demise of the New Order, the Regional Representative Council or *Dewan Perwakilan Daerah* (DPD) was formed in November 2001. Together with the **People's Representative Council**, they form the bicameral legislature in Indonesia. Unlike the DPR, the DPD is not vested with law-making or veto powers. Its remit is essentially confined to the proposal of regional bills to the DPR for consideration. In effect, the DPD was an initiative to institutionalize the decentralization process that had been initiated during the era of political reform, and as such it serves to articulate and promote regional interests in the larger context of national policy making in Indonesia as an expression of regional autonomy. According to amendments to the 1945 Constitution which brought the DPD into being, its size is restricted to no more than a third of the DPR. Like their DPR counterparts, DPD representatives serve five-year terms. While DPD elections taking place on a non-partisan basis, most sitting representatives are members of the main political parties.  
see also: People's Representative Council.

### **Reproductive Health Bills** (Philippines)

The Reproductive Health Bills, also known as the RH Bill, is legislation arising from government efforts to establish wider access to contraception or birth control, as well as maternal care, for Filipino women. The RH Bill was the subject of controversy and major debate in the Philippines, a predominantly Roman Catholic country. Orthodox Roman Catholic beliefs advocate natural methods of contraception, and many Roman Catholics in the country are of the view that birth control not only contravenes their core belief, but also encourages promiscuity. Nevertheless, because of booming

demographics, lawmakers were compelled by circumstance to deliberate passing this law as a means of population control, in addition to other equally pressing aims of easing poverty and unemployment. The bill was designed to facilitate the implementation of methods of contraception, including condoms, birth control pills, and IUDs (intrauterine devices). As a major policy initiative of his administration, President **Benigno Aquino III** defied pressure from the Church by pushing the bill through to its signing in December 2012. In response, the Church has appealed to the Supreme Court and has threatened supporters of the bill, including the president, with excommunication. The implementation of the bill has been stalled, however, by tedious proceedings initiated by the Catholic Church. As such, it was only in 2018 that implementation began to make significant progress.

see also: Aquino, Benigno Simeon Cojuangco, III.

### **Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia 1958–61** (Indonesia)

On 15 February 1958, a group of ill-matched dissident officers and politicians, who had met initially in Sungai Dareh in west Sumatra, proclaimed over Radio Bukit Tinggi a *Pemerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia* (PRRI), which translates as Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia. This reformist rather than separatist rebellion, which sought to change the structure of government in Jakarta, was rooted in regional discontent in Sumatra and Sulawesi (Celebes) in particular. It registered resentment at the distribution of power and resources between Java and the outer islands of the archipelago. It also incorporated resentment on the part of regional military commanders at the centralizing policies of the national military establishment. A revolt by the west Sumatra military command, which took over civil administration in December 1956, had precipitated corresponding actions in Sulawesi and Kalimantan (Borneo). In Sulawesi, a military movement known as *Piagam Perjuangan Semesta Alam* (in acronym **Permesta**) meaning

Universal Struggle Charter, which had been declared in March 1957, allied with the Sumatran rebels on 17 February 1958. The rebellion was also a reaction to the growing assertiveness and pro-communist radicalism of President **Sukarno**, who maintained that the source of Indonesia's political turbulence was liberal democracy imported from the west. He declared martial law in March 1957 and acted to intimidate the modernist-Muslim **Masyumi** and the Socialist Party. He encouraged the seizure of Dutch business enterprises at the end of November 1957 in response to a failure to secure support in the United Nations General Assembly for Indonesia's position on **Irian Jaya**. This action, by causing economic disruption including a crisis in inter-island shipping, provoked the regional rebellion into a formal declaration of an alternative government. A firm military response from the centre in March 1958, however, saw the rebellion crumble and effectively collapse by June, although final defeat was not conceded until 1961. Its failure, despite clandestine support from the United States' CIA, proved to be a political turning point. It had the effect of consolidating the power of both Sukarno and the central military establishment, who together were able to inaugurate the authoritarian political system of **Guided Democracy** in July 1959.

see also: Guided Democracy; Irian Jaya; *Masyumi*; *Permesta*; Sukarno.

### **Rizal, José** (Philippines)

José Rizal is regarded as the spiritual father of Filipino nationalism and the supreme martyr of its cause. His famous satirical novels exposing the venality of Spanish colonial rule produced an evocative response among his fellow Filipinos. He was born on 19 June 1861 in Calamba, south of Manila, to a wealthy Chinese-mestizo family. He was exceptionally gifted and went on from the Jesuit elite Ateneo High School to the University of Santo Tomas, where he qualified in medicine. Before he left the Philippines to pursue postgraduate studies in Madrid, he had suffered personal humiliation at Spanish colonial hands. He pursued a reformist political cause in metropolitan Spain and expressed his desire for equal status in two famous novels

which were banned in the Philippines. He specialized in ophthalmology and spent time in England and then in Hong Kong. In June 1892 he returned to Manila, where he founded the Philippine League to advance his reformist political aims. Rizal was soon thereafter banished to the southern island of Mindanao on a charge of sedition. In 1896 he volunteered for service in Cuba in the Spanish interest but was arrested while en route and taken back to Manila. He was charged with responsibility for the nationalist uprising which had begun in the Philippines earlier in the year and sentenced to death. Rizal was executed by firing squad on 30 December 1896 at the age of 35. His poetic last testament, *Ultimos Adios*, has served as a romantic basic text for Philippine nationalism.

### Roadmap to Democracy (Myanmar)

First announced in August 2003 by General **Khin Nyunt**, the 'Roadmap to Democracy' was a seven-step blueprint for a transition from military rule to a form of democracy wherein the military would retain a strong influence. The roadmap essentially set out the process to re-establish democracy through a new constitution, the conduct of elections, and the inauguration of a new Parliament. The first step was to reconvene the stalled National Convention to draft principles for a new constitution. The second step was the piecemeal implementation of the foundation for a democratic system following the completion of the National Convention. The third step was to draft a constitution in accordance with the basic and detailed principles drawn up by the National Convention. The fourth step was the adoption of a new constitution through a national referendum. This was to be followed by step five, the conduct of free and fair elections for legislative bodies as laid out in the constitution. The sixth step was the convening of the new Parliament. The seventh was the building of a 'modern, developed, and democratic nation' by the leaders elected by Parliament, the government, and other central organs. Although not expressly listed as one of the steps, it was widely felt that the handover of arms by ethnic insurgent groups and their inclusion in mainstream politics was a part of this process. Up until the February 2021 coup,

it appeared that Myanmar had accomplished all that was outlined in the seven steps, even though the **2008 Constitution** still preserved for the military a major role in national politics. As with many other things in Myanmar, the coup has considerably set back the development of democracy in the country.

see also: Constitution 2008; Khin Nyunt, General.

### Rohingya (Myanmar)

Rohingya is the name of the minority Muslim community in the north of the Arakan region of Myanmar who are the descendants of Arab and Persian traders who settled and intermarried over a period of several hundred years from the ninth century. Under colonial rule they enjoyed the protection of the government in Rangoon; their loyalty to the British during the Japanese occupation led to friction with the majority Burman Buddhists and the first of a series of forced population movements into east Bengal. Muslims in Arakan rose in abortive revolt with other ethnic minorities with independence in 1948 because of the central government's refusal to countenance their political autonomy. A government campaign disguised as a search for illegal immigrants in the late 1970s produced a second major wave of refugees into newly independent Bangladesh. Recurrent harassment continued until early 1992 when a third major exodus of some 300,000 took place as a result of an evident policy of 'ethnic cleansing' by the military regime. This action exercised the **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** governments with significant Muslim communities such as Malaysia, Indonesia, and Brunei. The policy of the government has been attributed to its interest in playing on communal tensions in order to distract popular attention from its economic failings and political repression. A process of repatriation of Rohingya was begun in September 1992, and some 200,000 returned to Myanmar by mid-1995.

In 2001, communal riots erupted in Sittwe, the capital of Rakhine State, with over 20 mosques destroyed. Notwithstanding their persecution, the Rohingya participated in the 2008 national referendum regarding the new constitution. Later that year, in December, several

boatloads of Rohingya being smuggled from Bangladesh to Malaysia were detained in Thailand. Following this, Thailand initiated its new policy of 'pushing back' Rohingya boat people to drift at sea. In July 2009, Bangladesh began a new crackdown on undocumented Rohingya in Bangladesh, and the Bangladesh Border Guards began to force thousands of Rohingya back to Myanmar. In May 2011, the Bangladesh government refused a grant offered by the European Commission to reduce poverty in areas in Bangladesh with a majority of undocumented Rohingya refugees on grounds that it would encourage a greater exodus of refugees into the country. In 2012, riots broke out in Rakhine State in May, June, and October between ethnic Rakhine Buddhists and Rohingya Muslims. The trigger was the rape and murder of a Rakhine woman earlier that year in May by a group of men claimed by locals to have been Rohingya Muslims. In response, a mob of ethnic Rakhine attacked a bus, killing ten Muslims, triggering violence between the two communities. The government of Myanmar responded to the violence by deploying troops and imposing curfews. In June 2012, a state of emergency was declared in Rakhine State. The violence resulted in more than 100 deaths, the displacement of more than 200,000 people (mostly Rohingya residents), and the destruction of thousands of homes. March 2013 saw the re-ignition of riots and attacks by the Rakhine Buddhist majority on the Muslim minority in Meiktila. This triggered further sectarian violence in April, May, August, and October that year. This time, violence was stoked by sectarian rhetoric from influential monks that the government has been unable or unwilling to act against.

On 25 August 2017, Rohingya militants launched coordinated attacks on several police posts in Rakhine State. These attacks triggered an asymmetrical response from the Myanmar military including indiscriminate attacks on civilians and whole villages, resulting in a humanitarian crisis of epic proportions as more than half a million Rohingya refugees fled across the border to Bangladesh. The tragic events were subject to investigation in August 2018 by the United Nations, which alleged 'genocidal intent' in the actions of the Myanmar military.

This was followed up by a lawsuit initiated by Gambia to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) against Myanmar for genocide against the Rohingya. In the face of international condemnation, **Aung San Suu Kyi**, the Nobel laureate and democracy and human rights icon who had become de facto head of the Myanmar government after the 2015 elections, was a picture of recalcitrance. In December 2019, she mounted a defiant defence of Myanmar at the ICJ. Despite the inking of a repatriation agreement between Bangladesh and Myanmar in November 2017, Rohingya have mostly been reluctant to return. Those who did return found devastated villages which were once their homes.

At the heart of the intractable issue remains the Myanmar government's continuation of its policy to deny Rohingya Muslims citizenship status and accompanying rights. Instead, they are classified as illegal immigrants from Bangladesh, despite the fact that many have resided in Myanmar for generations.

*see also:* ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Aung San Suu Kyi.

### **Roxas, Manuel A. (Philippines)**

Manuel Roxas was the first president of the Republic of the Philippines on its independence from the United States. He was elected in April 1946 as president of the Commonwealth and then took the oath of office again in July with the full transfer of sovereignty. Manuel Roxas was born on 1 January 1892 in Capiz on the island of Panay and was educated at the University of the Philippines, where he graduated in law. He was an active politician between the two world wars, becoming speaker of the House of Representatives. He was involved in negotiating the transitional arrangement to independence in 1935, after which he held the office of secretary of finance. During the Pacific War, he had remained in the Philippines as a member of the Japanese-sponsored administration headed by Jose Laurel. He was saved from the political wilderness and worse by the active intervention of General Douglas MacArthur, who had been a close friend before hostilities. MacArthur's patronage was a decisive factor in Roxas's political rehabilitation and success. Restored as Senate president, he

challenged the incumbent Sergio Osmena for high office and defected from the **Nacionalista Party** through the vehicle of its 'Liberal Wing', which was reconstituted as the **Liberal Party** under his leadership. He won a narrow victory with US support in a free-spending election. As president, he was faced with major problems of economic rehabilitation and political challenge from the peasant-based **Hukbalahap Movement**. He has been identified with protecting US economic and military interests in the Philippines in return for payments for war damages. The military bases agreement which gave the United States a 99-year tenure over 23 sites, including **Subic Bay Naval Base** and **Clark Air Base**, was negotiated under his aegis. Ironically, he died on 15 April 1948 at Clark Air Base after making a speech to US service personnel.

see also: Clark Air Base; *Hukbalahap* Movement; Liberal Party; *Nacionalista* Party; Subic Bay Naval Base.

### **Ruak, Taur Matan** (Timor-Leste)

On 20 May 2012, Taur Matan Ruak succeeded Nobel Peace Prize laureate **José Ramos-Horta** to become the third president of Timor-Leste, a largely ceremonial position that has little policy role except for veto powers, but which nevertheless remains crucial for peace and stability in a country that has been troubled with violence and unrest for decades.

Born in 1956 in Portuguese Timor as José Maria Vasconcelos, part of his appeal as a presidential candidate came from his extensive and decorated military background, and in particular his role in the resistance against Indonesian occupation of East Timor from 1975 to 1999. Known by his *nom de guerre*, which translates as 'two sharp eyes' in local dialect, he rose quickly through the ranks of *Falintil*, East Timor's national liberation army, and became its last commander-in-chief prior to independence. Upon independence from Indonesia in 2002, he was appointed major general of Timor-Leste's fledgling armed forces, a position which he relinquished in October 2011. He won the presidential election in April 2012, which observers have described as being generally free and fair, defeating his opponent **Francisco 'Lu'Olo' Guterres** with 61 per cent of the vote. His past is

not, however, free of controversy. A UN inquiry following the political crisis and deadly unrest of 2006 found that Taur Matan Ruak had armed civilians during the unrest, and the inquiry recommended his prosecution for complicity in the violence (see **Timor-Leste Crisis 2006**). Taur Matan Ruak defended himself by claiming that he was merely following directives issued by the defence minister. No charges were subsequently pressed against him. Following the completion of his term in presidential office in 2017, Ruak joined the People's Liberation Party (PLP) as its leader. In May 2018, he was sworn in as prime minister at the head of the 'Alliance for Progress' coalition which included his party, the **National Congress for Timorese Reconstruction** (CNRT) headed by **José 'Xanana' Gusmão**, and Khunto, but soon found himself locked in a struggle with the president who succeeded him, Francisco 'Lu'Olo' Guterres, over the appointment of cabinet ministers. Differences with Gusmão over budgetary allocations in 2020 led Ruak to sideline his erstwhile ally as political realignments led to the CNRT being replaced by **Fretilin** as the anchor party of the coalition.

see also: *Fretilin*; Gusmão, José 'Xanana'; Guterres, Francisco 'Lu'Olo'; National Congress for Timorese Reconstruction; Ramos-Horta, José; Timor-Leste Crisis 2006.

### **Rukunegara 1970** (Malaysia)

Translated literally as Basic Principles of the State, *Rukunegara* was promulgated on 31 August 1970 by Malaysia's Department of National Unity. Drawing inspiration from Indonesian practice, the concept was intended to provide a set of guidelines for communal coexistence in the wake of extensive violence that erupted in Kuala Lumpur in the **May 13 Racial Riots 1969**. The declaration read:

Our Nation Malaysia, being dedicated to achieving a greater unity of all peoples; to maintaining a democratic way of life; to creating a just society in which the wealth of the nation shall be equitably shared; to ensuring a liberal approach to her rich and diverse cultural traditions; to building a progressive society which shall be oriented to modern science and technology;

We, her people, pledge our united efforts to attain those ends guided by these principles:

Belief in God

Loyalty to King and Country

Upholding the Constitution

Rule of Law

Good Behaviour and Morality

*Rukunegara* has never assumed the standing of a national ideology and lapsed as a practical political device after Malaysia resumed parliamentary government during the 1970s. The

ability of the government to proceed with its **New Economic Policy** of redistributing wealth to the particular advantage of the Malay community without unleashing communal tensions has made the stratagem underlying *Rukunegara* redundant. The concept remains available for employment against political dissent with a racial connotation, although in practice, it increasingly rings hollow in the wake of escalating Malay conservative right-wing rhetoric.

see also: May 13 Racial Riots 1969; New Economic Policy.

# S

## **Sabah United Party (Malaysia)**

The Sabah United Party (*Parti Bersatu Sabah*, PBS) was the ruling party in the Malaysian state of Sabah in northern Borneo from April 1985 until March 1994. It was established in February 1985 as the result of defections from the ruling *Berjaya* (Sabah People's Union) because of resentment on the part of ethnic Kadazans and Chinese at the pro-Muslim policies of the chief minister, Datuk **Harris Mohamad Salleh**. In state assembly elections in April, it won 25 out of 48 seats and after overcoming an artificial constitutional impediment, its leader, Datuk Joseph Pairin Kitingan, was sworn in as chief minister. In time, it was accepted as a member of the ruling federal coalition, **Barisan Nasional** (National Front, BN), and in July 1990 was returned to office despite apparent federal support for the opposition **United Sabah National Organization (USNO)**. In mid-October 1990, just five days before elections to the federal legislature, PBS defected from BN to join the opposition coalition. BN, which retained office, expelled PBS and sought to undermine its position in Sabah by establishing a branch of the politically dominant **UMNO (United Malays National Organization)** in the state as well as bringing a charge of corruption against the chief minister. This initiative appeared to backfire in April 1993, when leading members of the opposition USNO defected to join PBS. Kitingan called state elections for February 1994, shortly before being found guilty of corruption, which disqualified him from the contest. In the event, PBS was returned to power with a narrow majority. It secured 25 seats in the state legislature of 48, with the remaining places being held by UMNO and three linked minor parties. Its parliamentary position was then undermined by a series of defections, including that of the chief minister's brother, Jeffrey Kitingan, which led to a loss of its majority four weeks after the result of the elections. Joseph Kitingan then resigned as chief minister in favour of Sakaran Dandai, the head of the Sabah division

of UMNO. The key to the failure of PBS was the refusal of the federal government to encourage the economic development of Sabah as long as it remained in office. With the resignation of Kitingan, his party began to splinter into three factions which made their own accommodations with the BN government in the interest of sharing power and its spoils. It demonstrated its resilience in federal elections in April 1995 by holding eight seats compared to 14 in 1990. In elections in November 1999, its federal strength was reduced to three seats, while in state elections won by BN in the previous March, it secured 17 out of 48 seats. In April 2000, however, six of its members in the state legislature defected to the ruling coalition. In January 2002, PBS rejoined BN and went on to contribute 13 state seats and four parliamentary seats to the ruling coalition's landslide victory in March 2004. As an acknowledgement of PBS's contribution, Joseph Kitingan was made deputy chief minister and minister of rural development. After the fall of the BN government in 2018, PBS left the coalition to join *Gabungan Rakyat Sabah*, an electoral alliance supported by the **Perikatan Nasional** federal government for purposes of establishing a foothold in the Sabah state election of 2020.

see also: *Barisan Nasional* (BN); Harris Mohamad Salleh, Datuk; *Perikatan Nasional*; UMNO (United Malays National Organization); United Sabah National Organization (USNO).

## **Saffron Revolution 2007 (Myanmar)**

The 2007 protests, popularly known as the 'Saffron Revolution', took place in August and September 2007. Initially the result of dissatisfaction with the government's economic mismanagement, the demonstrations quickly took on political and anti-government overtones.

By 2007, Myanmar's civilian population was already increasingly restive over the slow pace of political reconciliation and a worsening economy. Economic mismanagement combined



with Western sanctions had pushed many deeper into poverty while families of the military elite and their business partners amassed considerable wealth. Prices for daily necessities had been soaring since 2006, but a general tolerance for hardship built up over years of military rule kept the lid on. This changed on 15 August 2007 when the government removed a fuel subsidy resulting in price increases of between 100 and 500 per cent overnight, far beyond what ordinary people could afford. This sparked protests on 19 August that carried on into September despite government efforts to disperse the demonstrations with arrests. The protests took on a new form in mid-September as Buddhist monks took over the leadership of the movement, beginning in the northwest. Protests soon spread throughout the country, including Yangon, following the beating of protesting monks in Pakokku on 5 September. A boycott of donations from military families was called by monasteries in Mandalay, a powerful move that effectively denied them the Buddhist merit earned through donations.

While Buddhist monastic code forbids involvement in mundane politics, Myanmar's monks have been at the forefront of politics at numerous historic junctures, including anti-colonial activities and the 1988 demonstrations. The military was initially hesitant to stop the protests due to the reverence of monks by the largely Buddhist population and the enormous bad merit incurred by harming a monk. This changed on 26 September when the government ordered a general crackdown on the protests. Shots were fired into the crowds, monks and protestors were arrested, beaten, interrogated and many imprisoned. Monks were also defrocked. The crackdown horrified the international community, earning the regime strong criticism not only from Western governments but also, surprisingly, the People's Republic of China. Mass arrests and repressive measures over the following months eventually suppressed the protest movement and reaffirmed military rule. Notably, although there was early involvement by former 1988 student activists, the participation of the **National League for Democracy** was minimal.

see also: National League for Democracy.

**Saloth Sar** (Cambodia) see **Pol Pot**

### **Sam Rainsy** (Cambodia)

Sam Rainsy was the leader of the now-defunct **Sam Rainsy Party** (SRP). At the time of its formation in November 1995, SRP was a key opposition party in Cambodia. An outspoken critic of the Cambodian government's economic policies and prevalent corruption, he has a long-running feud with the ruling **Cambodian People's Party** (CPP) led by Prime Minister **Hun Sen** and has often been on the receiving end of government intimidation.

Born in Phnom Penh in 1949, Sam Rainsy moved to France in 1965 and started his career there in the finance sector. He joined Prince **Norodom Ranariddh's** FUNCINPEC party and subsequently returned to Cambodia in 1992. After FUNCINPEC won the 1993 elections and formed a coalition government with CPP, Sam Rainsy was appointed finance minister. In 1994, however, he was abruptly removed from his post and expelled from the party after a vote of no-confidence against him. A month later, he was also forced out of the National Assembly. In early November 1995, Sam Rainsy established the Khmer Nation Party (KNP) which eventually changed its name to the Sam Rainsy Party (SRP) prior to the 1998 elections. In February 2005, Rainsy was forced to flee the country after he and two other parliamentarians from his SRP were stripped of their parliamentary immunity and charged with defamation when he claimed that Hun Sen was involved in a grenade attack at a rally in 1997 which resulted in 17 fatalities. He also faced defamation lawsuits from Norodom Ranariddh, whom he has accused of taking bribes from the ruling party. Rainsy was sentenced *in absentia* to 18 months' imprisonment but was later pardoned by King **Norodom Sihamoni** just a few months after the sentence, at the request of the prime minister. The royal pardon allowed Rainsy to return to Cambodia and continue his political activities. Still smarting from that encounter, he was once again stripped of his parliamentary immunity in 2010 after allegedly falsifying information over the Vietnam–Cambodia border dispute as well as inciting protests and violence by

villagers near the border. He was living in exile in Paris when he was sentenced *in absentia* to ten years' imprisonment. Sam Rainsy insisted that the charges against him were politically motivated and reflected broader attempts by CPP to suppress opposition and criticism. Sam Rainsy received a royal pardon again from King Norodom Sihamoni in July 2013 at the behest of Prime Minister Hun Sen. He returned to invigorate the 2013 elections and led the **Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP)**, which included his SRP, to make significant inroads into CPP's grip on power. Alleging widespread election fraud, Sam Rainsy has led an opposition boycott of Parliament, calling for an independent investigation into election irregularities and a re-election. A meeting between Sam Rainsy and Hun Sen in October 2013 failed to resolve differences. In 2015, he escaped to France as lawsuits accumulated against him, and resigned from leadership of CNRP two years later. In November 2019 he attempted to return to Cambodia on its independence day via Thailand on a Thai Airways flight but was prevented from doing so at the airport in Paris. In March 2021, Sam Rainsy was sentenced *in absentia* to 25 years in jail for an alleged plot to overthrow the government of Prime Minister Hun Sen.

see also: Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP); Cambodian People's Party (CPP); FUNCINPEC; Hun Sen; Ranariddh, Prince Norodom; Sam Rainsy Party; Sihamoni, King Norodom.

### Sam Rainsy Party (Cambodia)

The liberal Sam Rainsy Party (SRP) came into being in March 1998 when it changed its name from Khmer Nation Party (KNP) and is a constituent of the **Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP)** that stood in opposition to the ruling **Cambodian People's Party (CPP)**. Formed in November 1995 by **Sam Rainsy** after he was expelled from **FUNCINPEC**, KNP changed its name three years later as a result of internal party disputes that saw the emergence of a faction that had gravitated towards the ruling party. SRP won 15 out of 122 seats in the Cambodian legislature in the 1998 elections, despite widespread allegations that CPP

had manipulated electoral process. In the 2003 elections, SRP increased its share of seats to 24, coming in second behind Prime Minister **Hun Sen's** CPP. After 11 months of negotiations yielded no consensus between the three main parties, SRP was eventually excluded from the coalition when **FUNCINPEC** agreed to join CPP in forming the new government. SRP parliamentarians accused the new government of being unconstitutional and boycotted the new National Assembly. As an opposition party, SRP bore the brunt of political repression and intimidation by the ruling CCP. In September 2012, the SRP formally combined with the Human Rights Party to form the CNRP to contest the 2013 elections in which they collectively won 55 seats to the CPP's 68 seats.

see also: Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP); Cambodian People's Party (CPP); FUNCINPEC; Hun Sen; Sam Rainsy.

### Samak Sundaravej (Thailand)

Samak Sundaravej had a long political career which culminated as prime minister of Thailand in 2008 as well as leader of the **People's Power Party (PPP)**. Samak was born in Bangkok on 13 June 1935 to a Chinese family. He earned a bachelor's degree from Thammasat University in Bangkok.

Samak joined the **Democrat Party** in 1968 and through his strong ties to the military became leader of its right-wing faction. After defeating veteran politician **Kukrit Pramoj** in the 1976 elections, Samak became deputy interior minister in the **Seni Pramoj** government. Samak was sent by Seni to Singapore in August 1976 to persuade former dictator Field Marshal **Thanom Kittikachorn** not to return to Thailand. Instead, Samak may have in fact encouraged the return by informing the general that he had the support of the monarchy, resulting in his removal from his cabinet position in October 1976. Samak responded by organizing an anti-government demonstration and attacked several ministers for allegedly being communists. He played a prominent role in the events leading to the 6 October 1976 massacre of students at Thammasat University by inciting right-wing mobs to attack students, whom he labelled as communists, protesting the return of

Thanom. Samak became minister of interior in the government of **Thanin Kraivichian** which followed the coup of 6 October 1976 and initiated a campaign of arrests of alleged leftist students, writers, and intellectuals. In 1979, Samak founded the *Prachakorn Thai* Party, which went on to defeat the incumbent Democrat Party in the 1979 elections. He was made minister of transport from 1983 to 1986 and again in 1990–1 under the governments of **Prem Tinsulanonda** and **Chatichai Choonhavan** respectively. In 1992, he was deputy prime minister in the military-appointed government of General **Suchinda Kraprayoon** and defended the military's brutal suppression of pro-democracy protestors in May that year. Samak remained leader of his *Prachakorn Thai* Party until 2000 when he was elected governor of Bangkok. A popular governor, he served until 2003, when he concentrated on his popular cooking show. He would re-enter politics in 2006 as a senator following the coup of the same year.

Samak was the leader of PPP and became prime minister when the party won general elections in December 2007. The **People's Alliance for Democracy** accused PPP and Samak of being proxies for the exiled prime minister, **Thaksin Shinawatra**, and the disbanded **Thai Rak Thai Party**, and organized massive street protests to call for their removal. Samak refused to resign in the face of increasingly militant protests, but on 9 September 2008, he found himself disqualified by the Constitutional Court for receiving payment for his televised cooking shows while serving as prime minister, a violation of the constitution that bans ministers from accepting external paid positions. Samak with his loyalists tried to keep himself in position but gave up on 12 September when he resigned as leader of PPP. Samak was later convicted on an old libel charge and sentenced to two years' imprisonment. He jumped bail and left for the United States for cancer treatment. Returning to Thailand, Samak was hospitalized and died in Bangkok on 24 November 2009.

see also: Chatichai Choonhavan, General; Democrat Party; Kukrit Pramoj; People's Alliance for Democracy; People's Power Party; Prem Tinsulanonda, General; Seni Pramoj; Suchinda Kraprayoon, General; *Thai Rak*

*Thai* Party; Thaksin Shinawatra; Thanin Kraivichian; Thanom Kittikachorn, Field Marshal.

**Samphan, Khieu** (Cambodia) see **Khieu Samphan**

**Samrin, Heng** (Cambodia) see **Heng Samrin**

***Sangkum Reastre Niyum*** (Cambodia)

*Sangkum Reastre Niyum*, which translates as Popular Socialist Community, was a mass political organization established by Prince **Norodom Sihanouk** in March 1955 on his abdication from the throne. Through this organization, Prince Sihanouk commanded the heights of Cambodian politics for 15 years until he was deposed in March 1970. The *Sangkum* served as a means through which he could encompass and also domesticate all shades of political opinion. It was employed initially to contest the general election held in September 1955. An overwhelming victory was secured with 83 per cent of the vote, which delivered all the seats in the National Assembly. The *Sangkum* functioned very much as a political stage for Prince Sihanouk, who called periodic national congresses held in the open at which he could humiliate his ministers and national assemblymen in front of an urban mass for whom the occasion provided considerable entertainment. The heyday of the *Sangkum* and its national congresses was in the late 1950s and early 1960s. However, as Prince Sihanouk's political grip became less sure, in part because of external factors, the spectacle of the national congress lost its initial attraction. By the time Prince Sihanouk was overthrown in 1970, the *Sangkum* had long ceased to serve its initial political function.

see also: Sihanouk, King Norodom.

**Sann, Son** (Cambodia) see **Son Sann**

**Sanoh Thienthong** (Thailand)

Sanoh Theinthong is a Thai politician and powerbroker who has engineered the premierships of several of Thailand's recent prime ministers,

although he has never held the position himself. Sanoh was born on 1 April 1934. He graduated with a law degree from Sripatum University in Bangkok in the 1970s. Sanoh entered politics in 1975, joining the **Chart Thai Party**, and was subsequently elected to Parliament for Prachinburi Province in 1976. He was deputy minister for agriculture from 1986 to 1988 and deputy minister of transport for a short period in 1992. In 1994, Sanoh was made general secretary of *Chart Thai* after **Banharn Silpa-archa** became its leader. When *Chart Thai* formed a coalition government the following year, Banharn appointed Sanoh as minister of public health. Sanoh resigned in 1996 to join the **New Aspiration Party of Chavalit Yongchaiyuth**, becoming its secretary-general. Following its election win in 1996, Sanoh became minister of interior. Sanoh changed parties again in 2001, joining the new **Thai Rak Thai Party** under **Thaksin Shinawatra** and becoming its chief advisor. Upon the party's election victory in 2001, Sanoh did not receive a ministerial position, but his wife was alternately appointed minister of culture and labour. Within the party, Sanoh formed a powerful faction known as *Wang Nam Yen*. He fell out with Thaksin, however, and left the party in February 2006, later speaking at several **People's Alliance for Democracy** rallies following Thaksin's dissolution of Parliament later that year. In February 2006, Sanoh formed *Pracharaj* (Royal People Party) and was declared its leader. In May 2011, he abandoned his party to join the **Pheu Thai Party** and was elected in the July 2011 election. Sanoh supported the candidature of **Yingluck Shinawatra** as prime minister, and his political allies continue to form a substantial bloc in *Pheu Thai* today while he assumes the position of chief advisor in the party.

see also: Banharn Silpa-archa; *Chart Thai Party*; Chavalit Yongchaiyuth, General; New Aspiration Party; People's Alliance for Democracy; *Pheu Thai Party*, *Thai Rak Thai Party*; Thaksin Shinawatra; Yingluck Shinawatra.

### **Santri** (Indonesia)

*Santri* is an Indonesian term deriving from *pesantren*, which is the name for a village

religious school. It has come to be employed, primarily in Java, to distinguish Indonesian Muslims of a strict orthodoxy from the **Abangan** whose **Islam** is a synthesis comprising in part animist and Hindu–Buddhist beliefs with a mystical content. Since independence, *Santri* have been identified with political parties such as **Masyumi** and **Nahdlatul Ulama** and since the merger of all Islamic parties in 1973 with **Partai Persatuan Pembangunan**. The term is a convenient category for foreign scholars rather than a precise basis for common identity on the part of devout Muslims. It began to lose its discrete quality when former President **Suharto** sought to mobilize urban Islamic elements in his own political interest during the 1990s. With his downfall and a mushrooming of Islamic-based parties, Islamic identity has served as more of a vehicle for **Pribumi** interests than as an indication of intra-religious divisions. Because of this, the boundaries between *Abangan* and *Santri* have become blurred owing to the complications of overlap between Islamic identity and political allegiance.

see also: *Abangan*; Islam; *Masyumi*; *Nahdlatul Ulama*; *Partai Persatuan Pembangunan*; *Pribumi*; Suharto.

### **Sarawak United People's Party** (Malaysia)

The Sarawak United People's Party (SUPP) was until 2018 a junior member of the **Barisan Nasional** (National Front, BN) government in the East Malaysian state of Sarawak, during which time it was also part of the federal ruling coalition. SUPP was established in June 1959 in anticipation of municipal elections in Kuching and well before the proposal that the British colony be incorporated into a Federation of Malaysia had been mooted. Its founders were ethnic-Chinese businessmen who espoused a non-communal socialist agenda, but support for the party was along ethnic lines. Moreover, an active communist component within the local Chinese community used SUPP as a vehicle for an abortive opposition to Sarawak's entry into Malaysia. During the 1960s, it formed part of the state opposition. But from the early 1970s, its leadership began practical collaboration

with both state and federal governments, with SUPP becoming a founding member of BN and then a member of the state ruling coalition. As a member of BN, its performance suffered from the swing of support away from the coalition at the 2008 and 2013 federal elections. After the 2018 election, SUPP broke away from BN and joined the Sarawak-based coalition, *Gabungan Parti Sarawak*.

see also: *Barisan Nasional* (BN).

### **Sarit Thanarat, Field Marshal** (Thailand)

Sarit Thanarat was prime minister of Thailand from January 1959 until his death on 9 December 1963. He was a strong and forceful personality with an evident will to govern that commanded popular respect. During the period of political stability which he enforced as effective military dictator, the foundations were laid for Thailand's subsequent economic growth. In addition, the national standing of the monarchy was enhanced as a direct consequence of its employment by the regime to uphold its political legitimacy.

Sarit Thanarat was born in the northeast of the country in 1908 and entered the Chulachomklao Royal Military Academy in Bangkok in the late 1920s. He was a junior officer at the time of the coup against the absolute monarchy in 1932. He rose steadily as an officer and was a colonel in command of an infantry battalion in Bangkok in 1947 at the time of the first coup after the Pacific War through which the military re-established its political dominance. By 1949 he had risen to the rank of lieutenant general with the key command of the First Army, charged with the defence of Bangkok, as part of an uneasy triumvirate with Field Marshal **Phibul Songkram** and the chief of police, General Phao Siyanond. Sarit and General Phao were direct rivals, but when Sarit became commander-in-chief of the army in 1954, he was able to consolidate his power. He intervened to establish his dominance in September 1957 after a turbulent period of electoral politics fostered by the prime minister, Phibul. His deputy, General **Thanom Kittikachorn**, assumed the office of prime minister while Sarit went to the United States to receive medical treatment.

Rumbling financial and political crises were not overcome until his return in October 1958 to launch a bloodless coup, after which he promulgated a new interim authoritarian constitution. Sarit assumed the office of prime minister in January 1959, drawing political inspiration from the recently established rule of Charles de Gaulle in France. In foreign policy, Thailand was sustained in its alliance relationship with the United States. After Sarit's death, a scandal arose over the number of wives he had taken as well as the considerable wealth that he had accumulated.

see also: Phibul Songkram, Field Marshal; Thanom Kittikachorn, Field Marshal.

### **Sary, Ieng** (Cambodia) see **Ieng Sary**

### **Scarborough Shoal Dispute**

(Philippines)

Consisting of a group of very small islands, rocks and reefs in the **South China Sea**, Scarborough Shoal, known to Chinese as Huangyan Island and Filipinos as Panatag Shoal, has been and continues to be the subject of a territorial dispute and source of deteriorating bilateral relations between the Philippines and China.

Both the People's Republic of China and the Republic of China (Taiwan) have claimed the islands on the historical basis that they have been their traditional fishing grounds for centuries. The shoal lies some 550 nautical miles from Hainan Island and 124 nautical miles off Zambales, which raises reasonable doubts over the logic of Chinese claim to the shoal, even though the shoal's location apparently falls within the area marked by the nine-dotted line which China has used to justify its claim to other disputed features of the South China Sea. The Philippines government has contested the legality of their claims and has publicly expressed its desire to resolve the dispute through peaceful negotiations and arbitration through the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea. However, this has been rejected by Beijing, which has insisted strongly on bilateral negotiations only.

In April 2012, tensions flared due to an attempt by the Philippines Navy to detain

and arrest Chinese fishermen in the disputed waters, but they were blocked by two Chinese maritime surveillance ships that were patrolling in the vicinity. The military standoff between deployed gunboats in the area continued despite diplomatic assurances from both Beijing and Manila that all efforts were being made towards a peaceful resolution of the dispute. Relations between the People's Republic and the Philippines continued to deteriorate as the latter accused the Chinese of imposing sanctions on tourism and fruit imports. While international law has since ruled on the side of the Philippines, given that the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) provides for a 200-nautical-mile Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and continental shelf, Chinese officials have made no concessions, insisting that the issue would not be resolved until Chinese sovereignty over the shoal is recognized. In January 2013, Manila notified Beijing that it would seek international arbitration to decide on the legality of China's nine-dash line claim to the South China Sea. The dispute over the shoal became a matter of diplomatic contention between the Philippines and Cambodia at the **Phnom Penh Summit of ASEAN** (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) as well as its foreign ministers' meeting in 2012. In July 2016, international arbitration ruled in favour of the Philippines (*see* **Arbital Tribunal Award 2016**).

*see also:* Arbitral Tribunal Award 2016; ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Phnom Penh Summit (ASEAN) April 2012; South China Sea.

### **SEATO (Southeast Asia Treaty Organization) 1955–77** (Philippines/Thailand)

The Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) was the institutional expression of the Southeast Asia Collective Defence Treaty concluded in the **Manila Pact** in September 1954. SEATO was established with its headquarters in Bangkok during a treaty council meeting held on 23–25 February 1955. As an organization, it initially comprised representatives of all council members, made up of all ambassadors of signatory states and a corresponding member

of the Thai foreign service, a military advisors group as well as three committees concerned with economics, information, and security. An international secretariat and a permanent working group of junior diplomats were set up at a council meeting in Karachi in March 1956. A meeting of military planners in Singapore in June 1956 recommended the establishment of a military planning office, which was endorsed at a council meeting in Canberra in March 1957 together with the office of secretary-general. After council meetings in Manila and Wellington in 1958 and 1959, some members declared specific military units for SEATO purposes.

Although SEATO arranged a series of military exercises, it never fulfilled an active military role, even during the **Vietnam War**. It found itself beset by internal tensions arising conspicuously from French dissidence but also from an underlying lack of common strategic interest. After the **Paris Peace Agreements** in January 1973, the organization began to be wound down because of its loss of any practical *raison d'être*. The military structure was abolished from 1 February 1974. At a council meeting held in New York on 24 September 1975, it was agreed to disband SEATO from 30 June 1977 but not to revoke the treaty on which it was based. Thailand, in particular, was keen to retain the vestigial security link with the United States.

*see also:* Manila Pact 1954; Paris Peace Agreements 1973; Vietnam War.

### **Semangat '46** (Malaysia)

*Semangat '46*, which translates from Malay as the Spirit of 1946, was the name of a breakaway party from the politically dominant **UMNO (United Malays National Organization)**. The schism arose from personal rivalry between the prime minister, **Mahathir Mohamad**, the former minister of trade and industry, **Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah**, and the former deputy prime minister, **Musa Hitam**. The term Spirit of 1946 referred to the year in which UMNO was established in opposition to British constitutional revisionism and was intended to register that the breakaway group was the authentic legatee of UMNO's political values

and traditions. *Semangat '46* was established in the wake of a decision by the federal High Court in February 1988 that UMNO was an unlawful society because 30 of its branches had not been properly registered when elections for highest party office were held at its General Assembly in April 1987. The party however, failed in its attempts at the 1990 and 1995 elections to unseat UMNO as the leading Malay-Muslim party in Malaysia. In October 1995, the party was formally dissolved, and Tengku Razaleigh and his supporters were readmitted to UMNO. *see also:* Mahathir Mohamad, Tun; Musa Hitam, Tun; Razaleigh Hamzah, Tengku; UMNO (United Malays National Organization).

**Sen, Hun** (Cambodia) *see* **Hun Sen**

### **Seni Pramoj** (Thailand)

Seni Pramoj enjoys the unique record of having been prime minister of Thailand in 1945 and then again for two short periods in 1975 and 1976. He was born on 26 May 1905 into a junior branch of the royal family; he is the older brother of **Kukrit Pramoj** (also prime minister in 1975–6). Seni Pramoj received his main education in Britain, graduating in law from Worcester College, Oxford. He practised as a lawyer and entered the judiciary before heading Thailand's legation in Washington in 1940 as minister. In that capacity, he refused to communicate Thailand's declaration of war against the Allies made at Japan's insistence. In Washington he assumed the role of leader of the overseas Free Thai Movement; after the war he was briefly prime minister and foreign minister in interim governments before the restoration of a short-lived parliamentary democracy. He served as minister of justice in the **Democrat Party** cabinet led by Khuang Abhaiwongse during 1947–8 until it was overthrown by the military. Seni Pramoj returned to the practice of law but retained his association with the Democrat Party, becoming its leader after the death of Khuang in 1968. He re-entered Parliament in 1969, and during the democratic restoration from October 1973 until October 1976, he served for two periods as prime minister, leaving office first through electoral reverse and secondly through the military coup following the

**Thammasat University Massacre**. He resigned as leader of the Democrat Party in 1979 and then retired from public life. He died on 28 July 1997 at the age of 92.

*see also:* Democrat Party; Kukrit Pramoj; Thammasat University Massacre 1976.

### **Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)** (Indonesia/Malaysia/Singapore/Philippines/Thailand/Vietnam)

Even though the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome outbreak, better known as SARS, first surfaced in China in November 2002, an initial cover-up caused delays in responses among Southeast Asian states to the disease. By the time China acknowledged a local outbreak, the virus had already reached countries nearby, especially via super spreaders. That said, Southeast Asia generally reported fewer SARS cases than expected, with most of them being imported cases. During the epidemic, Indonesia confirmed only two SARS cases, both imported. Malaysia reported five SARS infections in total, all imported as well. Its first case emerged on 5 April 2003, the same day that the government declared SARS a national security concern. Thailand's nine SARS infections were also imported, with the first case arriving from Vietnam on 11 March 2003. The Philippines recorded 14 SARS cases.

While the region's famously high temperatures and humidity seemed to have curtailed the spread of the virus, swift policy responses, including stringent screening of travellers at checkpoints, active contact tracing, and thorough protection of healthcare workers also ensured effective control of the public health crisis. In early April, Thailand and Malaysia took measures to refuse entry to visitors from SARS-hit areas, including the People's Republic of China, Singapore, and Vietnam. Meanwhile, the World Health Organization commended the Philippines for its efficient surveillance and reporting system which allowed Manila to take swift action to contain a cluster of seven cases. However, the restrictions were soon withdrawn after the People's Republic retaliated by imposing a ban on group tours to Malaysia, Thailand, and Singapore.

The effectiveness of the region's SARS-containing strategies was best illustrated in

the case of Singapore, the worst-hit Southeast Asian state with 238 cases and 33 deaths. SARS first reached the Republic on 25 February 2003, with three Singaporean returnees from Hong Kong, then an epicentre of the SARS outbreak. Because immediate isolation measures were not taken at that point, three major clusters soon emerged, linked to hospitalized patients. At its peak, hospitals made up nearly 75 per cent of transmissions, and healthcare workers accounted for about 41 per cent of the island-state's case count. Singapore reported the highest single-day infection of 13 on 16 March, and the second highest of 12 on 15 March and 5 April. To battle the virus, Singapore stepped up infection control measures in healthcare facilities with the mandatory use of protective gear and visitor restrictions. It also reduced the risk of imported cases via temperature checks and health declaration cards, and stemmed community spread through public education, contact tracing, and home quarantines. For example, to minimize risks of community spread via public transport, suspected SARS cases were transferred by private ambulance to designated facilities for treatment. The Singapore government also launched a comprehensive public education campaign on the disease and prevention tips. To cushion the economic fallout, relief packages were passed by Parliament to support the hospitality and public transportation industries.

**ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** reacted fairly quickly to the public health crisis, with a special ASEAN health ministers' meeting held on 26 April with dialogue partners China, Japan, and Korea. An ASEAN leaders' meeting and an ASEAN–China leaders' meeting were also held consecutively on 29 April. Through these platforms, agreements were made for information sharing, coordination of regional travel, and public education. Even though ASEAN's efficient containment of the virus won it international praise, unilateral measures pursued by some member states, such as travel bans, meant that efforts to roll out a cohesive response to SARS also met with considerable obstacles.

see also: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–.

## Shan (Myanmar)

The Shan indigenous minority inhabit a hilly plateau of about 150,000 square kilometres or a quarter of the country in the eastern part of Myanmar which borders the People's Republic of China, Laos, and Thailand. They share a cultural and linguistic affiliation with the people of Thailand and adhere to the Theravada branch of **Buddhism**. Under British administration, the traditional political system of rule by *Sawbwa* (hereditary princes) was made part of the colonial structure. The traditional leadership agreed to membership of a Shan State within the Union of Burma with the **Panglong Agreement** of 1947. The Shan did not join in the separatist challenge to the Union until 1959 after an attempt was made to remove the powers of their traditional leadership. A Shan States Army fought in an insurgency against the government in Rangoon until 1989, when a ceasefire agreement was reached with the ruling **State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC)**. The Shan State Nationalities Liberation Organization formally abandoned its armed struggle against the Yangon government in October 1994. Insurgent activity continued under the leadership of the drug baron Khun Sa, but in June 1995 his Mong Tai Army split and a separate Shan State National Army resumed the insurgency. In December 2011, a ceasefire agreement was signed between the Shan State Army and the Myanmar government, but sporadic clashes have continued even as the Shan State Army itself has split into Shan State Army (North) and Shan State Army (South). These clashes would escalate in January 2018. Other Shan militant organizations include the Restoration Council of Shan State (RCSS), which was a signatory to the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement in 2015 but since then has resumed armed struggle against the Myanmar military. Shan State militia, which fight not only the *Tatmadaw* but often also each other, have been able to sustain their armed rebellion by way of the drug trade. Previous known for heroine production, Shan State is presently one of the largest centres for the production of crystal methamphetamine in the world.

see also: Buddhism; Panglong Agreement; State Law and Order Restoration Council.



**Shari'a Law** (Brunei)

In May 2014, Brunei Sultan **Hassanal Bolkiah** pushed through controversial plans to phase in the implementation of *shari'a* law in the country, announced a year earlier in the institutionalized form of the *Shari'a* (Syariah) Penal Code Order 2013, which sanctions punishments of different severity depending on the crime. While *shari'a* law was not unknown in Brunei prior to that, the new legislation incorporated controversial hudud and *qisas* punishments. At any rate, prospects of the introduction of *shari'a* law in Brunei had surfaced as early as the mid-1990s when the sultan announced plans to study into the possibilities. In the event, the plan was introduced over three phases. The first phase would penalize violations such as non-fasting during the holy month of Ramadhan or missing of Friday prayers. The second phase, implemented in May 2015, would target theft and alcohol consumption. The third and final phase, implemented in April 2019, would see severe punishment imposed for sodomy, adultery, and insulting of the prophet Muhammad. At issue was not only the introduction of the penal code, but more controversially, the adoption of punitive measures. These included not just fines and incarceration, but also whipping, amputation of limbs, and stoning, in accordance to strict interpretations of religious injunctions drawn from traditional Islamic teaching.

Predictably, the announcement sparked an outcry from the international community. Calls were made to boycott Bruneian commercial interests in protest as celebrities inveighed against the government of the sultanate. Meanwhile, European leaders sought to convince the sultan to rescind the plans, to no avail. In response, the Bruneian authorities tasked with implementing the laws have explained that they are meant to be 'preventive' measures, and that a high bar for evidence was required before the sanctioned punitive actions are triggered. Sultan Hassanal has led Brunei since 1967. The introduction of *shari'a* law reinforces the national ideology of **Melayu Islam Beraja**, which has served as the ideological bedrock for the sultanate since July 1990. It is also believed to be designed to ensure stability and continuity as Brunei confronts the reality of political transition.

see also: Bolkiah, Sultan Hassanal; *Melayu Islam Beraja*.

**Sheraton Move 2020** (Malaysia)

The Sheraton Move refers to a series of events that transpired on 23 February 2020, beginning with separate meetings of the leaderships of **Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia** (*Bersatu*), **UMNO**, **Parti Islam Se-Malaysia** (PAS), and a faction of **Parti Keadilan Rakyat** (PKR) aligned to the deputy president of the party, Mohamed Azmin Ali throughout the day, after which several of them proceeded to the *Istana Negara* purportedly to discuss the possibility of a new coalition government with Sultan Abdullah, the king of Malaysia. The series of events culminated in a dinner involving more than 130 members of Parliament from both sides of the aisle, followed by a collective meeting of the leaderships of several parties that night at the Sheraton Hotel in Petaling Jaya, ostensibly for the purpose of discussing the interests of the ethnic Malay majority that were deemed to have been sidelined under the **Pakatan Harapan** government. In effect, the Sheraton Move catalysed a process that led to the collapse of the *Pakatan Harapan* government via a reconfiguration of allegiances on the part of several political parties.

Led by party president **Muhyiddin Yassin**, *Bersatu* pulled out of the *Pakatan Harapan* coalition a day later, on 24 February, leading to the loss of a parliamentary majority and collapse of the government. Notably, this decision was not endorsed by party chairman **Mahathir Mohamad**, who eventually resigned on 2 March. In the meantime, the leaders of *Bersatu*, UMNO, PAS, and several Sabah and Sarawak based parties met with the Malaysian king. The three main parties – *Bersatu*, UMNO, and PAS – would eventually orchestrate the change of state government in Johor a few days later. After a series of meetings with almost all 222 parliamentarians, the Malaysian king decided on 29 February to swear in Muhyiddin Yassin as prime minister to head a coalition government that eventually came to be known as **Perikatan Nasional**.

In the final analysis, the Sheraton Move was a product of the unresolved differences and

deep distrust that prevailed among the political leaders of Malaysia that cast a dark shadow over the country. This came across starkly in how political succession was contested, as several parties and factions within *Pakatan Harapan* were not keen to support a transition plan that would have eventually seen power handed to **Anwar Ibrahim**. Another issue was concern for what was perceived to be the outsized role and influence of the Chinese-dominated **Democratic Action Party** in the *Pakatan Harapan* government.

see also: Anwar Ibrahim; *Barisan Nasional* (BN); Democratic Action Party (DAP); Mahathir Mohamad, Tun; Muhyiddin Yassin, Tan Sri; *Pakatan Harapan*; *Parti Islam Se-Malaysia*; *Parti Keadilan Rakyat*; *Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia*; *Perikatan Nasional*; UMNO (United Malays National Organization).

### Shwe Mann (Myanmar)

Shwe Mann was speaker of the Pyuthu Hluttaw, Myanmar's lower house of Parliament between 2011 and 2016. A former general, Shwe Mann was born on 11 July 1947 at Kanyuntkwin in Bago Division. He attended the Defence Services Academy as part of Intake 11, graduating in 1969 as a second lieutenant. He rose steadily through the ranks, becoming a major in 1988 and later a battalion commander. He earned the honorific 'Thura' in 1989 for bravery during operations against the Karen National Liberation Army. In 2000 he was promoted to major-general. In November 2001 he became coordinator of Special Operations, a position that placed him in control of all military operations in Myanmar through the Bureau of Special Operations. In 2003 he was promoted to general. Shwe Mann rose to become a leading figure in the **State Peace and Development Council** and joint chief of staff of the Myanmar armed forces, the *Tatmadaw*, eventually becoming the third-highest ranking member before resigning to contest elections as a civilian in 2010. He was widely respected in the military and among his soldiers for his service on the frontline. A protégé of **Than Shwe**, he was often seen as a likely successor to the position of commander of the *Tatmadaw* and leader of the military junta. He was made speaker of the Pyuthu

Hluttaw on 31 January 2011 after winning his seat at the November 2010 election. In May 2011, he replaced **Thein Sein** as the leader of the **Union Solidarity and Development Party** (USDP).

Although a former high-ranking general and third-ranked member of the previous military regime, Shwe Mann carefully cultivated a reputation as a reformer and developed good relations with **Aung San Suu Kyi**. On 7 February 2012, he acknowledged the issue of corruption at all levels of government during an address to the Pyuthu Hluttaw, a move seen as a significant step in the reform process underway in Myanmar politics. Shwe Mann harboured political ambitions and expressed his intention to run for the presidency in 2015. He was, however, removed from the leadership of USDP in August 2015, purportedly after falling out with Thein Sein while also antagonizing the military, and purged from the party altogether a year later. He went on to form the Union Betterment Party but failed to make any significant impact at the 2020 election. Shwe Mann was detained on 10 February 2021 by the **State Administration Council** that had taken over the government after their coup on 1 February.

see also: Aung San Suu Kyi; State Administration Council; State Peace and Development Council; Than Shwe, Senior General; Thein Sein; Union Solidarity and Development Party.

### Sihamoni, King Norodom (Cambodia)

Norodom Sihamoni succeeded his father, King **Norodom Sihanouk**, as king of Cambodia after the latter relinquished his title in 2004. Born in 1953, the year in which Cambodia gained independence, Norodom Sihamoni spent much of his formative and adult years abroad, first in Czechoslovakia where he completed high school and at the National Conservatory in Prague, where he pursued his passion for music and dance. He then moved to North Korea briefly to study filmmaking, an enthusiasm that his father King Sihanouk also shared. He later returned to Cambodia when the **Khmer Rouge** regime came to power and was placed under house arrest in the royal palace together with most of his family. When the Vietnamese

invaded and toppled the Khmer Rouge regime in 1979, Sihamoni left for Paris, where he taught classical dance and ballet for almost a decade. In 1993, he was selected as the Cambodian representative to UNESCO, a post he held until early 2004.

Shortly after Sihanouk's abdication, Sihamoni was elected by a nine-member Throne Council to the largely ceremonial role as king of Cambodia. A relatively unknown figure prior to his father's abdication, it has been suggested that his political neutrality and lack of controversy might have been the reason behind his selection as his father's successor, who during his reign had frequent confrontations with Prime Minister **Hun Sen** and his government. As king of Cambodia and with a flair for the performing arts, Sihamoni championed the revival of Cambodian cultural life after years of war and deprivation.

Recently, observers and close aides have suggested that, given Hun Sen's control over the royal family, Sihamoni has increasingly become a prisoner in his own palace. Sihamoni is constantly and closely surrounded by government officials both inside the palace and when he is out on rare visits to the countryside. Although the constitution bestows on him many rights and powers, Sihamoni has not exercised them in order to avoid antagonizing the government. The government has denied this and maintains that the king continues to play an important role through providing recommendations on government policies, and in particular on judicial, social, and religious issues.

see *also*: Hun Sen; Khmer Rouge; Sihanouk, King Norodom.

### **Sihanouk, King Norodom (Cambodia)**

Norodom Sihanouk was a dominating figure in the political life of Cambodia from the mid-1940s. As one of the great survivors of post-colonial politics in Southeast Asia, he drew his staying power from a tradition of divine monarchy, a unique flamboyant personality, and the failure of Cambodian regimes to transcend an endemic factionalism. He has to be regarded as a flawed personality, in part responsible for the tragedy that has befallen post-colonial Cambodia. His patriotism was always fused with

an intense personal vanity which affected his judgement and prompted erratic behaviour.

Prince Sihanouk was born on 31 October 1922 to parents drawn from both the senior and junior wings of the royal family and received his secondary education at a French lycée in Saigon. In April 1941, after the death of King Sisowath Monivong, the colonial authorities decided to revert to the Norodom branch of the royal family because they judged that the young Sihanouk would make a malleable monarch. Initially he proved to be an accommodating figure in dealing in turn with representatives of Vichy France, Imperial Japan, and Free France. That judgement was shown to be misplaced after the Pacific War, when King Sihanouk played the nationalist card to the political disadvantage not only of the French but of contending republican and social-revolutionary groupings. In June 1952 he assumed the office of prime minister, committing himself to achieving independence within three years. In February 1953 he embarked on a world tour in a successful attempt to embarrass the French into granting his political demands. He returned in triumph from a contrived internal exile in westerly Battambang Province to the capital, Phnom Penh, on 8 November 1953 to announce national independence. That independence was confirmed in 1954 by the **Geneva Agreements on Indochina**, which also imposed obligations on Cambodia to conduct internationally observed free elections. In March 1955, in order to escape the constraints of constitutional monarchy and to outmanoeuvre his political opponents, King Sihanouk abdicated his throne in favour of his father, Norodom Suramarit. He then set up a national front, **Sangkum Reastre Niyum** (Popular Socialist Community), which captured all seats in the National Assembly in elections in September 1955.

Prince Sihanouk then dominated Cambodian politics in a wilful and self-indulgent manner intolerant of any dissent until his overthrow in 1970. When his father died in 1960, Prince Sihanouk had himself created head of state in a monarchy without a monarch. He was overthrown in March 1970 by a coup which was justified by a failure to remove a Vietnamese communist presence from the eastern parts of the country.

Prince Sihanouk had been a pioneer of the foreign policy of non-alignment. He attended the **Asian–African Conference** at Bandung in Indonesia in April 1955 where his meeting with the People’s Republic of China’s prime minister, Zhou En-lai, served to convince him that non-alignment offered the best safeguard for Cambodia’s security against neighbouring historical antagonists, both of whom were allied with the United States. Prince Sihanouk went on to reject the gratuitous protection of the **Manila Pact** of 1954 and committed his country to a foreign policy described as neutrality. Initially, that policy coincided with conventional non-alignment, but with the growing success of communist insurgency in neighbouring South Vietnam, Prince Sihanouk revised the practice of neutrality to one of political accommodation to both North Vietnam and China. Toleration of Vietnamese communist use of Cambodian territory as an active sanctuary from which to prosecute their revolutionary war against the Saigon regime provided an opportunity for his political opponents to move against him.

Prince Sihanouk was in Moscow on 18 March 1970 when he was deposed by the incumbent government in Phnom Penh headed by General **Lon Nol**. He continued a pre-arranged journey to Beijing where he joined the Vietnamese communist prime minister, **Pham Van Dong**, to promote an opposition united front with a group of Cambodian insurgents whom Prince Sihanouk had dubbed the **Khmer Rouge**. In May 1970 he set up a government in exile with his new-found political partners and lent his name and authority to the cause of **Pol Pot**. With the victory of the Khmer Rouge in April 1975, he was reinstated as head of state but remained outside of Cambodia until the end of the year, except for a brief and disturbing visit in September. In Cambodia, Prince Sihanouk and his wife Monique lived under effective house arrest, while 6 of his 14 children and a number of his grandchildren perished at Khmer Rouge hands. In April 1976, with the promulgation of the constitution for a republican **Democratic Kampuchea**, he resigned as head of state. Coincident with Vietnam’s invasion of Cambodia in December 1978, Prince Sihanouk was flown to Beijing on a Chinese aircraft and from there travelled to New

York, where he denounced Vietnam’s intervention before the General Assembly of the UN. He then went into exile in North Korea, with whose late leader Kim Il Sung he had established a close rapport. A small resistance group loyal to him was set up among refugees along the border with Thailand and were organized into **FUNCINPEC** (the French acronym for the National United Front for an Independent, Neutral, Peaceful and Cooperative Cambodia). In June 1982 Prince Sihanouk was persuaded after much external pressure to become president of a so-called **Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea (CGDK)** comprising his Khmer Rouge tormentors and a non-communist resistance movement of republican disposition. During the course of the 1980s he was able to transform his initial figurehead position into one of renewed political importance as the Vietnamese were obliged to withdraw effective support from the government which they had implanted in Phnom Penh. Towards the end of the decade, he resigned his office and began bilateral but abortive negotiations with its prime minister, **Hun Sen**. The failure of an **International Conference on Cambodia** in Paris in 1989 led to a major political initiative under the aegis of the permanent members of the UN Security Council, who concluded a framework agreement on a peace settlement in August 1990. Prince Sihanouk was seen as central to its successful application as the head of a symbolic repository of sovereignty, the **Supreme National Council**, which would delegate administrative responsibility to the UN in an interim period before elections were conducted to decide the political future of the country. That settlement was endorsed by a second stage of the **International Conference on Cambodia** in Paris in October 1991 and in the following month Prince Sihanouk returned to Cambodia after an absence of almost 13 years to be reinstated as head of state.

The Cambodian peace settlement was based on fragile political assumptions about the contending parties’ commitment to national reconciliation. Although Prince Sihanouk was greeted on his return as a national saviour, all factions sought to exploit his personal standing. In failing health and lacking his former energy, he

retreated to China and North Korea in periodic bouts of despair as Cambodia seemed to lapse into anarchy. Nevertheless, he was reinstated as King of Cambodia on 24 September 1993 at the age of 70 and in poor health, 40 years after he abdicated the throne, by the coalition government of FUNCINPEC and the **Cambodian People's Party**. After his reinstatement as monarch, King Sihanouk returned to Beijing to receive treatment for prostate cancer. He reappeared in Phnom Penh in April 1994 and displayed some of his old political vigour in an attempt to effect an accommodation between the new coalition government and the Khmer Rouge, but to no avail. He went back to Beijing for more medical treatment in mid-May 1994 and also to demonstrate his continuing indispensability to stable government in Cambodia, pointing up the likely political vacuum that would be left with his departure from the scene. He returned to Cambodia at the beginning of 1995 without assuming an active political role. He stood above the growing rivalry between his son and Second Prime Minister Hun Sen and was publicly equivocal in response to the bloody coup in July 1997 which ousted Prince **Norodom Ranariddh** from senior political office. However, he did threaten to abdicate in an indication of the importance of his constitutional role to Hun Sen's consolidation of power. King Sihanouk went on to broker an agreement between Prince Ranariddh and Hun Sen initially by authorizing an amnesty for Prince Ranariddh, who had been sentenced to 35 years' imprisonment for arms trafficking and negotiating clandestinely with the Khmer Rouge. When his son was relegated to the ceremonial role of chairman of the National Assembly after the July 1998 election, King Sihanouk readily accommodated himself to his son's political displacement, which indicated the nature of the filial relationship and also a characteristic disposition to defer to superior power. King Sihanouk died on 15 October 2012 in Beijing at the age of 90.

see also: Asian-African Conference, Bandung 1955; Cambodian People's Party (CPP); Democratic Kampuchea; Democratic Kampuchea, Coalition Government of (CGDK) 1982-90; FUNCINPEC; Geneva Agreements on Indochina 1954; Hun Sen; International Conference on Cambodia, Paris 1989;

International Conference on Cambodia, Paris 1991; Khmer Rouge; Manila Pact 1954; Lon Nol; Pham Van Dong; Pol Pot; Ranariddh, Prince Norodom; *Sangkum Reastre Niyum*; Supreme National Council; United Nations: Cambodia 1991-3; UNTAC (United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia).

### Sin, Cardinal Jaime (Philippines)

Cardinal Jaime Sin, Archbishop of Manila, was head of the Roman Catholic Church in the Philippines from May 1976 to September 2003. He was born on 31 August 1928 in New Washington in Capiz Province on Panay Island in the central Philippines. Ordained in 1954, his early career was spent in the provincial ministry. He was surprised in January 1974 to be transferred from the archdiocese of Jaro to that of Manila. He achieved political prominence as an outspoken critic of the government of President **Ferdinand Marcos** and of the self-indulgence of his wife, **Imelda Marcos**. Long before the assassination of the opposition leader **Benigno Aquino** in August 1983, which marked a turning point in Filipino politics, Cardinal Sin had drawn public attention to growing poverty, corruption, and the gross violation of human rights. After Aquino's death, he articulated the moral outrage of the Filipino people and encouraged a public challenge to Marcos in the hope of promoting political reform.

Cardinal Sin was not a radical in politics and was never an enthusiast for liberation theology. His self-styled stance of 'critical collaboration' towards the Marcos administration indicated an evident ambivalence. That ambivalence arose from concern that exhortation to confrontation might unleash revolutionary forces to which the Church, as well as the state, might fall victim. He was influenced by the role which Buddhist monks had played in undermining the government of **Ngo Dinh Diem** in South Vietnam, and so assisting the ultimate seizure of power by the communists. Apprehension that the communists might secure advantage from Marcos's decaying political system moved him to persuade **Corazón Aquino**, the widow of Benigno, to stand for president against Marcos in the snap election of February 1986. When conspicuous fraud resulted in military revolt led by **Juan Ponce Enrile** and **Fidel Ramos**, Cardinal Sin

encouraged the mobilization and interposition of massive popular support, '**People Power**', which prevented Marcos from employing military force in order to cling on to power. He stood by Corazón Aquino on her elevation to high office but also made known his disappointment when her new government showed itself to be less than competent in addressing the fundamental economic and social ills of the Philippines. Cardinal Sin was lukewarm towards the election of Fidel Ramos as the first Protestant president of the Philippines in May 1992 and opposed his efforts to promote birth control. In 2001, Cardinal Sin reprised his 1986 role and took an active part in the mobilization against President **Joseph Estrada** that culminated in the **EDSA II** revolt. It was later revealed that he had done this against the exhortations of the Vatican to remain non-partisan. Jaime Sin died on 21 June 2005 at the age of 76.

see also: Aquino, Benigno; Aquino, Corazón; EDSA II; Enrile, Juan Ponce; Estrada, Joseph Ejercito; Marcos, Ferdinand; Marcos, Imelda; Ngo Dinh Diem; People Power; Ramos, Fidel.

### **Singapore Strait** (Indonesia/Malaysia/Singapore)

The Singapore Strait is a constricted and congested waterway situated south of the island of Singapore and the southeastern tip of peninsular Malaysia and north of Indonesia's Riau Islands. Its length is approximately 70 miles. The narrowest land width is 3.2 miles; the narrowest breadth of navigable waters is 1.8 miles. At its most westerly point, the Singapore Strait merges with the Malacca Strait. At its corresponding easterly point, the strait merges with the **South China Sea**. Together with the linked **Malacca Strait**, the Singapore Strait was subject to a controversial joint statement on 16 November 1971 by Indonesia and Malaysia which challenged the customary legal regime in the context of making provision for safety of navigation. Singapore, which was a party to the provision, registered its reservations to that challenge. In the event, the three coastal states worked out a scheme for traffic separation in the linked straits on 24 February 1977 which was accepted by the maritime powers within

the context of a new regime for straits used for international navigation. That regime was incorporated in the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea promulgated on 10 December 1982, which also recognized Indonesia's **Archipelago Declaration of 1957**.

The territorial sea boundary between Singapore and Indonesia was delimited in a treaty which was concluded on 25 May 1973. At its points of ingress and egress, the Singapore Strait is commanded by Indonesian and Malaysian territorial waters. A treaty concluded between Indonesia and Malaysia in July 1982 delimited the territorial sea boundary between the two countries, recognizing as a consequence the archipelagic status of the former. A dispute obtained between Malaysia and Singapore over the island of Pedra Branca (Singapore usage) or Pulau Batu Puteh (Malaysian usage) on which is situated the **Horsburgh Lighthouse**, which has been administered from Singapore since its construction in the mid-19th century. The island is bounded by Malaysian and Indonesian waters but lies close to the middle of the navigable channel at the eastern egress of the Singapore Strait. The dispute was settled in May 2008 by the International Court of Justice, which awarded the island (along with Horsburgh Lighthouse) to Singapore.

see also: Archipelago Declaration 1957; Horsburgh Lighthouse; Malacca Strait; South China Sea.

### **Singapore Summit (ASEAN) 1992** (Brunei/Indonesia/Malaysia/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand)

The fourth meeting of heads of government of **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** convened in Singapore on 27 and 28 January 1992. The Summit took place in the wake of the **International Conference on Cambodia** in Paris in October 1991, which agreed to a comprehensive political settlement of the Cambodian conflict. That conflict had engaged the corporate energies of ASEAN for more than a decade, enhancing the reputation of the Association as a diplomatic community. At issue at the Summit was the ability of ASEAN to demonstrate a renewal of its terms of cooperation, especially in economic matters. To that end, the six heads of government agreed to set up **AFTA**

(ASEAN Free Trade Area) using their established Common Effective Preferential Scheme as the main mechanism within a timeframe of 15 years beginning from 1 January 1993. A Malaysian initiative to establish an East Asian Economic Caucus exclusive of the United States and Australia failed to attract a consensus, with Indonesia opposed in particular. Adherence to ASEAN's **Treaty of Amity and Cooperation** by regional non-members was welcomed and a declaratory commitment to a regional **ZOPFAN (Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality)** was reaffirmed, but security cooperation was not advanced in any substance. It was agreed, however, that external dialogues in political and security matters should be intensified by using the vehicle of the ASEAN post-ministerial conferences, which was undertaken from July 1992 in Manila. The heads of government agreed to meet formally every three years with informal meetings in between, in a significant change from past practice. An important symbolic innovation was the decision to redesignate the secretary-general of the ASEAN Secretariat as the secretary-general of ASEAN with an enlarged mandate to initiate, advise, coordinate, and implement ASEAN activities. *see also:* AFTA (Association of Southeast Nations Free Trade Area) 1993–; ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; International Conference on Cambodia, Paris 1991; Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (ASEAN) 1976; ZOPFAN (Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality) 1971.

### **Singapore Summit (ASEAN) 2007**

(Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/Laos/Malaysia/Myanmar/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand/Vietnam)

The 13th meeting of heads of government of **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** convened in Singapore from 18 to 22 November 2007 on the occasion of ASEAN's 40th anniversary. Foremost of the achievements at the Summit was the signing of the **ASEAN Charter**, a historic agreement that would provide a legal and institutional framework for ASEAN as it committed itself to further strengthening community-building in the region. The Charter was drafted by a High Level Task Force

(HLTF) consisting of senior government officials from each member state which had been established at the previous summit in Cebu. The Charter would be declared to have come into effect on the 30th day after it had been ratified in all member states and the tenth instrument of ratification deposited with the secretary-general of ASEAN. Under the Charter, ASEAN would acquire a legal personality distinct from that of its member states. Foreign ministers would form an ASEAN Coordinating Council (ACC) with the responsibility to prepare for meetings and implement decisions. The ASEAN Charter also provides for the convening of ASEAN summits twice a year instead of once a year. Provisions were also included for the establishment of an ASEAN human rights body.

Notwithstanding the monumental significance of the Charter's signing, the summit itself was overshadowed by Myanmar's bloody suppression of demonstrations led by Buddhist monks during the **Saffron Revolution** just two months earlier. The decision to go ahead with the signing of the Charter led to criticisms, and questions were raised over the credibility of the document and, in particular, ASEAN's professed objectives to strengthen democratic accountability and the protection of human rights. While a collective decision was made to issue a strong statement condemning the violent clampdown in Myanmar, ASEAN was compelled to cancel a scheduled briefing by the UN envoy to Myanmar, Ibrahim Gambari, after Myanmar protested.

*see also:* ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; ASEAN Charter (Charter of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations); Saffron Revolution 2007.

### **Singapore Summit (ASEAN) April**

**2018** (Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/Laos/Malaysia/Myanmar/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand/Vietnam)

Heads of governments of **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** assembled in Singapore in April 2018 in pursuit of the theme 'Resilience and Innovation', conceptualized by the Singapore Chair to provide a basis for the pursuit of greater regional unity in the face of growing uncertainty in the geopolitical landscape.

The 32nd ASEAN Summit saw extensive discussions on the impact of the brewing Sino-US trade war on the region, as well as the familiar issues of denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and the disputes in the **South China Sea**, took place at the heads of government retreat. Discussions on the South China Sea included expressions of concern on reclamation undertaken on some features by claimant states, referring thence to activities that had been undertaken by China, Vietnam, and Malaysia. Calls for also made for non-militarization, in veiled reference to Chinese efforts to build fortifications on some reclaimed features. Some attention was also given to the situation in Rakhine State in Myanmar, and regional leaders encouraged their colleagues in Yangon to continue with the implementation of recommendations contained in the final report of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State. The Summit also expressed support for ongoing humanitarian efforts and plans for safe return of **Rohingya** refugees to Myanmar. Leaders further reaffirmed their commitment to an open global multilateral trade system and shared aspirations for the completion of the **Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership**.

In accord with its standing as the most technologically advanced economy in Southeast Asia, a key accomplishment under Singapore's chairmanship was the creation of the ASEAN Smart Cities Network. The effort culminated in the creation of a network encompassing 26 'pilot cities' across all ten member states. The network is envisaged to enhance connectivity in the search for more opportunities for innovative and sustainable development in the domain of the digital economy.

see also: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967-; Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership; Rohingya; South China Sea.

### **Singapore Summit (ASEAN) November 2018** (Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/Laos/Malaysia/Myanmar/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand/Vietnam)

Against the backdrop of growing concern that the intensification of Sino-US rivalry was exerting a heavy strain on the global international

order, Singapore hosted the 33rd ASEAN Summit in November 2018. Several other meetings took place alongside the summit, namely ASEAN meetings with its dialogue partners, as well as the **East Asia Summit**.

Discernible progress was made on the matter of the disputes in the **South China Sea**. After agreement was reached on a single text for negotiation on the Code of Conduct at the ASEAN Minister's Meeting in August 2018, tensions were further eased as China offered a timeframe of three years for negotiations on the Code of Conduct to be concluded. ASEAN responded by embracing the timeline. While welcomed, an agreed timeframe barely papered over the reality that competing states still sought to legitimize their claims to sovereignty through different legal and extra-legal means, and also the fact that agreement on the scope of geographical and legal coverage of the Code of Conduct remained elusive. This served as a reminder of how difficult the process has been since the first expression of intent to conclude a Code of Conduct articulated in 2002 at the signing of the **Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea**.

In addition to discussions on the South China Sea, ASEAN leaders also expressed support for efforts towards the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and extended the offer of assistance to Myanmar on the humanitarian crisis in Rakhine State. In response, Myanmar invited the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management to assist in the effort to repatriate Rohingya refugees. On **Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership** discussions, commitments were made to complete negotiations in 2019. China seized the opportunity to position itself as a staunch advocate of multilateralism and regional free trade amidst the gloomy clouds of protectionism cast by the United States under President Donald Trump. Among other achievements in the accompanying events, the ASEAN-China Summit witnessed agreement to strengthen efforts to meet a target of US\$1 trillion in trade volume and US\$150 billion in investment by 2020. ASEAN and China also announced a roadmap titled ASEAN-China Strategic Partnership Vision 2030.



Handing over the chairmanship of ASEAN to the Thai prime minister, **Prayuth Chan-ocha**, **Lee Hsien Loong** articulated three targets that ASEAN should continue to aspire to. First, deeper economic integration; second, strengthening unity among ASEAN states in the wake of great power rivalry; and third, enhanced efforts to develop the skillsets of the population of ASEAN in preparation for the digital economy. *see also*: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (ASEAN) 2002; East Asia Summit 2005–; Lee Hsien Loong; Prayuth Chan-ocha; Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership; South China Sea.

### **Sipadan–Ligitan** (Indonesia/Malaysia)

Sipadan is located in the Celebes Sea parallel to the eastern boundary between Malaysian Sabah and Indonesian Kalimantan. Together with the nearby reef of Ligitan, both islands were the subject of competing claims between Malaysia and Indonesia. Both based their respective claims on colonial agreements and documents, including an Anglo–Dutch boundary convention of 1891. The issue of jurisdiction arose when both states extended their territorial seas from 3 to 12 nautical miles. Malaysia’s occupation dates from the formation of the Federation in 1963, when its troops were deployed to cope with Indonesia’s **Confrontation**. In the early 1980s Indonesian patrol vessels were deployed to investigate reports of occupation by Malaysian troops, allegedly in violation of an understanding to avoid unilateral action in advance of negotiations. Indonesia has challenged Malaysia’s occupation through recurrent acts of military display and in negotiations between heads of governments and officials. In September 1994, Indonesia rejected Malaysia’s proposal that the dispute be referred to third-party arbitration, but relented when their heads of government met again in October 1996. In May 1997, senior officials from both states concluded a draft agreement on submitting their contending claims to the International Court of Justice (ICJ), but Malaysia insisted on administering the islands until a judicial decision

was forthcoming. At the end of April 2000, 21 people, including 10 foreign tourists, were abducted from Sipadan, where Malaysia had built a diving resort, by armed Muslim insurgents from the Philippines. On 17 December 2002, the ICJ ruled by 16 votes in favour of recognizing Malaysian sovereignty over Sipadan and Ligitan. While the ruling has periodically drawn a backlash from the Indonesian public, Jakarta has accepted the ICJ decision. *see also*: Confrontation.

### **Sisón, José María** (Philippines)

José María Sisón provided the intellectual vision in the reconstitution of the Communist Party of the Philippines which took place during a so-called ‘Congress of Re-establishment’ in Pangasinan Province between 26 December 1968 and 7 January 1969. He was responsible for drafting the new party’s constitution, which acknowledged the supreme guidance of Mao Tse Tung, and also assumed the post of chairman. Sisón took the name Amado Guerrero (Beloved Warrior). In 1970, under that name, he wrote *Philippine Society and Revolution*, which served as the theoretical text for the party.

Sisón was born on 8 February 1939 into a middle-income family in Ilocos Sur Province. He was educated at the University of the Philippines and became a leading activist in student politics as well as a member of the Communist Party. He began his career on the staff of the Manila Lyceum School of Journalism in 1954, where he helped to form the *Kabataan Makabayan* (KM: Patriotic Youth), a stridently anti-American nationalist movement. Sisón was expelled from the Communist Party in April 1967 because of his personal assertiveness and rejection of discipline. He then established an alternative politburo with inspiration from China’s Cultural Revolution, which led on to his initiative for an alternative party. His small group of student radicals joined up with Bernabe Buscayno, who provided the leadership for the military wing of the party which was established on 29 March 1969 as the **New People’s Army**. Sisón was captured by security forces in November 1977. He remained in prison until after the fall of President **Ferdinand Marcos**, when he was

released in March 1986 by the new government of President **Corazón Aquino**. Sisón then established the People's Party to exploit so-called democratic space but, with his colleagues, misjudged the popular mood and failed to secure congressional representation in elections in May. He left the Philippines at the end of 1987 to take up residence in the Netherlands, where he was granted political asylum and permitted to work for the **National Democratic Front (NDF)**, which had long maintained its European office in Utrecht. Sisón continued to assert a leadership role in exile, pressing for a continuation of the initially successful strategy of peasant-based guerrilla war. In October 1988 a warrant was issued in the Philippines for Sisón's arrest after it had become known that he had resumed in exile the leadership of the Communist Party. He was involved in negotiations in Utrecht with representatives of the government in Manila in September 1992, but lost his role with a further split within the Communist Party which repudiated his leadership.

As a result of lobbying by the Philippines government, Sisón was blacklisted as a terrorist by the US and Netherlands governments, and then by the Council of Europe in 2002. Nevertheless, a decision to freeze his assets in Europe was reversed by the European Union General Court. In August 2007, Sisón was arrested by the International Crime Investigation Team of the Netherlands National Crime Investigation Department and detained for two weeks. He was charged along with other rebel leaders with three counts of murder in the Philippines – of Congressman Rodolfo in 2001 and two police officials following a rebel raid on a police station in 2002. Given that there was no extradition request, the trial was held in the Netherlands, where Sisón entered a plea of not guilty. The validity of the Netherlands' jurisdiction over the cases was questionable, given the fact that they had already been dismissed in July that year by the Philippine Supreme Court. On 13 September 2007 Sisón was released from jail for reasons of insufficient evidence. Several subsequent attempts by prosecutors to appeal the decision were denied. Sisón is currently the chief political consultant of NDF. The

administration of **Rodrigo Duterte** classified Sisón and his wife, Julieta, terrorists in 2021.

see also: Aquino, Corazón; Duterte, Rodrigo; Marcos, Ferdinand; National Democratic Front; New People's Army.

### **Sjahrir, Sutan** (Indonesia)

Sutan Sjahrir was the first prime minister of the revolutionary Republic of Indonesia, assuming office in November 1945. He was born in west Sumatra on 5 March 1909, and after showing great promise at secondary school, he went to the Netherlands to study law in Leiden. He returned to the Netherlands East Indies in 1931 at the suggestion of his more senior fellow-student **Mohammad Hatta** to help in organizing a new nationalist party, which he sought to infuse with socialist convictions. He was arrested in 1934 and sent into internal exile, first to New Guinea and then to Banda. During the Japanese occupation, he refused to collaborate and organized a small resistance movement whose members formed the core of the post-war Indonesian Socialist Party which he led. His anti-Japanese credentials were the key to his appointment as prime minister because of **Sukarno's** taint of collaboration in the eyes of the Dutch and the Western powers. Sjahrir was an advocate of negotiations as the way to attain independence, which became a controversial strategy as the Dutch sought to re-establish their colonial dominion by force. He was displaced in June 1947 and then pleaded Indonesia's case before the United Nations but never again held public office. After independence, he became a marginal political figure despite a following of like-minded and gifted young people who came under the spell of his intelligence and personality. He led the Socialist Party, but it went into decline after securing only 2 per cent of the vote in the first national elections in 1955. Sjahrir was arrested in 1962 on suspicion of involvement in regional rebellion, but when his health deteriorated in 1965, he was permitted to leave the country for medical attention in Switzerland, where he died in April 1966. His political vision was set out in a pamphlet entitled 'Our Struggle' published in October 1945.

see also: Guided Democracy; Hatta, Mohammad; Sukarno.

**Somchai Wongsawat** (Thailand)

Born in Nakhon Si Thammarat in 1947, Somchai Wongsawat was prime minister of Thailand for the brief but turbulent period from September to December 2008. A distinguished civil servant, Somchai entered politics in 2007 when he joined the **People's Power Party** (PPP) as deputy leader during the height of popular protests by the **People's Alliance for Democracy** (PAD) against the party, which was seen as a vestige of the **Thaksin Shinawatra** government through which he continued to assert influence in national affairs. Somchai's short-lived government continued the populist policies that defined the terms of Thaksin and his immediate successor, **Samak Sundaravej**, whom Somchai replaced in September 2008 after a brief period as acting prime minister. In response, PAD escalated their campaign against PPP. In October 2008 PAD blockaded Parliament in an attempt to prevent Somchai from presenting the new government's policy statement. The ensuing crackdown by the police led to two deaths and numerous injuries. PAD later also took over Bangkok's airports in an attempt to block Somchai's return from an overseas trip. In December that year, Somchai and his government were forced to step down after PPP was found guilty of electoral fraud. He was later also charged with abuse of power over the crackdown on demonstrators in 2008, but the charges were dismissed in 2017.

Seen as a gentle and soft-spoken leader whose personal demeanour might have been able to heal the rift between the government he led and PAD, Somchai Wongsawat was never able to shake off the baggage of his personal and political ties with Thaksin, his brother-in-law.

*see also:* People's Alliance for Democracy; People's Power Party; Samak Sundaravej; Thaksin Shinawatra.

**Son Sann** (Cambodia)

Son Sann was the leader of the republican-inclined **Khmer People's National Liberation Front** (KPNLF) which was established in October 1979 in opposition to the **Khmer Rouge** and the incumbent People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK). He was born on 5 October 1911

in Phnom Penh to a family originating from southern Vietnam. Son Sann was educated in France, where he graduated in 1933 from the School for Advanced Commercial Studies. On his return to Cambodia, he served as deputy governor of the provinces of Battambang and Prey Veng in the French administration. After the Pacific War, Son Sann held a series of senior government offices beginning with finance minister. In 1954, as foreign minister, he represented Cambodia at the conference leading to the **Geneva Agreements on Indochina**. He became the first governor of Cambodia's National Bank in 1955, holding that position until 1968 and serving concurrently as prime minister during 1967–8. He was never in tune politically with Prince **Norodom Sihanouk**, but after Sihanouk's overthrow in 1970, Son Sann left Cambodia to take up residence in Paris, where he was living when the Khmer Rouge seized power in 1975. As leader of KPNLF, he took his movement in June 1982 into the **Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea** (CGDK), in which he held the office of prime minister. Poor military performance by KPNLF led to dissension within its ranks; but Son Sann, who attracted respect for his personal probity, held on to its political leadership. He took a hard line towards the incumbent government in Phnom Penh and was a party to the negotiations which culminated in a political settlement at the **International Conference on Cambodia** in Paris in October 1991. He returned to Cambodia in December 1991 and then transformed KPNLF into the Buddhist Liberal Democratic Party for the elections in May 1993 under UN auspices. His party won only 10 out of the 120 seats in the Constituent Assembly. Son Sann was elected its chairman and supervised its role in drafting a new constitution, which was promulgated in September. After the reestablishment of the constitutional monarchy, Son Sann retired from public life, giving up his chair of the National Assembly to **Chea Sim**. He lost his position as party president to the minister of information, Ieng Mouly, in July 1995. He subsequently set up his own Son Sann Party which contested elections in July 1998 without success. Following this, he took the Son Sann Party into alliance with **FUNCINPEC**. Son Sann died

from heart failure in Paris in December 2000 at the age of 89.

see also: Chea Sim; Democratic Kampuchea, Coalition Government of (CGDK) 1982–90; FUNCINPEC; Geneva Agreements on Indochina 1954; International Conference on Cambodia, Paris 1991; Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF); Khmer Rouge; Sihanouk, King Norodom.

### Son Sen (Cambodia)

Son Sen assumed the post of supreme commander of the insurgent national army of **Democratic Kampuchea** on the ostensible retirement of **Pol Pot** in August 1985. He was removed from that position sometime after the Paris peace agreements following the **International Conference on Cambodia** in October 1991 because of contention among the **Khmer Rouge** leadership over complying with its provisions; but he was reported as having been reinstated to senior command in April 1994. Son Sen was born in 1930 in southern Vietnam among the settled Cambodian minority. He was educated in Phnom Penh and then in the 1950s in Paris, where he became a member of a Marxist group of Cambodian students at whose centre was Saloth Sar (Pol Pot). On his return to Cambodia, he became director of studies at the National Teaching Institute as well as a leading member of the reconstituted Communist Party of Cambodia. He fled from the capital in 1963 to escape from Prince **Norodom Sihanouk's** secret police and is believed to have spent time in Hanoi. By 1971 he had become chief of staff of the Cambodian People's National Liberation Armed Forces engaged in challenging the government in Phnom Penh, headed by **Lon Nol**. After the Khmer Rouge seized power in April 1975, he became a deputy prime minister and minister of defence until the Vietnamese invasion at the end of 1978. He continued in that role in directing the military challenge of the ousted Khmer Rouge against the Vietnamese occupation and the government established in Phnom Penh. He was a party to the political machinery set up to implement the political settlement for Cambodia and was a Khmer Rouge member of the **Supreme National Council** in Phnom Penh until April 1993, when its delegation withdrew

in protest at the forthcoming elections. At one time regarded as the fourth-ranking member of the Khmer Rouge hierarchy, he is believed to have engaged in factional rivalry with Pol Pot and to have been implicated in the murder of a British university teacher, Malcolm Caldwell, in Phnom Penh in December 1978. He was also in overall charge of the infamous **Tuol Sleng** interrogation centre. Son Sen was murdered on 10 June 1997, together with his wife and his nine children, on the instructions of Pol Pot after he had refused to attend a meeting at which the Khmer Rouge leader would have insisted on a continuation of armed struggle and on opposing a compromise deal with the government in Phnom Penh.

see also: Democratic Kampuchea; International Conference on Cambodia, Paris 1991; Khmer Rouge; Lon Nol; Pol Pot; Sihanouk, King Norodom; Supreme National Council; Tuol Sleng.

### Sondhi Limthongkul (Thailand)

Sondhi Limthongkul is a media mogul cum politician and was leader of the **People's Alliance for Democracy** (PAD). Sondhi was born in Bangkok on 7 November 1947 to Chinese immigrant parents. He earned a bachelor's degree in history in 1969 from the University of California, Los Angeles, where he was also a reporter on the student newspaper, and completed an MA at Utah State University in 1972. He returned to Thailand and worked as a reporter and editor for several publications, setting up his own company in 1979. In 1982, Sondhi established *Phoojakarn* (*The Manager*), a business monthly that would eventually become a weekly, and later *Phoojakarn Rai Wan* (*Manager Daily*), a daily newspaper which would become his personal mouthpiece. Eventually, he set up the Manager Group, a publishing house and holding company for his numerous media outlets. Sondhi also branched into other markets, including information technology and satellite television through a complex network of holding companies. His media outlets played a significant role in opposing military rule during the crackdown on pro-democracy protestors during May 1992.

The election of **Thaksin Shinawatra** in 2001 put several of Sondhi's associates in

advantageous positions that allowed him to emerge from the brink of bankruptcy after his business empire unravelled during the 1997–8 **Asian Financial Crisis**, and Sonthi became a vocal supporter of Thaksin. This relationship soured in 2004 when, among other things, Sonthi's banker was forced out of a senior position at a major Thai bank in 2004 over problem loans, including Sonthi's. Sonthi began criticizing the Thaksin government through his media outlets in 2005. The government retaliated by cancelling Sonthi's weekly television show, but he switched to broadcasting over the internet, and his popularity grew. Sonthi's criticism of Thaksin increasingly took on royalist overtones. A series of outdoor political talk shows hosted by Sonthi together with his broadcasts drew tens of thousands of protestors and became the focus for the formation of the People's Alliance for Democracy, co-organized by Sonthi and aimed at removing the Thaksin government. A massive protest was called for on 20 September 2006, but was called off due to the coup which ousted the Thaksin government and forced the prime minister into exile the day before. PAD disbanded with Sonthi publicly supporting the coup and continuing his criticism of Thaksin. When the **People's Power Party** (PPP) formed a government after a strong election win in December 2007, PAD reformed in protest against what it considered a Thaksin proxy government. Sonthi was again at the forefront of the movement, demanding the resignations of successive prime ministers **Samak Sundaravej** and **Somchai Wongsawat**. He devoted much media time to the protests and was again a frequent speaker at demonstrations. In 2008, Sonthi together with other leaders led PAD supporters to occupy Government House for several months and later seize Suvarnabhumi International Airport. The protests ended with the Constitutional Court's dissolution of PPP. On 17 April 2009, Sonthi narrowly avoided serious injury in an assassination attempt. It was never made public who carried out the attack. In June 2009, the New Politics Party was created as the political party of PAD, with Sonthi elected leader in October 2009. In 2011, infighting over the direction of the party resulted in Sonthi leaving the party and

its effective dissolution. Following his failed foray into party politics, Sonthi faced a number of legal convictions. In 2012 he was charged and convicted of falsifying loan documents and sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment. His prison sentence began only in 2016 after a lengthy appeals process. During his incarceration, he was also charged with *lèse majesté* and initially sentenced to two years' imprisonment, although the sentence was subsequently overturned. He was later also charged and convicted of falsifying loan documents in 2014 and sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment. Three years into his sentence, he received a royal pardon for good behaviour and was released.

see also: Asian Financial Crisis 1997–8; People's Alliance for Democracy; People's Power Party; Samak Sundaravej; Somchai Wongsawat; Thaksin Shinawatra.

### **Sonthi Boonyaratglin, General** (Thailand)

A former commander-in-chief of the Royal Thai Army, Sonthi Boonyaratglin was a major figure behind the 2006 *coup d'état* and subsequently headed the ruling Council for National Security. Sonthi was born in the northeast Ubon Ratchathani Province on 2 October 1946. He graduated from the Armed Forces Academies Preparatory School with Class 6 and went on to Chulachomkhalao Royal Military Academy, graduating in 1969 with Class 17. Sonthi served in the infantry and later the Special Forces, eventually commanding the Special Warfare Command. In August 2004, Sonthi was appointed deputy army commander, and he was promoted to commander on October 2005. Sonthi's appointment made him the first Muslim army commander-in-chief. While the appointment was unexpected, he did have powerful backers in the Privy Council, including former general and privy councillor **Surayud Chulanont** and Privy Council president and former prime minister **Prem Tinsulanonda**.

During his time as commander-in-chief, the army became increasingly involved in political disputes in Bangkok. At the time, Sonthi appeared to be attempting to keep the army above politics and repeatedly reassured the

public that the army would not interfere in the crisis between Prime Minister **Thaksin Shinawatra** and the political opposition. However on 19 September 2006, Sonthi led other military leaders in carrying out a successful coup against Thaksin's government. After dissolving the cabinet, Parliament, and the Constitutional Court, he gave himself powers of prime minister, established the ruling Council for Democratic Reform, later changed to the Council for National Security, and declared that he would hand over power in two weeks. On the second day of the coup, he received a formal mandate from King **Bhumibol Adulyadej**. Sonthi purged senior military ranks of Thaksin loyalists, oversaw the drafting of a new constitution, and, together with the council, worked behind the scenes during the caretaker government of Surayud Chulanont. On 30 September 2007, Sonthi resigned his commission, handing over command of the army to General **Anupong Paochinda**. He also resigned as chairman of the Council for National Security on 1 October 2007, accepting a post as deputy prime minister for security in Surayud's government.

As army commander, Sonthi also presided over counterinsurgency operations in the south. His appointment came with the extension of an olive branch offer of dialogue with the insurgents, although it was never clear who were the leaders of the **Southern Provinces Insurgency**. This attitude hardened after the coup, however, when Sonthi increased troop deployments to the south and ordered large cordon and search operations that had some impact on reducing the level of violence. While Sonthi never assumed high office after launching the 2006 coup, he has been supportive of the appointment of **Prayuth Chan-ocha** as prime minister both after the 2014 coup and after the 2019 election.

see also: Anupong Paochinda, General; Bhumibol Adulyadej, King; Insurgency, Southern Provinces; Prayuth Chan-ocha, General; Prem Tinsulanonda, General; Surayud Chulanont, General; Thaksin Shinawatra.

### **Souphanouvong, Prince** (Laos)

Prince Souphanouvong was instrumental in helping to found the revolutionary movement in Laos, which achieved political victory under

Vietnamese patronage. He was born on 13 July 1909, the youngest of the 20 sons of Prince Boun Khong. His best-known half-brother was Prince **Souvanna Phouma**. Prince Souphanouvong was educated at a school in Hanoi and went on to study engineering in France, where he became politically active during the period of the Popular Front. He returned to Indochina in 1937 and entered the colonial public works service. Posted to southern Vietnam, he married the daughter of a hotel owner. He drew on his Vietnamese connections in September 1945 when he travelled from Laos to the headquarters of **Ho Chi Minh** to seek an alliance against the French. Ho sent him back with a military escort with which Prince Souphanouvong launched an anti-French resistance movement. This movement was driven into exile in Thailand in 1946. When the movement's more conservative members came to terms with France in 1949, Prince Souphanouvong joined the **Viet Minh** in the jungles of Vietnam, beginning a close association with the revolutionary leaders, **Kaysone Phomvihane** and **Nouhak Phoumsavan**. In August 1950 he was a party to establishing the **Pathet Lao** (Lao Nation) revolutionary movement. Although denied representation at the **Geneva Agreements on Indochina** in 1954, a Vietnamese vice-minister of defence signed the ceasefire agreement for Laos on their specific behalf with a French counterpart.

Prince Souphanouvong was a founding member of the **Lao People's Revolutionary Party** (LPRP) in 1955 and subsequently played an important negotiating role on behalf of the *Pathet Lao*, participating in a short-lived coalition government after a further conference resulting in the **Geneva Agreements on Laos** in 1961–2. That conference failed to end the civil war, which was eventually concluded to *Pathet Lao's* advantage in 1975 after the end of the **Vietnam War**. Possibly because of his royal origins, Prince Souphanouvong was never a truly commanding figure in the ruling LPRP. He occupied senior positions, nonetheless, including membership of the Politburo. When the People's Democratic Republic of Laos was established in December 1975, he became its first president until obliged to give up on grounds of age and ill health in 1986. He did

not formally relinquish his office and Politburo position until the fifth national congress of the ruling party in March 1991. He died on 9 January 1995 aged 86.

see also: Geneva Agreements on Indochina 1954; Geneva Agreements on Laos 1962; Ho Chi Minh; Kaysone Phomvihane; Lao People's Revolutionary Party; Nounhak Phoumsavan; *Pathet Lao*; Souvanna Phouma, Prince; Viet Minh; Vietnam War.

### South China Sea (Brunei/Indonesia/Malaysia/Philippines/Vietnam)

The South China Sea has a semi-enclosed Mediterranean quality. Its area of some 648,000 square miles is bounded by China, Vietnam, the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Brunei. The sea provides important maritime communication routes between the Indian and Pacific Oceans, most notably for energy supply from the Gulf of Arabia to Japan's home islands. Within the South China Sea, there are four main island groups, none of which is the natural geographic extension of any coastal state's continental shelf. These groups, in different ways, are the object of serious contention between coastal states. The People's Republic of China is in control of the northerly Paracel Islands, which are contested by Vietnam and Taiwan. At issue between China and Taiwan is the question of governmental legitimacy, not sovereignty over specific territories. Control of the northerly Pratas Islands by Taiwan is challenged by China only as part of its general challenge to the government in Taipei. The Macclesfield Bank is permanently submerged, and the issue of control has not yet arisen. Greatest contention arises over the Spratly Islands comprising many reefs, shoals, and sandbanks which spread out from the very centre of the sea. Jurisdiction is contested between China, Taiwan, Vietnam, Malaysia, and the Philippines, with Brunei concerned only with maritime space arising from its continental shelf.

The main attraction is the prospect of discovering and exploiting extensive reserves of oil and natural gas and fishing waters, although strategic considerations may influence governments. In July 1992 the foreign ministers of ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian

Nations), at their annual meeting in Manila, issued a Declaration on the South China Sea which called on contending claimants to resolve issues of sovereignty without resort to force. The claim by China, exemplified in its nine-dash line map released in 2009, causes the greatest concern within Southeast Asia because of the transformation of the strategic environment which would follow from the projection of its jurisdiction some 1,800 kilometres from its mainland into the maritime heart of the region. The nine-dash line map also includes Indonesia's **Natuna Islands** within its boundary. In 1995, Chinese forces occupied Mischief Reef, some 135 miles to the west of the Philippine island of Palawan. In 1990, Indonesia coordinated an informal Workshop on Managing Potential Conflicts in the South China Sea with financial support from Canada, but the results were negligible.

In November 2002, ASEAN and China made some headway in South China Sea diplomacy with the signing of the **Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC)**. The DOC reaffirmed commitment to universally recognized principles of international law, freedom of navigation and overflight in the South China Sea, and peaceful settlement of jurisdictional disputes. It took another two years for agreement to be reached on the Terms of Reference for the ASEAN-China Joint Working Group tasked to implement the DOC. In August 2005, a proposal that consultations on the DOC be undertaken among ASEAN states prior to discussions with China was rejected by Beijing on grounds that relevant parties should resolve their respective territorial disputes bilaterally, a position the Chinese had always insisted on. This resulted in a deadlock that lasted for six years until July 2011, when ASEAN agreed to drop its insistence on preliminary consultations and the Guidelines to implement the DOC were adopted. Discussions with Chinese senior officials on the implementation of the Guidelines commenced, and during a meeting held in Beijing in January 2012, agreement was reached to establish four expert committees on maritime scientific research, environmental protection, search and rescue, and transnational crime.

The agreement on the Guidelines led to the revival of the longstanding proposal by the Philippines for a legally binding Code of Conduct (COC) that was included in the 2002 DOC. The protracted COC discussions reached a landmark in August 2018 when ASEAN foreign ministers and their Chinese counterpart announced that they had reached agreement on a single draft negotiating text for the COC. Nevertheless, the fact that the desire for a legally binding COC is not shared enthusiastically by all ASEAN members renders the task more trying. Another particularly intractable feature of the discussion is the long shadow that Sino-US rivalry has cast over the South China Sea, with persistent American freedom of navigation operations a source of annoyance for Beijing. Meanwhile, ASEAN struggles to demonstrate unity on the South China Sea disputes were laid bare in July 2012 at the ASEAN Minister's Meeting when Chinese ally and ASEAN chair Cambodia blocked attempts to raise the issue of South China Sea tensions. The result was the embarrassment of ASEAN's inability to release a joint communiqué for the first time in its history.

Marginal progress on the diplomatic front notwithstanding, China has continued to press its claims in the South China Sea assertively. In 2005, Chinese vessels opened fire on two Vietnamese fishing boats, killing nine people, and detained another ship with eight passengers on Hainan island. In 2009, Chinese fishing vessels harassed a US surveillance ship, purportedly for entering China's Exclusive Economic Zone. In February that year a Chinese vessel fired warning shots at Philippine fishing boats near Jackson Atoll, while in May three Chinese naval ships cut the cables of a Vietnamese oil and gas exploration vessel 120 kilometres off the coast of Vietnam. In April 2012, an attempt by Philippine vessels to arrest Chinese fishermen near an outcrop of **Scarborough Shoal** for allegedly fishing government-protected marine species within the Philippines' 200-nautical-mile limit was blocked by Chinese surveillance boats, leading to a tense standoff which lasted several months. By July China erected barriers to the entrance of Scarborough Shoal to ward off Filipino vessels. Four Chinese navy vessels

sailed to James Shoal, a submerged reef in the South China Sea within 50 miles of the Malaysian coast, in May 2013. This is the farthest down the South China Sea that the Chinese navy has ventured and prompted expressions of concern from a Malaysian government that had hitherto been restrained in its responses to Chinese claims.

In 2014, Chinese vessels blocked efforts by the Philippine navy to resupply a small military outpost in Second Thomas Shoal. Meanwhile, national laws were passed in Vietnam and the Philippines that demarcated maritime borders. This move, and frustration at ASEAN's inability to temper Chinese adventurism, led Manila to take its case against China to the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) focusing on the legality of the latter's 'nine-dash line' claim. Subsequently, the **Arbitral Tribunal Award** of the PCA in 2016 ruled in favour of the Philippines by not only rejecting the Chinese claim of historical rights but also ruling that Beijing had 'violated the Philippines' sovereign rights in its exclusive economic zone' with its artificial islands, of which they had built seven since 2013 by dredging. The impact of the legal victory was obviated by President **Rodrigo Duterte** who downplayed it as he prioritized enhancing engagement with China.

see also: *Arbitral Tribunal Award 2016*; ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; *Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (ASEAN) 2002*; *Declaration on the South China Sea (ASEAN) 1992*; Duterte, Rodrigo; Natuna Islands; Scarborough Shoal Dispute.

### Southeast Asia Command 1943–6

The Southeast Asia Command was the title of the military authority responsible for dispossessing Japan of territorial gains acquired during the Pacific War. After the end of hostilities in 1945, that title was adopted into conventional usage to describe the region situated to the east of the Indian sub-continent and south of China. The decision to establish the Command was taken at a conference in Quebec City in August 1943, attended by the US president, Franklin Roosevelt, and the British prime minister, Winston



Churchill, which appointed Vice-Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten as Supreme Allied Commander. Based in Kandy in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), its initial geographic responsibilities were limited to Burma, Thailand, and Malaya, including Singapore and the island of Sumatra.

In July 1945, at the Potsdam Conference in Germany attended by Marshal Stalin, President Truman, and Prime Minister Churchill and his successor Clement Attlee, the decision was taken to transfer extensive geographic responsibilities from the South-West Pacific Command under General Douglas MacArthur so that it could devote itself to an assault on Japan's home islands. In consequence, the Southeast Asia Command was enlarged to include the whole of the Netherlands East Indies (except West Timor), northern Borneo, and Indochina north of the 16th parallel of latitude. With the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, its prime post-war tasks were to recover Allied prisoners of war and civilian internees and to take the surrender of Japanese forces. The Command's headquarters were transferred to Singapore in November 1945. British/Indian troops played a role in restoring French authority in southern Vietnam and came into armed conflict with Indonesian nationalists on the island of Java in the **Battle of Surabaya**. After a preliminary accord between Dutch and Indonesian representatives over the political future of the Indies in mid-November 1946, all British/Indian troops were withdrawn at the end of the month coincident with the Command being disbanded. *see also*: Surabaya, Battle of, 1945.

### **Souvanna Phouma, Prince** (Laos)

Prince Souvanna Phouma was prime minister of Laos on several occasions between 1950 and 1975 when the communists assumed power. He was a man of liberal values who stood for a time as a symbol of national reconciliation among warring factions. His ability to fulfil that role depended in part on his personal relationship with his half-brother, Prince **Souphanouvong**, the nominal head of the pro-communist **Pathet Lao** (Lao Nation) movement and for some years president of the People's Democratic Republic established in 1975. The obstacle which he could never overcome was that the main antagonists

in Laos were never really interested in political compromise.

Souvanna Phouma was born on 7 October 1901 in Luang Prabang into the junior branch of the royal family. Trained in civil and electrical engineering in Vietnam and France, he became director of public works in French colonial Laos before the outbreak of the Pacific War. He became involved in politics at its close during the interregnum before the return of the French. With two brothers, he formed the Free Laos Movement in opposition to French rule and spent a short exile in Thailand, returning to Laos only after its independence was recognized in 1949. He first became prime minister in 1951 and negotiated the full transfer of sovereignty from France. After the **Geneva Agreements on Indochina** of 1954, which failed to resolve internal political divisions within Laos, he sought to engage *Pathet Lao* in coalition government. Success in this enterprise prompted a right-wing military coup in July 1958 and Souvanna Phouma left office to serve as ambassador to France. He returned as prime minister after a neutralist coup in August 1960 but was forced into exile at the end of the year. He resumed high office after the **Geneva Agreements on Laos** in July 1962 as head of a government of national union. He was never able, however, to overcome deep internal divisions reinforced by external intervention. After the **Paris Peace Agreements** in January 1973, a corresponding accord for Laos, the **Vientiane Agreement on the Restoration of Peace and Reconciliation in Laos**, was concluded in the following month, and Souvanna Phouma became the head of yet another coalition government. His role was little more than a caretaker one until his final resignation in December 1975. On giving up office, he was given a formal position as advisor to the new government, but he played no part in the political life of the People's Democratic Republic of Laos. Souvanna Phouma died in Vientiane on 10 January 1984, aged 82.

*see also*: Geneva Agreements on Indochina 1954; Geneva Agreements on Laos 1962; Paris Peace Agreements 1973; *Pathet Lao*; Souphanouvong, Prince; Vientiane Agreement on the Restoration of Peace and Reconciliation in Laos 1973.

## State Administration Council

(Myanmar)

After mounting its coup on 1 February 2021, which removed the government led by **Aung San Suu Kyi** and the **National League for Democracy** (NLD), the military junta announced the establishment of the State Administration Council (SAC) on 2 February. Chaired by Senior General **Min Aung Hlaing**, the SAC was intended to serve as the vehicle through which the junta will assume government functions for the one-year duration of the state of emergency. The Council began with 11 members, of whom eight were from the military and three were civilians. Six of the eight held the top positions in the military at the time of the coup. Six more civilians were later added to the Council. Therefore, unlike previous juntas, the present Council comprises a significant number of civilians, although power clearly remains in the hands of the *Tatmadaw*. By extension, the Council also wields considerable influence over the two main military-owned conglomerates in Myanmar, Myanmar Economic Holdings Limited and Myanmar Economic Cooperation, who enjoy an ubiquitous presence throughout the economy.

Given widespread opposition to the coup that also manifested in the civil service, one of the first tasks undertaken by the SAC government was to dismiss civil servants, including ministers, senior officials, and Supreme Court judges, who refused to comply with their instructions and replace them with loyalists. Meanwhile, Regional Administration Councils were also formed for purposes of governing locally, as were councils for Self-Administered Divisions and Zones which covered the country's several autonomous regions. The SAC proceeded to abolish the NLD-led National Reconciliation and Peace Centre, tasked with pursuing peace dialogues with armed ethnic organizations, and established their own initiatives for that purpose, including: the National Solidarity and Peace-making Central Committee, chaired by Min Aung Hlaing; the National Solidarity and Peace-making Working Committee, chaired by Vice Senior General Soe Win, who is also vice-chair of the SAC; and the National Unity and Peace Restoration Coordination Committee,

chaired by Lieutenant General Yar Pyae, who is not from the SAC.

On 29 April 2021 the European Union extended an existing sanctions regime against the SAC as well as the Tatmadaw and border guard police for a year. Following this, the US Department of the Treasury announced sanctions designations of the SAC as well as 16 individuals associated with the SAC on 17 May 2021. Additional sanctions were imposed on 3 July. Regarding the SAC's dealings with neighbours in **ASEAN (Association of South-east Asian Nations)**, the Association proposed a five-point plan involving: (1) the immediate cessation of violence in Myanmar; (2) constructive dialogue among all parties concerned to seek a peaceful solution in the interests of the people; (3) mediation to be facilitated by an envoy of the ASEAN chair, with the assistance of the secretary-general; (4) humanitarian assistance provided by ASEAN's AHA Centre; and (5) a visit by the special envoy and delegation to Myanmar to meet all parties concerned. The SAC has been evasive in response, suggesting that the plan could be considered at a later point but that at present, its priority is 'the stability and security of the country'. In August 2021, the state of emergency was extended for two years by Min Aung Hlaing. Concomitantly, the SAC was reformed as a caretaker government, which duly appointed Min Aung Hlaing as prime minister.

see also: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Aung San Suu Kyi; Min Aung Hlaing, Senior General; National League for Democracy.

## State Law and Order Restoration Council (Myanmar)

The State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) was established on 18 September 1988 by the armed forces of Myanmar as the national instrument of government after a continuous period of public disturbance. Political disorder had been sparked off initially in September 1987 by a crude act of demonetization without government compensation, provoking student alienation which spread because of deep-seated economic discontent reaching a bloody culmination. SLORC was headed initially by the

defence minister, General Saw Maung, who also assumed the post of prime minister. Martial law was introduced and all existing state organs abolished, including the ruling **Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP)**, which re-emerged as the **National Unity Party (NUP)** a week later. Violent confrontation between student protestors and the armed forces intensified but was resolved with great loss of life through the indiscriminate use of firepower by the military.

Elections to the newly created People's Assembly were promised for May 1990 and were duly held to widespread surprise, but the overwhelming victory by the opposition **National League for Democracy** over NUP and other minor groupings did not lead to political change because SLORC refused to allow the assembly to convene. By that juncture, opposition leader **Aung San Suu Kyi** had been under detention for nearly a year, while legal powers and violence were employed after the elections to crush all dissent. SLORC pressed ahead in an attempt to give its rule constitutional legitimacy. A National Convention was convened in January 1993; it concluded its work a year later by endorsing a prerogative political role for the armed forces in any new constitutional structure. In April 1992 General Saw Maung was replaced as head of SLORC and prime minister by his deputy, General **Than Shwe**, after reportedly suffering from mental disturbance. The real locus of power within SLORC at the time, however, was Brigadier General **Khin Nyunt**, the council's first secretary and head of military intelligence. In July 1995, SLORC felt able to release Aung San Suu Kyi from detention without serious fear of a challenge to its political position. On 15 November 1997, SLORC was dissolved and replaced by the **State Peace and Development Council (SPDC)**. The firm grip on power by the military was not, however, lessened in any way by this change in nomenclature.

*see also:* Aung San Suu Kyi; Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP); Khin Nyunt, General; National League for Democracy; National Unity Party; State Peace and Development Council; Than Shwe, Senior General.

## **State Owned Enterprise Reform** (Vietnam)

State Owned Enterprise (SOE) reform in Vietnam, which began with **Doi Moi** (Renovation) in 1986, represents ongoing efforts by the Vietnamese government to restructure the SOE sector with the objective of making it more efficient and reducing the strain on the public budget and as a broader strategy for stimulating economic growth. However, after more than two decades, the reform process remains ambivalent, with large SOEs still underperforming, many with non-performing bank loans and some (e.g. Vinashin and Vinalines) defaulting on their debts.

In the early 1990s, Vietnamese SOEs found themselves unprepared to face the stiff competition in both the foreign and domestic markets as the country gradually opened its economy. Many, if not most, of these SOEs were highly inefficient and running at a loss due to unclear objectives, poor management, and soft budget constraints. Moreover, they also enjoyed the safety net of government bailouts in the event of failure. Still, unlike the economic restructuring of other formerly centrally planned economies, SOEs were envisaged by Vietnamese policymakers to play a lead role in the transformation to a market economy, as the country modelled its economy after the People's Republic of China. It is in this respect that the reform of SOEs was vital. Equitization, in particular, was emphasized as a key strategy in reforming the SOE sector. In reality, the pace of equitization has been slow, and only small SOEs have been equitized. There was plenty of resistance to privatization from SOE managers who were concerned about the possible loss of privileges that came with running a SOE. Although a pilot privatization programme had been initiated as early as 1992, the pace of equitization did not pick up until much later. Out of the 2,600 firms equitized in the first 13 years of the programme, approximately 2,000 took place between 2000 and 2005. The state continues to retain the controlling, albeit minority, share in most equitized firms; the varying degree of state engagement in these equitized firms depends on each's strategic importance. In addition to equitization, reduction of the

number of SOEs also took place through the merging of SOEs that were too small to be competitive. Inspired by the Keiretsu and Chaebol models in Japan and South Korea respectively, the Vietnamese government established large-scale holding companies – General Corporations – with the aim of strengthening international competitiveness through concentration, internal linkages and economies of scale. Despite the equitization programme, the state's share in the Vietnamese economy continues to hover at 40 per cent over the reform period, suggesting that equitization was not so much an effort to reduce state involvement in the economy as a means of attracting capital to the equitized firms. Without transferring control of a firm to private capital, equitization cannot adequately tackle the efficiency issue. The remaining SOEs remain highly inefficient and unprofitable – 80 per cent of all SOE profits in 2011 can be accounted for by only four SOEs out of more than 1,300 – yet they continue to receive privileged access to capital and bank loans. Ambitious plans were announced in 2017 for divestment, as a list of 375 firms was finalized for privatization by 2020. In the event, between 2016 and 2020, 178 SOEs had their privatization schemes approved, but only 37 had executed their plans by the end of the year because of a combination of bureaucratic inertia and the prevalence of vested interests.

The performance of SOEs became a major political issue at the 11th National Congress held in January 2011, when it was believed that President **Truong Tan Sang** leaked information on huge losses incurred by the state conglomerate Vinashin in order to undermine the leadership of Prime Minister **Nguyen Tan Dung**, whose office had oversight of SOEs. This led to an intense struggle within the Communist Party which carried over into the fourth plenum of the Central Committee in December 2011 when the party launched its rectification campaign which had as its focus the matter of corruption among the top leadership. It also contributed to factionalism that resulted in Dung's elimination from leadership contests for top positions at the 12th party congress in 2016.

see also: *Doi Moi*; Nguyen Tan Dung; Truong Tan Sang.

## State Peace and Development Council (Myanmar)

On 15 November 1997, the **State Law and Order Restoration Council**, which had served as the vehicle for military rule in Myanmar since September 1988, was dissolved and replaced by the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC). The change of political label was purely cosmetic and was probably prompted by an attempt to improve the international image of the country following its controversial entry into **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** the previous July. Although the change of nomenclature suggested a revision of national priorities, the authoritarian nature of the government did not change. The commanders of Myanmar's various military regions were promoted and brought into the ruling council with the formation of SPDC in a move that would be repeated several times to prevent the building of regional power centres. **Than Shwe** remained the chairman and, together with army commander General Maung Aye, continued to rule the country. Secretary-1 **Khin Nyunt** initially appeared to be ascendant in SPDC, removing several of his rivals and promoting loyalists, but his influence was eliminated in 2004 when he was put under house arrest, his military intelligence apparatus largely dismantled, and many of his operatives imprisoned ostensibly on corruption charges. From this point until the handover of power in 2011, Than Shwe was the clear ruler.

Continued accusations of gross human rights abuses prompted the United States and several other Western nations to step up sanctions against the regime. Released from house arrest in 1995, **Aung San Suu Kyi** was again placed in detention by the regime in September 2000. The SPDC government released her in May 2002, but detained her again in May 2003 after an attack on her motorcade in Depayin, Sagaing Division. Opposition politicians and rights advocates accused the military regime of masterminding the attack. The regime would go on to extend her detention three times. Aung San Suu Kyi would remain under house arrest until after national elections in November 2010. Several rounds of reconciliation talks were held between her and government interlocutors during the period, but all came to naught. In

November 2005, the regime moved the capital from Yangon to **Naypyidaw**, a new capital city carved out of the jungle in central Myanmar. Unrest continued to simmer among the civilian population and, after the rescinding of fuel subsidies in August 2007, a series of protests erupted in several cities across the country (see **Saffron Revolution 2007**). Joined by monks from throughout Myanmar in September, the movement grew from dissatisfaction with the regime's economic mismanagement into nationwide anti-government protests. The government finally cracked down on 26 September, violently suppressing the protests and carrying out mass arrests of protestors, monks, and organizers that would shock the international community and even bring reproach from the People's Republic of China. The regime would come in for further criticism over its handling of the Cyclone Nargis disaster in May 2008, which killed over 130,000 in the southwest of the country. In the critical days following the disaster the regime threw up barriers to international relief efforts and allowed in relief supplies and international experts only after the successful intervention of the ASEAN secretary-general, **Surin Pitsuwan**, and the formation of the Tripartite Core Group consisting of the Myanmar government, ASEAN, and the United Nations and aid agencies to coordinate relief. The generals were further criticized for their refusal to postpone the constitutional referendum despite the huge loss of life.

Under SPDC rule ethnic insurgency continued to fester along Myanmar's borders, particularly in **Shan**, **Karenni**, and **Karen** states. Many of the groups who had negotiated ceasefires in 1989–94 were growing restless, and relations took a turn for the worse in 2009 when SPDC pushed for these groups to hand over their weapons and join the military as a Border Guard Force while their political wings morphed into mainstream political parties. The arrest of **Khin Nyunt**, who had arranged most of the ceasefires, further eroded the regime's rapport with ethnic insurgents. In August 2003 the regime announced a seven-step '**Roadmap to Democracy**' intended to transform the country from military rule to a democracy under military guidance. One step was the

reconvening of the National Convention in February 2005 in order to draft a new constitution. The military regime selected the participants from among small political and ethnic organizations, academics, and other prominent figures. Major opposition parties, including the **National League for Democracy**, were banned from the convention. A constitution was eventually completed in September 2007 and a referendum held in 2008 which, although widely criticized, approved the draft (see **Constitution 2008**). On 13 August 2010, SPDC announced national elections would be held on 7 November that year. A number of prominent members of the junta resigned from the military in the lead-up to the polls in order to stand for election, including generals **Thein Sein** and **Shwe Mann**. In the campaigning that followed there were widespread allegations that the junta was directly assisting the **Union Solidarity and Development Party** (USDP) in its activities, prompting widespread doubt that the elections would be either free or fair. When the election results were announced on 17 November 2010, USDP was the clear winner, and together with the 25 per cent of seats allocated to the military in Parliament secured for the military a key role in the new government. SPDC acted as a caretaker government for the next four months before formally handing over power to the notionally democratically elected government on 30 March 2011, after which generals **Than Shwe** and **Maung Aye** essentially faded from public view.

see also: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Aung San Suu Kyi; Constitution 2008; Karen; **Khin Nyunt**, General; National League for Democracy; **Naypyidaw**; Roadmap to Democracy; **Saffron Revolution 2007**; **Shan**; **Shwe Mann**; State Law and Order Restoration Council; **Surin Pitsuwan**; **Than Shwe**, Senior General; **Thein Sein**; Union Solidarity and Development Party.

### **Subandrio** (Indonesia)

Subandrio, who like many Javanese has only one name, was foreign minister of Indonesia between April 1957 and March 1966. He was the chosen political instrument of President

**Sukarno.** As such, he directed and managed the radical leftist foreign policy of **Guided Democracy**, which was marked by **Confrontation** with Malaysia and a close alignment with the People's Republic of China.

Subandrio was born on 15 September 1915 and trained as a medical practitioner in Jakarta under the Dutch. After the proclamation of independence, he was posted abroad by the embryonic Ministry of Information to engage in public relations and from 1947 was the republic's representative in London, becoming ambassador to Moscow between 1954 and 1956, returning to Jakarta in 1956 to become secretary-general of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs until being appointed foreign minister in 1957. In 1963 President Sukarno appointed him first deputy prime minister. In that position, he assumed control of the Central Intelligence Bureau and openly identified with the leftwards drift in politics to the extent that speculation arose over his possible succession to President Sukarno. After the abortive coup (*see Gestapu*) in October 1965, Subandrio was subject to vociferous criticism from student and Muslim groups as well as from the armed forces. When General **Suharto** assumed executive authority in March 1966, Subandrio was arrested on charges of complicity in the alleged communist-inspired coup attempt. After a trial before a military tribunal in October 1966, he was sentenced to death, which was commuted to life imprisonment in 1980. In August 1995, aged 81, he was pardoned and released coincident with the 50th anniversary of the proclamation of Indonesia's independence. He died on 3 July 2004.

*see also:* Confrontation; *Gestapu*; Guided Democracy; Suharto; Sukarno.

### **Subic Bay Naval Base (Philippines)**

Subic Bay Naval Base, situated some 50 miles west of Manila on the island of Luzón, was the most important US military installation in the Philippines. The base area comprised 62,000 acres and had been set aside for military use by US President Theodore Roosevelt in 1904.

The base was established as a major facility after the Philippines became independent in 1946, initially for 99 years under a lease agreement concluded on 17 March 1947. It comprised

a complex of facilities capable of supporting combat operations by several aircraft carrier groups throughout the Indian Ocean and the western Pacific Ocean. To serve that purpose, it became the largest US overseas supply depot. The term of the lease was reduced to 25 years in September 1965. The strategic significance of the base complex declined with the end of the Cold War. Nonetheless, the United States maintained an interest in retaining operational use of the facilities and engaged in protracted negotiations with the government of the Philippines from the late 1980s over the financial terms for the renewal of the lease for an additional ten years. Although intergovernmental agreement on a new treaty was reached in August 1991, the Philippines Senate voted against ratification the following month, with members motivated in part by the potential electoral benefits of demonstrating an assertive nationalism. The Philippines government then announced that negotiations with the United States designed to sanction withdrawal of its forces over a three-year period had collapsed. The United States was subsequently served with a one-year notice of termination, which required that Subic Bay Naval Base be returned to Philippine jurisdiction before the end of 1992. Washington began to comply without protest, immediately dismantling base installations and withdrawing floating docks. After the inauguration of President **Fidel Ramos** in July 1992, negotiations were resumed with the US government on the continued servicing and repair of American vessels at Subic Bay. However, the naval base was formally transferred to Philippine control on 30 September 1992. The Cubi Point Naval Air Station on the western edge of the base complex was relinquished on 24 November that year when the last US service personnel left the Philippines. Following the bankruptcy of the Philippine office of Korean shipyard builders Hanjin that had been operating facilities in Subic Bay in January 2019, Chinese shipping firms have expressed interest in taking over. This has created a strategic conundrum for the United States, which has made a counterbid. It was eventually purchased by the American investment firm, Cerberus, in March 2022.

*see also:* Ramos, Fidel.

**Suchinda Kraprayoon, General**

(Thailand)

General Suchinda Kraprayoon attained political notoriety in May 1992 when responsibility was attributed to him for ordering troops to fire on demonstrators in Bangkok protesting at his appointment as prime minister without prior election to Parliament. General Suchinda had become an army commander in March 1990 following the resignation of General **Chavalit Yongchaiyuth**, who had entered politics. In February 1991 Suchinda led a bloodless coup which removed the government of the prime minister, **Chatichai Choonhavan**. After a period of interim government under a former diplomat and businessman, **Anand Panyarachun**, national elections were held in March 1992. The military-backed *Samakkhi Tham* Party (meaning Unity in Virtue) formed specifically for the elections, secured the largest number of seats and established a governing coalition with other pro-military parties. After their leader Narong Wongwan had been publicly discredited, Suchinda resigned as army commander and accepted appointment as prime minister on 7 April, despite his commitment in November 1991 not to do so. Two weeks later demonstrations against his appointment were mounted in Bangkok, inspired by a fast by **Chamlong Srimuang**, the leader of the opposition *Palang Dharma* (Moral Force) Party. Demonstrations continued into May and after an initial use of armed force by the military, Chamlong was arrested, which inflamed political passions leading to an even bloodier confrontation with up to 200 deaths reported. On 20 May, King **Bhumibol Adulyadej** summoned Suchinda and Chamlong to his palace for a televised meeting which defused the crisis. Suchinda resigned from office three days later and departed the country.

Suchinda Kraprayoon was born on 6 August 1933 in Phra Nakhon in northeast Thailand. He went straight from secondary school into the Chulachomklao Royal Military Academy in Bangkok, enrolling in its fifth class, whose cohort has dominated their military generation. He received advanced training in the United States at Fort Leavenworth Army Staff College

and at Fort Seal Advanced Artillery College. His early career was spent as an artillery commander, but he also spent three years in Washington in the early 1970s as deputy military attaché before transferring to army intelligence, whose head he became by 1982. On his way to the post of army commander-in-chief, he was army assistant chief of staff for operations in 1985 and army assistant commander-in-chief in 1987. General Suchinda represented a military tradition which assumed a prerogative role in public life and which had not been able to come to terms with the political consequences of economic and social change which had challenged that assumption. Granted amnesty upon his removal from power, Suchinda faded from the political scene and entered the corporate world. *see also:* Anand Panyarachun; Bhumibol Adulyadej, King; Chamlong Srimuang, General; Chatichai Choonhavan, General; Chavalit Yongchaiyuth, General.

**Suharto (Indonesia)**

President Suharto dominated political life in Indonesia from 11 March 1966, when he seized power, until 21 May 1998 when he resigned from high office. In March 1966, he had used the threat of military force to assume executive authority from the incumbent President **Sukarno**. He concentrated and exercised power ruthlessly without significant challenge until Indonesia was beset by a devastating economic crisis from late 1997, unprecedented during his rule. He ruled Indonesia much like an erstwhile Javanese monarch, employing a quiet but decisive authority. In so doing, he was moved by the conviction that he had been entrusted with a divinely inspired mission to guide the country along the path of political order and economic development. With evident success in this endeavour up to the late 1990s, he became the logical chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement whose heads of government met in Jakarta in September 1992. At the end of the month, he addressed the General Assembly of the United Nations as the movement's spokesman, so demonstrating the international standing of the republic and his own personal achievement. His personal credibility and that achievement

were virtually dissipated overnight as he failed to comprehend, and to take appropriate action to cope with, the enormity of Indonesia's economic ills. On relinquishing office, he was succeeded by his vice-president, **B. J. Habibie**.

Suharto, like many Javanese, has only one name; he was born on 8 June 1921 in the village of Kemusu, near the town of Yogyakarta in Central Java. He came from a peasant background and received only an elementary education, but in June 1940 he enlisted in the Royal Netherlands Indies Army, rising to the rank of sergeant before the Japanese occupation in 1942. In 1943 he joined the Japanese-sponsored **Peta** (*Pembela Tanah Air*, meaning Defenders of the Fatherland) within which he received officer training, rising to the rank of company commander. After the proclamation of Indonesia's independence in August 1945, Suharto joined the national army and distinguished himself as a brigade commander against the Dutch, rising to the rank of lieutenant colonel by the transfer of sovereignty in December 1949. He subsequently commanded the Central Java Diponegoro Division and the forces deployed to liberate the western half of the island of New Guinea (**Irian Jaya**) from the Dutch. In May 1963, as a major general, he became commander of the army's Strategic Reserve (*Kostrad*) based in Jakarta, in the event of a fateful posting.

In the early hours of 1 October 1965, dissident army units abducted and murdered six senior generals at the outset of an abortive coup (see **Gestapu**). For reasons still not satisfactorily explained, Suharto's name was not on the list of generals abducted despite *Kostrad's* assigned role in countering a coup attempt. Suharto seized the initiative and acted with skill and resolve to crush the revolt and then set about dismantling the political system of **Guided Democracy** established and dominated by President Sukarno. Responsibility for the abortive coup was attributed to the Communist Party of Indonesia, which had enjoyed the patronage of Sukarno. Suharto swept both away, leaving the armed forces under his command as the key national institution (see **Supersemar**).

In March 1967 as a full general, Suharto was elected acting president by the provisional

**People's Consultative Assembly** (MPR). In March 1968 that assembly confirmed him in office for a full term. He was re-elected unopposed by a formally constituted MPR in 1973 and then again in 1978, 1983, 1988, 1993, and 1998, although his final term in office proved to be short-lived. From the outset, Suharto was instrumental in revising many of the republic's public priorities adopted by his predecessor. He set out to reverse the decline in Indonesia's economy by applying Western orthodoxies, so attracting the support of the governments of the United States and Japan. To demonstrate a commitment to development and in repudiation of Sukarno's flamboyant adventurism, he brought the campaign of **Confrontation** against Malaysia to a speedy end. He also embarked on an unprecedented exercise in regional cooperation with the founding in August 1967 of **ASEAN** (**Association of Southeast Asian Nations**), which has remained at the centre of the republic's foreign policy. If seemingly attuned to Western political sensibilities, Suharto has been no less a nationalist than his ill-fated predecessor. He was ruthless over the incorporation of Irian Jaya into the republic in 1969 and brutal in annexing East Timor from 1975 (see **Timor-Leste**).

Internally, Suharto imposed his so-called **New Order** through political demobilization. Political parties were obliged to amalgamate and subordinate their identities, while an existing organization of Functional Groups, **Golkar** (set up initially by the military to counter the communists) became the electoral vehicle of a military establishment which he managed and manipulated. In addition, conscious of Indonesia's lack of a single cultural tradition, Suharto set out to impose nationally the syncretic formula **Pancasila**, devised originally by Sukarno at the outset of independence in 1945 as a way of containing Islamic claims on the identity of the state. By the early 1990s, Suharto's political control had begun to slip a little as senior military officers became alienated by the extent to which his rule had become quasi-monarchical. Moreover, the rapacious business activities of his children and other relatives had generated a growing popular resentment and desire



for political change. Suharto retained power, despite growing dissent, through manipulation and a masterly understanding of human weaknesses. The death of his wife, Ibu Tien, in April 1996, is believed to have affected his political judgement and also to have placed him under the malign influence of his greedy children.

In March 1998, he was elected to a seventh consecutive term of office by the MPR, indicating confidence that he could continue until 2003. The social and political consequences of economic crisis intervened to cut short his term. Social unrest was precipitated by sharp rises in fuel, transport, and electricity prices, while basic staples were in short supply. A rising chorus of protest came to a head on 12 May 1998 when security forces in Jakarta opened fire on a student rally, killing four young people. Urban violence assumed an anti-Chinese dimension with destruction and looting of property as well as the rape of Chinese women. In the middle of this mayhem, Suharto made a fundamental error of judgement in travelling to an international conference in Cairo in an attempt to demonstrate that his authority remained unimpaired. He was obliged to cut short his visit. He made an abortive attempt to form a so-called reform government but could not find candidates to fill its ranks. He left office as a reviled figure. In August 2000, he faced trial on a charge of siphoning off nearly US\$600 million from charitable foundations but refused to appear in court on medical grounds.

With his authoritarian veil unceremoniously removed, Suharto's final years out of office were clouded by persistent allegations of corruption and abuse of power. Transparency International went on record in 2007 maintaining that Suharto was the world's most corrupt politician who allegedly amassed a fortune of between US\$15 billion and US\$35 billion. Meanwhile, members of his family and inner circle were also subject to accusations that they had abused their ties with Suharto to enrich themselves. In spite of these mounting allegations against him, in 2007 Suharto was successful in a lawsuit worth almost \$106 million against *Time* magazine, which had accused him of siphoning off almost \$15 billion to offshore bank accounts just before his forced resignation in 1998. Suharto

passed away on 27 January 2008, closing one of the most controversial chapters in Indonesia's history. Such was the influence he wielded in life that even his harshest critics were present to pay their last respects to the former strongman. In spite of his legacy, some opinion polls have suggested that nearly 58 per cent of Indonesians felt more content during the New Order period than what followed after Suharto's fall, although this could have been prompted by a sense of sympathy and nostalgia.

*see also:* ABRI; ASEAN (Association of South-east Asian Nations) 1967–; Confrontation; *Gestapu*; *Golkar*; Guided Democracy; Habibie, B. J.; Irian Jaya; New Order; *Pancasila*; People's Consultative Assembly; *Peta*; Sukarno; *Supersemar*; Timor-Leste.

### **Sukarno** (Indonesia)

Sukarno, who in the Javanese tradition had only one name, was the first president of Indonesia. He was the pre-eminent nationalist leader of his generation. He enjoyed remarkable oratorical skills and an extraordinary ability to communicate with and mobilize the mass of the Indonesian people. He became a controversial international figure from the late 1950s when he led Indonesia into **Confrontation** successively with the Netherlands and Malaysia. His political career ended in disgrace, however, in the wake of the abortive coup (*see Gestapu*) in October 1965 (attributed to Indonesia's Communist Party) in which he appeared to be implicated. His political successor, General (later President) **Suharto**, kept him under virtual house arrest from March 1966 until his death in June 1970.

Sukarno was born in Blitar in East Java on 6 June 1901, the son of a schoolteacher. He was brought up in a politicized environment in the home of one of the early nationalist leaders. He graduated as a civil engineer from the Advanced School for Technical Studies in Bandung in 1925. Architecture was part of the curriculum, which Sukarno practised for a while but without much success. An active induction into nationalist politics occurred during his higher education. In 1927, he played the leading role in founding the secular Indonesian Nationalist Party, which uncompromisingly demanded independence from the Dutch. He was arrested

in December 1929 and tried the following year in Bandung during which he made a spirited public defence of the nationalist cause. He was sentenced to four years' imprisonment in December 1930 but released a year later. He was detained for a second time in August 1933 and in February 1934 was sent with his family into internal exile in Flores, from which he was transferred to Bengkulu in Sumatra in February 1938. He was still in internal exile when the Japanese overran the Netherlands East Indies in early 1942.

Sukarno collaborated with the Japanese but undoubtedly used his position to promote the idea of an independent Indonesian archipelago among a culturally diverse but increasingly receptive people. On 17 August 1945, two days after the Japanese capitulated, he proclaimed Indonesia's independence together with **Mohammad Hatta**, who became vice-president. During the violent independence struggle against the Dutch, he played more of a symbolic than an active role, one that was confirmed after independence in December 1949 when he became a constitutional president. However, during the 1950s, Indonesia's experiment with Western parliamentary democracy began to test the integrity of the culturally diverse archipelago state. In the face of regional rebellion and a breakdown of political order, Sukarno seized the opportunity to move to the centre of the political stage. He appealed for a return to the roots of the national revolution and for the introduction of a **Guided Democracy** in keeping with the country's traditions. After a short period of martial law from March 1957, and with the support of the armed forces, Sukarno inaugurated the political system of Guided Democracy in July 1959 by reinstating the authoritarian 1945 Constitution with an executive presidency.

During Guided Democracy, Sukarno acted as the personal embodiment of the Indonesian state. He enjoyed a major triumph in employing coercive diplomacy to manipulate the Dutch into transferring **Irian Jaya**, the western half of the island of New Guinea, retained after 1949, to Indonesian jurisdiction. When Sukarno sought to use the same tactic against the Federation of Malaysia, he was not successful. In addition, his close internal alignment with the

Communist Party of Indonesia and external ties with the People's Republic of China alarmed the conservative military establishment, which seized power after the failed coup in 1965 and proceeded to cast Sukarno into political oblivion (see **Supersemar**). In his period of executive power, Sukarno was literally the resounding voice of Indonesia but brought his country more notoriety than prestige. In one respect, however, he demonstrated remarkable prescience. At the first meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement in Belgrade in 1961, Sukarno argued that the main problem facing the world was not that of superpower antagonism but that of conflict between the rich and poor countries. His management of his own country's economy was incompetent, however: on his overthrow it was in an impoverished condition as a consequence of profligate expenditure and corruption. His military usurpers nonetheless felt it politic to resurrect his reputation posthumously and also upheld his state philosophy of **Pancasila**, which was first enunciated in June 1945. He was undoubtedly a charismatic unifying figure at a time when the identity and integrity of the state seemed to be in jeopardy. He died on 21 June 1970 in Bogor.

see also: Confrontation; *Gestapu*; Guided Democracy; Hatta, Mohammad; Irian Jaya; *Pancasila*; Suharto; *Supersemar*.

**Sukarnoputri, Megawati** (Indonesia)

see **Megawati Sukarnoputri**

**Supersemar** (Indonesia)

*Supersemar* is an acronym from the Indonesian term *Surat Perintah Sebelas Maret*, which was an order signed by President **Sukarno** on 11 March 1966 to Lieutenant General **Suharto**, recently appointed minister/commander-in-chief of the army, instructing him 'to take all necessary steps to guarantee security and calm and the stability of the Government and the course of the Revolution'. The effect of the order was to transfer executive authority: it marked a critical stage in the ultimate deposition of President Sukarno. The use of the acronym *Supersemar* was to provide a basis in legitimacy for the transfer through invoking the name of *Semar*,

a clown-god of Hindu mythology with a reputation for invincible authority. The process of transfer was precipitated by an abortive coup (see **Gestapu**) in October 1965, which had the effect of undermining Sukarno's authority and also encouraging the leadership of the armed forces to seize power. Matters came to a head during a cabinet meeting in the presidential palace in Jakarta on 11 March 1966 against a background of rising student protest. Troops without insignia surrounded the palace, and Sukarno and close political associates fled by helicopter to the nearby resort town of Bogor. Three senior generals then drove to Bogor, where they confronted Sukarno, who agreed to transfer executive authority. Lieutenant General Suharto then ordered the Communist Party of Indonesia banned and reconstituted the government. The transfer order was confirmed by the provisional **People's Consultative Assembly** in March 1967, with Sukarno retaining only nominal title. General Suharto was confirmed as president in succession to Sukarno in March 1968.

see also: *Gestapu*; People's Consultative Assembly; Suharto; Sukarno.

### **Supreme National Council (Cambodia)**

The Supreme National Council was described in the accords on Cambodia reached at the **International Conference on Cambodia** in Paris on 23 October 1991 as 'the unique legitimate body and source of authority in which, throughout the transitional period, the sovereignty, independence and unity of Cambodia are enshrined'. Central to the contention over resolving the protracted Cambodian conflict was the problem of power-sharing between the warring Khmer factions in the transitional period before elections to determine the political future of the country. This problem was responsible for the failure of an earlier **International Conference on Cambodia, Paris 1989**. In the event, an initiative for a UN role in resolving the conflict gave rise to the proposal for a symbolic device comprising representatives of all factions which would be formally vested with sovereignty. Once established, it was to assume the Cambodian seat in the UN General Assembly and also delegate executive

powers to **UNTAC (United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia)**, which would run key ministries, oversee the disarmament and demobilization of contending forces, and organize national elections in a neutral political environment. The Council took on a formal existence at a meeting in the Indonesian capital, Jakarta, on 10 September 1990 and assumed a practical role after Prince **Norodom Sihanouk** was elected chairman in Beijing on 17 July 1991. After the accords reached in Paris in October 1991, the Supreme National Council convened for the first time in Cambodia on 30 December 1991. That meeting had been delayed because of political disorder in the capital Phnom Penh over the participation of **Khmer Rouge** representatives. Once established, it coexisted uneasily with the incumbent administration established by Vietnamese force of arms. The Khmer Rouge justified its failure to assume the government of Cambodia as an excuse for leaving the Council and for boycotting elections held under UN auspices in May 1993. The Supreme National Council was replaced when a provisional coalition government was established in Phnom Penh in July 1993 without Khmer Rouge membership.

see also: International Conference on Cambodia, Paris 1989; International Conference on Cambodia, Paris 1991; Khmer Rouge; Sihanouk, King Norodom; UNTAC (United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia).

### **Surabaya, Battle of, 1945 (Indonesia)**

Surabaya is the principal port of East Java which serves as a base for Indonesia's navy. In November 1945 it was the site of the biggest battle of Indonesia's national revolution, which took place between Republican and British forces, and not the Dutch. Japan had occupied Indonesia during the course of the Pacific War; after the Japanese surrender, British forces from the **Southeast Asia Command** assumed initial responsibility for administering the Netherlands East Indies. They landed in small numbers some six weeks after the proclamation of national independence and faced the obvious suspicion that they were intent on helping to restore Dutch colonial rule. In early November

1945 Indonesian irregulars objected to a demand from the local British commander for the surrender of their arms, viewing it as a preliminary action to a landing by Dutch troops. A violent confrontation ensued in which an entire brigade, comprising mainly of Indian soldiers under British command, came close to being overrun. The refusal of Indonesian irregulars to heed an ultimatum to withdraw after a British brigadier had been killed while attempting to uphold a truce provoked a military onslaught at divisional strength. From 10 November, there followed three weeks of courageous and fanatical resistance by the Indonesians, who were ultimately pacified by superior force.

The Battle of Surabaya is celebrated every year in Indonesia as Heroes' Day. At the time, it marked a turning point both for the British military authorities and Indonesia's nationalist leadership. Both parties saw the virtue of a negotiated solution to the problem of Indonesian independence. The British were conscious of the political costs of continued confrontation. The nationalist leadership judged it practical to give up a policy of armed struggle in favour of negotiations with the Dutch, in part because of concern not to alienate the great power support seen to be required for achieving full independence. In addition, that leadership had been disturbed by the prospect of being displaced by a radical youth element which had been prominent at Surabaya and which would be politically advantaged through continuing violence. *see also*: Southeast Asia Command 1943–6.

### **Surayud Chulanont, General** (Thailand)

General Surayud Chulanont is a privy counsellor and a former prime minister and commander-in-chief of the Royal Thai Army. He was born in Prachinburi on 28 August 1943. Surayud's father, Phayom Chulanant, was an army colonel who later left his family and joined the Communist Party of Thailand, becoming a Central Committee member and chief of staff of the People's Liberation Army of Thailand. Surayud completed his primary education in Bangkok, then joined the inaugural class of the Armed Forces Academies Preparatory Academy. He subsequently graduated with Class 12 from the Chulachomklao Royal Military Academy

in 1965 and later attended a number of service schools in Thailand and in the United States.

As an officer, Surayud served in a light artillery unit in 1966 and in the Special Forces from 1970. He participated in operations against the Communist Party of Thailand during the 1960s and 1970s. From 1972 to 1978 he was an instructor at the Special Warfare School. In 1983 he was the commander of the 1st Special Forces Division and, four years later, the commander of the 1st Special Forces. Surayud also served as an aide to General **Prem Tinsulanonda** during his time as army commander and later, prime minister. In 1992, Surayud was appointed commander of the Special Warfare Centre. Surayud's troops participated in the crackdown on protestors in Bangkok in May 1992, but asserted he never gave orders to his men to shoot. In 1994 he was appointed commander of the Second Army Region in the northeast of the country. In late 1998, he was appointed commander-in-chief of the army by the prime minister, **Chuan Leekpai**. By that time, Surayud had built a reputation in the service as incorruptible, tactful, and effective. He had expressed displeasure at the use of violence in the 1992 crackdown and attempted to steer the army away from politics by making it more accountable. Under his command, the army became involved for the first time in a UN peacekeeping mission in East Timor. His troops also took a more active role in anti-narcotics activities along Thailand's northern border with Myanmar that occasionally led to border skirmishes with the Myanmar army. In 2003, clashes with Prime Minister **Thaksin Shinawatra** over narcotics suppression and promotion issues led to his 'promotion' to Supreme Commander of Thailand's armed forces, a notionally superior position but substantively less senior compared to command of the army. Surayud resigned from the army later in 2003 and was appointed by King **Bhumibol Adulyadej** to the Privy Council on 14 November 2003. After spending some time as a Buddhist monk, Surayud, together with Prem, played key roles in arranging the promotion of General **Sonthi Boonyaratglin** to army commander. Following the 2006 coup, Surayud resigned from the Privy Council to become prime minister in the interim government until national elections in

December 2007. He was confirmed as prime minister by junta leader General Sonthi on 1 October 2006. Surayud oversaw the drafting of a new constitution, held a constitutional referendum on 19 August 2007, and promised elections at the end of the year. He also increased the budget for security operations for the **Southern Provinces Insurgency**, and he apologized for the loss of life during the Krue Se Mosque and Tak Bai incidents in 2004. His government also purged the senior ranks of the military of supporters of exiled prime minister Thaksin. Overall, his term in office was characterized by a lack of focus and decisiveness. Surayud was reappointed to the Privy Council in January 2008 after completing his term as prime minister. In May 2019, he was named acting president of the Privy Council following the death of his mentor, Prem Tinsulanonda. He was subsequently appointed president in January 2020.

see also: Bhumibol Adulyadej, King; Chuan Leekpai; Insurgency, Southern Provinces; Prem Tinsulanonda, General; Sonthi Boonyaratglin, General; Thaksin Shinawatra.

### Surin Pitsuwan (Thailand)

Surin Pitsuwan was the first secretary-general of **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** who served in the newly empowered office under the **ASEAN Charter**. Introduced with the formation of the ASEAN Secretariat 1976, the role of the secretary-general had largely been one of managing, rather than making, ASEAN policy. Nevertheless, the office has morphed over the years. In 1992, the ASEAN Secretariat was restructured and its chief officer was given the title 'Secretary-General of ASEAN' and accorded ministerial status. The office was further strengthened, albeit modestly, with the passing of the Charter.

Surin Pitsuwan was born on 28 October 1949 to an impoverished southern Thai family. His father was a prominent Muslim teacher. He received his higher education in the United States, acquiring a doctorate in political science from Harvard University in 1982. He then pursued an academic career, holding a post at

Thammasat University in the mid-1980s. He entered politics in 1986 and was elected to Parliament for the **Democrat Party** for a southern constituency in Nakhon Sri Thammarat Province, attracting strong support from the Muslim community whose faith he shares. Surin rose to become deputy leader of the Democrat Party, speaker of Parliament, and foreign minister from 1997 to 2001. On the occasion of the ASEAN ministerial meeting in Manila in July 1998, Surin famously proposed that the Association adopt an approach to regional cooperation he termed 'flexible engagement', which allowed member states to openly discuss the domestic affairs of fellow members inasmuch as they impacted on regional security. The suggestion was made in the wake of the **Asian Financial Crisis** and the environmental crisis, or 'haze' crisis, wrought by slash-and-burn farming practices in Indonesia that had beset the region. The proposal was not adopted for fear of excessive intervention.

In January 2008, Surin became the first secretary-general from outside of the civil service of a home government, although he had held the post of foreign minister of Thailand from 1997 to 2001. He was also the first secretary-general to be picked through an open recruitment exercise conducted for the position in the national selection process. Surin had to hit the ground running in order to handle the humanitarian crisis spawned by Cyclone Nargis which struck Myanmar in May 2008. In the aftermath of the cyclone, Surin had to muster his entire array of diplomatic talent to persuade the paranoid Myanmar junta to allow foreign aid into the country. After stepping down from the office of secretary-general, the charismatic Surin was a regular feature on the global lecture circuit. True to his calling, he passed away on 30 November 2017 as he was about to deliver a lecture. He was 68 years old.

see also: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; ASEAN Charter (Charter of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations); Asian Financial Crisis 1997–8; Democrat Party.

# T

## **Ta Mok** (Cambodia)

Ta Mok is the *nom de guerre* of the most notorious military commander of the **Khmer Rouge**. His true name is Chhit Choeun and he held senior military positions in the early 1970s during the successful challenge to the government of **Lon Nol**. He was seriously wounded in the fighting, losing a leg which was replaced with a wooden limb.

Of Chinese-Khmer descent, Ta Mok was believed to have been born in 1924 or 1925 to a fairly affluent farming family in Pra Keap village, the eldest of seven children. He became a Buddhist monk at the age of 16 but soon shed his robes to take up the rifle. His notoriety arises from his role as party secretary in the southwest region in conducting murderous purges after the Khmer Rouge came to power in April 1975, which is when he took the name Ta Mok, meaning 'Old Man'. After their ousting by the Vietnamese, Ta Mok became vice-chairman of the supreme commission of the national army of **Democratic Kampuchea** and established a military fiefdom along Cambodia's northern border with Thailand. That position began to be challenged by the government which came to office in Cambodia in October 1993 after general elections held under United Nations aegis (see **UNTAC**). In a military encounter in February 1994, the government forces temporarily seized Ta Mok's base camp of Anlong Veng, but he had been able to move his headquarters some weeks before. In June 1997, forces loyal to Ta Mok arrested **Pol Pot**, who was the subject of a show trial. Ta Mok then seized control of the rump of Khmer Rouge forces but was driven from his last camp into jungle along the Thai border by government units in June 1998. He was captured along the border in March 1999 and in September was charged with genocide under a decree issued in 1979 by the **People's Republic of Kampuchea**. Ta Mok's detention was repeatedly extended owing to the difficulty of convening a credible international tribunal (see **Khmer Rouge Trials**). It was only in July

2001 that the National Assembly approved legislation to establish a special tribunal to prosecute Khmer Rouge leaders. Ta Mok died in July 2006 after a long struggle with high blood pressure and tuberculosis before he could be tried for his part in the Khmer Rouge genocide.

see also: Democratic Kampuchea; Kampuchea, People's Republic of (PRK); Khmer Rouge; Khmer Rouge Trials; Lon Nol; Pol Pot; UNTAC (United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia).

## **Taib Mahmud, Tun Pehin Sri Abdul** (Malaysia)

Abdul Taib Mahmud is currently governor of Malaysia's north Bornean state of Sarawak. Prior to that, he served as the state's chief minister from March 1981 to February 2014, making him the longest-serving chief minister in the Malaysian federal system. Despite handing over the reins in 2014 to Adenan Satem, he continues to be an imposing figure in **Parti Pesaka Bumiputera Bersatu** (PBB), which is dominated by a Muslim Malay-Melanau constituency.

Taib Mahmud was born on 21 May 1936 in Miri, Sarawak, and studied law at the University of Adelaide in South Australia. He began his career as a Crown Counsel but entered Sarawak state politics when the former British colony joined Malaysia. He assumed a ministerial position from the outset, holding first the portfolio of communications and works and then at the end of the 1960s entering the federal Parliament to assume cabinet office. His tenure as chief minister was marred after a time by tension with his uncle **Abdul Rahman Yakub**, who had become Sarawak's governor in 1981 but stood down from office in 1985. In March 1987 financially induced defections from the governing state coalition designed to unseat Taib Mahmud led to early elections which returned his government to office, but with a reduced majority. In subsequent elections in September 1991, Taib restored his coalition's fortunes with a resounding victory and, in April 1995,

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delivered 26 out of 27 Sarawak constituencies in federal elections. During his tenure as chief minister, Taib cultivated good relations with the federal government, and his ability to deliver Sarawak to the **Barisan Nasional** (National Front, BN), including several landslide state election victories over the decades, has been a key factor in his long political tenure.

During his term in office, Taib was persistently shadowed by allegations of corruption because of huge personal wealth he has amassed, leading to period rumours of how ruling prime ministers were contemplating ways to curtail his influence. Nevertheless, he remained defiant, and even a major exposé in 2010 that uncovered his purported involvement in controversial land deals in Sarawak could not prevent Taib from a crucial victory in the state during federal elections in 2013. This all but entrenched Taib's position in Sarawak, leading detractors to claim that even the prime minister was powerless against his political influence in the state. Taib Mahmud stepped down from the office of chief minister after 33 years in February 2014 and handed the reins to his political ally and former brother-in-law, Adenan Satem. The day after his resignation, he was sworn in as governor of Sarawak.

see also: Abdul Rahman Yakub, Tun; *Barisan Nasional* (BN); *Parti Pesaka Bumiputera Bersatu*.

### **Tanjung Priok Riot 1984** (Indonesia)

A violent confrontation between Muslim protesters and security forces took place with great loss of life during the night of 12 September 1984 in the Tanjung Priok port area of Jakarta, the capital of Indonesia. The protest had been precipitated by the arrest of four members of a local prayer hall, who had attacked two army officers in the course of demanding an apology for their having allegedly violated its sanctity. The large crowd which sought the release of the detainees was met at the police station by a hail of bullets from members of an air defence regiment, resulting in up to 200 deaths. The bloody episode took place against the background of Muslim resistance to the government's attempt to require all organizations to accept **Pancasila**, the state philosophy, as their sole

principle. Agitation against government policy had become vociferous in and around the Tanjung Priok prayer hall, leading to a military investigation which in turn had given rise to the incident that led on to the violence. After the fatal clash, there followed a series of fires and explosions in Jakarta; in January 1985, several small bombs went off within the historic Borobudur Buddhist monument near Yogyakarta. Acts of Muslim-inspired violence petered out by the end of the 1980s as the result of action by intelligence and security forces. Nearly a year after **Suharto's** political downfall, public interest was expressed in a full accounting of the Tanjung Priok episode with the senior officers concerned being questioned by the Human Rights Commission. In 2003 the **People's Representative Council** (*Devan Perwakilan Rakyat*) sanctioned the re-opening of the case. However, the conviction of several senior military officers was overturned by the Supreme Court a year later, and to date the case remains inconclusive. see also: Islam; *Pancasila*; People's Representative Council; Suharto.

### **Tarbiyah** (Indonesia)

*Tarbiyah* refers to an Islamic reform movement prevalent in the tertiary education campuses across Indonesia during the 1970s and 1980s. The agenda of *Tarbiyah* was the creation of an Islamic society from the bottom up, where individuals formed familial units for the purpose of propagating Islamic values, which in turn would give rise to an Islamic society. This Islamic society will then result in the eventual creation of an Islamic state.

The *Tarbiyah* movement was non-violent and non-confrontational, and most of its activities focused on *dakwah* (proselytization among the Muslim community). Because of its non-confrontational stance, the *Tarbiyah* movement managed to flourish under the **Suharto** government, particularly when the former president started to build an alliance with the Muslim community. The founding of the Association of Indonesian Muslim Scholars (ICMI), with Suharto ally **B. J. Habibie** as chairman, marked a turning point for the *Tarbiyah* movement when it was allowed to publicize its activities. With this endorsement, *Tarbiyah* established

Islamic boarding schools and associations that provided educational assistance to high school students. In addition to that, they established organizations for purposes of religious propagation and created informal religious educational circles known as *halqah* through which religious activities were conducted. The *Tarbiyah* movement also started to flourish in university student organizations, and a Union for Indonesian Muslim Students (KAMMI) was formed in 1998. In addition, existing Muslim student associations such as *Himpunam Mahasiswa Islam* (HMI) and Indonesia Islamic Student Movement (PMII) came under the control of *Tarbiyah* student activists. With the resignation of Suharto and the transition to a more democratic Indonesia, *Tarbiyah* activists formed *Partai Keadilan* (Justice Party) on 28 July 1998 in order to translate their social activism into a political agenda that held closely to its ideals. *Partai Keadilan* eventually became **Partai Keadilan Sejahtera**.

see also: Habibie, B. J.; *Partai Keadilan Sejahtera*; Suharto.

### **Terrorism in Southeast Asia** (Indonesia/Malaysia/Philippines/Singapore)

While terrorism in the region has historically been perpetrated by communist and nationalist groups, Islamist terrorist groups have emerged as a pernicious challenge for governments in Southeast Asia after September 11. As early as December 2001, Singaporean authorities arrested members of **Jemaah Islamiyah** (JI), a radical Muslim group with roots in the Indonesia-based **Darul Islam** movement, which sought to overthrow the governments in Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Brunei, the Philippines, and Thailand so as to create a regional caliphate. JI was formally founded by two *Darul Islam* activists, Abdullah Sungkar and **Abu Bakar Ba'asyir**, while they were taking refuge in Malaysia from the **Suharto** government in 1993. Other prominent JI leaders include Riduan Isamuddin (better known as **Hambali**), an Indonesian, and two Malaysians, Nordin Mohamed Top and Azhari Hussein. Many JI members also come from the network of the Pondok Ngruki, an Islamic boarding school started by Ba'asyir and Sungkar in 1972.

Some observers have argued that the school's curriculum promotes an extreme interpretation of Islam which encourages violence. The group's violent turn occurred in 1998 during the communal conflicts in Maluku and Poso, when JI leaders deemed it an obligation for Muslims to engage in *jihād* to defend Islam in Indonesia against the perceived threat of Christian proselytization (see **Maluku Violence 1999–2002**).

Post-September 11 terrorism in Southeast Asia possesses a transnational dimension that previously was less evident among the activities of the region's armed resistance groups. This transnational character was perhaps most profoundly demonstrated in the relationship between JI and Al-Qaeda that took on ideological and operational forms. JI also forged relationships of varying degrees with other armed groups in Southeast Asia such as the **Moro Islamic Liberation Front** (MILF) and the **Abu Sayyaf Group** (ASG). Contacts between JI and these groups were established in Afghanistan where Southeast Asian Muslims arrived to participate in the *jihād* against Soviet occupation in the 1980s. Members of JI were also known to have trained in Camp Abu Bakar As-Shiddiq, headquarters of the MILF until it was overrun in 2000 during the presidency of **Joseph Estrada**.

On Christmas Eve 2000, coordinated bomb attacks were launched in Jakarta and eight other Indonesian cities, causing 18 deaths. The attack was the first Al-Qaeda-inspired JI terrorist attack in the country. A document detailing planned attacks in Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia was later discovered in December 2001 by Indonesian police, sparking concerns over the transnational footprint of the terrorist threat emanating from Indonesia. It was however, the devastating attacks in the Indonesian resort island of Bali in October 2002 that brought home the severity of the terrorist threat to the region. The 2002 Bali bombings involved a car bomb, which was detonated outside the Sari Club in Kuta, and a backpack-mounted device carried by a suicide bomber which was detonated in Paddy's Pub across the street. The attack was the deadliest act of terror in Indonesian history, with a death toll of over 200. Following the attack, an audio recording,



purportedly of Osama Bin Laden, surfaced on various Al-Qaeda-linked websites lauding the Bali bombings as retaliation for the US War on Terror and Australia's support for the secession of East Timor. The Bali bombings were significant on several fronts. First, they signalled the escalation of the terrorist threat in Southeast Asia. Second, they forced the Indonesian government to acknowledge the presence of home-grown terrorists, even though the Indonesian leadership at the time continued to deny the existence of a terrorist group called JI.

The 2002 Bali bombings were followed by a suicide bomb blast at the JW Marriott Hotel in the business district of Jakarta in August 2003, the bombing of the Australian Embassy in Indonesia in September 2004, and a further attack in Bali in October 2005. All these attacks in Indonesia were connected to JI, and Al-Qaeda was believed to have provided US\$30,000 to fund the 2003 attack. These attacks presaged heavy criticism of the Indonesian government for its alleged state of denial and lacklustre approach to counterterrorism. Jakarta responded by intensifying the training and operational preparedness of its crack counterterrorism task force, *Densus 88*, which has since acquired a reputation for operational decisiveness. With help from a carefully assembled intelligence network, *Densus 88* managed to eliminate key JI leaders such as Azhari Hussein, Nordin Top, and Dulmatin. At the same time, it has also been criticized for allegedly using torture to extract information. Meanwhile, terrorist attacks, while considerably reduced, were not eliminated, and in 2009 a radical faction within JI perpetrated attacks at the JW Marriott Hotel and the adjacent Ritz Carlton Hotel, while a militant training camp was discovered in Aceh in 2010. Aside from counterterrorism operations, the Indonesian government has also used legal instruments to deal with terrorism. These include a 2003 anti-terror law that authorized the death penalty and detention without trial for perpetrators of terrorist acts. This legal instrument was deployed in the trial of the Bali bombers: Amrozi, Imam Samudra, and Mukhlas.

Terrorist activity has been equally rife in the Philippines, and while the **New People's Army** has long adopted terrorism as a weapon in its

struggle, it has been Islamist-inspired terrorist acts that have predominated in recent years. The southern islands of the Philippines archipelago, poorly governed and home to armed groups such as the **Moro National Liberation Front** (MNLF), the MILF, and the ASG, have also proven to be a safe haven for JI members escaping authorities in Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia. Since 2000, the region has also witnessed an upsurge in terrorist attacks of varying scale, including grenade attacks in markets, bombing of public transport facilities, and the taking of hostages by ASG from the Malaysian resort island of Sipadan in 2000 and from Palawan in 2001. The bombing of *SuperFerry 14* in February 2004, leading to more than 100 deaths, was the most lethal. Facing the magnitude of the problem, the Philippines government sought out American military assistance without hesitation. In May 2017, elements from ASG and the Maute Group launched a brazen offensive in Marawi City (see **Marawi Siege 2017**).

The emergence of the Islamic State of Iraq and As-Sham (ISIS) in the Middle East introduced a new dimension to terrorism in Southeast Asia as militants from the region were drawn to battle for physical territory, not unlike the Afghan *jihad* several decades earlier. In the event, Indonesians, Malaysians, and a handful of militants from Singapore and the Philippines flocked to Iraq and Syria to take up arms with groups such as ISIS and *Jabhat al-Nusra*, while at home, groups such as ASG in the Philippines and Jamaah Ansharut Daulah in Indonesia pledged allegiance to ISIS. At its peak, as many as 600 Indonesians and more than 100 Malaysians, including entire families, had gone to fight in the Middle East, so much so that organizations such as *Katibah Nusantara* were formed comprising Southeast Asian militants. As ISIS fortunes diminished, concerns grew for hardened returning foreign fighters.

The existence of internal security legislation, which allows for extended periods of detention without trial, and efficient policing and intelligence networks have provided the governments of Singapore and Malaysia with the wherewithal to effectively contain the terrorist threats that have emerged within their borders. In addition

to this, multinational cooperation among the four states and their **ASEAN (Association of South-east Asian Nations)** neighbours has allowed for extensive exchange of information and joint operations that has helped national security and law enforcement agencies to effectively disrupt terrorist activities in the region, although sporadic terrorist attacks have continued especially in Indonesia, with ISIS-linked suicide bombings, and the Philippines. In May 2018, a family of six carried out suicide bombings in three churches in Surabaya, East Java, killing 18 people and injuring 40. This was followed by another suicide attack by a family a few days later against a police station in Surabaya.

see also: Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG); ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Ba'asyir, Abu Bakar; *Darul Islam*; Estrada, Joseph Ejercito; Hambali (Riduan Isamuddin); *Jemaah Islamiyah*; Maluku Violence 1999–2002; Marawi Siege 2017; Moro Islamic Liberation Front; Moro National Liberation Front; New People's Army; Suharto.

### **Tet Offensive 1968** (Vietnam)

Tet is the name of the holiday celebrated on the Vietnamese lunar new year. On the night of 30 January 1968, during that holiday, forces of the **National Liberation Front of South Vietnam** (NLF) launched a series of coordinated surprise attacks throughout South Vietnam. Apart from the capital Saigon, where the presidential palace was penetrated, 34 out of 44 provincial capitals were attacked and 10 were held temporarily. The citadel of the ancient capital of Hue was not retaken by US and South Vietnamese forces until the end of February. The declared purpose of the attacks was to generate a popular uprising against the government of President **Nguyen Van Thieu**. To that end, the offensive, which involved a costly expenditure of human resources by the NLF, was a military failure. Politically, however, it proved to be a remarkable success due to its visual impact on television within the United States, where the **Vietnam War** had become increasingly unpopular. The domestic impact of the Tet Offensive led to the announcement by President Lyndon Johnson on 31 March that he would not seek re-election in November 1968

and that the bombing of North Vietnam would be restricted in order to start negotiations to end the war with the Vietnamese communists. The Tet Offensive proved to be a critical psychological turning point in the Vietnam War, following which American resolve to fight the war was never the same.

see also: National Liberation Front of South Vietnam; Nguyen Van Thieu; Vietnam War.

### **Thach, Nguyen Co** (Vietnam) see **Nguyen Co Thach**

### **Thai–Lao Border War 1987–8** (Laos/Thailand)

The Thai–Lao Border War was a brief and often overlooked armed conflict between Thailand and Laos over border demarcation that lasted from December 1987 to February 1988. At issue was the unclear ownership of four villages based on a 1907 French map of the border between then Siam and French Indochina. This same map is also at the heart of the **Preah Vihear Temple Dispute**. Thailand claimed Ban Rom Klao as part of its Phitsanulok Province and the other three villages as part of Uttaradit Province. In December 1987 Thai troops occupied Ban Rom Klao and raised the Thai flag. Vientiane issued strong protests, claiming the village is part of its Saiyabuli Province. Laotian army units staged a night attack on the Thai garrison, forcing them out of the village. Heavy fighting continued for several weeks until a ceasefire was arranged on 19 February 1988. Vietnamese units were sent to assist the Laotian Army, but they arrived only after the ceasefire was agreed. There were about 1,000 casualties in total on both sides, with the Thais suffering more. General **Chavalit Yongchaiyuth**, commander of the Thai Army at the time, was criticized for fighting against the advice of the foreign ministry. In 1996 a Thai–Lao Joint Boundary Commission was established to clarify the 1,810-kilometre border between the two countries and ownership of the villages. Border demarcation is still ongoing.

see also: Chavalit Yongchaiyuth, General; Preah Vihear Temple Dispute.

**Thai Rak Thai Party** (Thailand)

The *Thai Rak Thai* (Thais Love Thais, TRT) Party was established on 14 July 1998 by successful entrepreneur cum politician **Thaksin Shinawatra**. TRT was the governing party in Thailand from 2001 to September 2006, winning three landslide elections. In forming TRT, Thaksin wooed a considerable number of politicians from other parties and in some cases won whole factions over to the TRT banner. The party's first electoral foray resulted in a loss when its candidate failed in a bid to become governor of Bangkok in July 2000. TRT rebounded with a victory in January 2001 parliamentary elections by a wide margin over the incumbent **Democrat Party**. The elections were the first under the **People's Constitution** promulgated in 1997. TRT, which won 248 seats out of 500, more than any other party in previous elections, formed a government coalition with the **Chart Thai Party** and the **New Aspiration Party**. With a total of 325 seats, the TRT-led coalition had secured the largest majority in Thai electoral history. The New Aspiration Party of former army commander and prime minister **Chavalit Yongchaiyuth** merged with TRT shortly after the elections, as did the much smaller *Seritham* Party. TRT won an even larger majority in the 2005 elections when its own representatives won 376 seats, allowing the party to form a single-party government for the first time in Thai politics. The fact that TRT essentially comprised factions of other parties, and even entire parties as in the case of New Aspiration and *Seritham*, meant that it remained factionalized throughout its existence. Many of its politicians continued to maintain allegiance to their factions rather than to the party as a whole. Most important of these factions were *Wang Bua Ban*, led by Thaksin's sister, Yaowapa Wongsawat, and which formed much of Thaksin's inner circle; and *Nam Wong Yen*, led by kingmaker **Sanoh Thienthong**, and which comprised politicians from the northeast.

Thaksin founded the party ostensibly as a vehicle for political and economic reform, drawing mainly on support from Chiang Mai and the rural north and northeast and also from disaffected white-collar Democrat Party voters. This was articulated through a platform of

populist policies that appealed directly to voters, especially those in rural areas of the north and northeast, the most populous in the country, and urban voters with roots in those areas. These policies included a universal healthcare scheme and a microcredit development fund for rural districts. The party has no real political ideology but was skilful at convincing voters that the party listened to and empathized with their grievances, a marked change from traditional top-down Thai politics. Some of TRT's policies were controversial. Most prominently, the 2003 'war on drugs' led to intense international criticism for its reliance on extrajudicial killings. It was, however, popular with many Thais and did reduce the high levels of narcotics trafficking and use in the country. TRT's hardline policies in the restive southern region, on the other hand, alienated many among the Malay-Muslim population and exacerbated an already deteriorating situation.

While TRT's policies were generally well received, especially by its support base, Thaksin's manoeuvring for personal political and economic advantage would result in the party's downfall. Chief among these was his sale of his family company Shin Corporation to Temasek Holdings of Singapore and attempts to evade taxes on this sale as well as on real estate dealings. The situation was compounded by his increasingly hostile attitude towards criticism by the press culminating in the closure of a weekly current affairs programme of a former ally, the influential **Sondhi Limthongkul**. Angry protests over Thaksin's financial dealings soon coalesced into the **People's Alliance for Democracy**, led by Sondhi and other prominent figures. Under political pressure, Thaksin dissolved Parliament and called for new elections in an attempt to stave off the looming crisis. The Democrat Party and its allies boycotted the elections in April 2006 in which TRT won 460 of 500 seats. A rare intercession by King **Bhumibol Adulyadej**, who publicly declared the elections undemocratic, resulted in the Constitutional Court invalidating them and calling for new elections. TRT became a caretaker government until new elections could be held later in the year. On 19 September 2006, the army staged a successful coup in Bangkok while Thaksin and

much of the TRT leadership were abroad. Members of the leadership remaining in the country were arrested and detained by the junta, largely decapitating the party and forestalling any significant response to the coup. Now in exile, Thaksin resigned from the party on 2 October 2006, a move that largely ended TRT as a political force. The party remained in existence until 30 May 2007 when the Constitutional Court officially banned it due to violations of electoral laws during the 2006 elections. The decision also banned 111 TRT politicians from participating in politics for five years. Most of the remaining TRT politicians would go on to join the **People's Power Party** (PPP), which would be seen as a proxy for TRT and Thaksin. The PPP would win a resounding victory in elections in 2007, but would also be dissolved by the Constitutional Court in December 2008 for electoral fraud. Many of the former TRT/PPP politicians moved to join the **Pheu Thai Party**. *see also:* Bhumibol Adulyadej, King; *Chart Thai Party*; Chavalit Yongchaiyuth, General; Democrat Party; New Aspiration Party; People's Alliance for Democracy; People's Constitution 1997; People's Power Party; *Pheu Thai Party*; Sanoh Thienthong; Sondhi Limthongkul; Thaksin Shinawatra.

### Thaksin Shinawatra (Thailand)

One of the most divisive figures of his time, Thaksin Shinawatra served as prime minister of Thailand from February 2001 to September 2006 when he was removed in a military coup.

Thaksin Shinawatra, who was born on 26 July 1949, is a one-time senior police officer and successful telecommunications entrepreneur cum politician who was leader of the *Palang Dharma* Party from May 1995. During the first administration of **Chuan Leekpai**, he was foreign minister for three months but then resigned because of controversy over his lack of a parliamentary seat. He was elected to Parliament in July 1995 and took his party back into coalition government as deputy prime minister to **Banharn Silpa-archa** but gave up office in August 1996 when *Palang Dharma* left the ruling coalition. After its dismal performance in elections in November 1996, Thaksin resigned as party leader. He was briefly deputy prime

minister in the coalition headed by **Chavalit Yongchaiyuth** but lost office with the latter's resignation in November 1997 in the wake of the **Asian Financial Crisis**. In July 1998, he founded the **Thai Rak Thai Party** (TRT). Claiming to be in favour of political and economic reform, he emerged as a strong opposition rival to the prime minister, Chuan Leekpai. Thaksin led TRT to victory in elections held in January 2001, the first under the new **People's Constitution** promulgated in 1997, on the back of populist promises. The People's Constitution was a landmark in Thai democratic reform, providing guarantees of civil rights, creation of independent institutions, and implementation of executive powers designed to break the chronic political deadlock born of weak coalitions and factionalism since the end of military rule in Thailand. It was against this backdrop that Thaksin was appointed prime minister in a coalition government which included the **Chart Thai Party** and the **New Aspiration Party**.

Upon assuming high office, Thaksin moved quickly to entrench his position. He pushed through populist electoral promises such as universal healthcare and village credit, which further enhanced his popularity among the rural electorate. These populist measures led him and his TRT to another sweeping victory at the 2005 elections, when it won an even larger mandate with 375 seats. Some of his other policies in contrast, particularly his 'war on drugs' policy which led to multiple cases of extrajudicial killings, his hardline policies in relation to the **Southern Provinces Insurgency**, and the controversial sale of his family company Shin Corporation to Temasek Holdings of Singapore, sowed the seeds of discontent which would eventually contribute to his downfall. Thaksin's fall from grace was catalysed by his closure of the weekly current affairs programme of influential former ally **Sondhi Limthongkul**, which led to mass protest. Thaksin sought to stave off a brewing crisis by calling for fresh elections in April 2006 but, faced with a collective boycott from opposition parties, could claim only a pyrrhic victory. An unprecedented intervention by King **Bhumibol Adulyadej**, who publicly declared the election undemocratic, led to judicial annulment of the result, which in turn

set in motion forces that eventually led to his removal through a coup in September 2006 while he was abroad. TRT suffered a similar fate when it was dissolved in May 2007 for reasons of electoral fraud. Thaksin returned briefly to Thailand in 2008 when the **People's Power Party**, comprised of his allies and former TRT colleagues, came to power after post-coup elections. Confronted with corruption charges, he skipped bail and left the country again, ostensibly to attend the opening ceremony of the August 2008 Olympics in Beijing. He has not returned since. Thaksin was charged *in absentia* for conflict of interest over a land deal involving his wife, Pojaman Shinawatra, and sentenced to two years' imprisonment. For that, he gained notoriety as the first Thai prime minister charged and convicted for a corruption offence that took place during his term.

While abroad in self-imposed exile, Thaksin remained actively involved in Thai politics initially through the **United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship** (UDD), whose leaders he kept in regular contact with, and then through his sister and prime minister, **Yingluck Shinawatra**. At the height of the UDD protests Thaksin was ever-present at their rallies through satellite and phone-in links, often provocatively praising their actions and even calling for revolution. In November 2009, Thaksin accepted an invitation from Prime Minister **Hun Sen** to serve as an economic advisor to Cambodia at the height of the **Preah Vihear Temple Dispute**. Exercised by the prospect of Thaksin's return to Thailand, opposition forces blocked attempts by the government of Yingluck Shinawatra to embark on constitutional revisions, which they interpreted foremost as a vehicle to facilitate this return. In any event, the 22 May 2014 military coup made any prospect of return highly unlikely. In March 2019, he was stripped of all royal titles by King **Maha Vajiralongkorn**, with whom he once had a close relationship. Meanwhile, Thaksin's shadow continues to loom large over Thai politics, and pro-Thaksin political parties have won every election since 2001, even after his removal from power. His influence today is palpable in the **Pheu Thai Party**, successor to TRT, which is run by his allies and family members.

see *also*: Asian Financial Crisis 1997–8; Ban-harn Silpa-archa; Bhumibol Adulyadej, King; *Chart Thai* Party; Chavalit Yongchaiyuth, General; Chuan Leekpai; Hun Sen; Insurgency, Southern Provinces; Maha Vajiralongkorn, King; New Aspiration Party; People's Constitution 1997; People's Power Party; *Pheu Thai* Party; Preah Vihear Temple Dispute; Sondhi Limthongkul; *Thai Rak Thai* Party; United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship; Yingluck Shinawatra.

### **Thammasat University Massacre 1976** (Thailand)

On 6 October 1976, armed border patrol and other police units, together with right-wing vigilante groups, stormed the campus of Thammasat University in Bangkok. Students had assembled there in protest against the return to the country in September of the former prime minister, Field Marshal **Thanom Kittikachorn**, who had gone into exile in the wake of a violent confrontation between soldiers and students in October 1973, after which parliamentary democracy had been re-established. There is reason to believe that Thanom's return was a deliberate attempt to engineer a political crisis in the military interest. Student theatre, including a mock hanging to draw attention to the extra-legal execution of two of their number in September, was seized on as an act of *lèse majesté* because of the striking resemblance of one of the actors to then-Crown Prince **Maha Vajiralongkorn**. The police onslaught led to carnage, with students being burned alive and lynched from trees as well as being shot dead. The official death toll was put at 46, but the fatalities were almost certainly much greater, while hundreds of students were wounded and many thousands arrested. The same evening, Admiral Sangad Chaloryu, minister of defence in the elected government of the prime minister, **Seni Pramoj**, announced that a National Administrative Reform Council had seized power in order to restore law and order. The coup re-established military rule in Thailand with the evident blessing of King **Bhumibol Adulyadej**, who on 9 October appointed a former Supreme Court judge, **Thanin Kraivichian**, as a nominally civilian prime minister.

He was replaced in a bloodless coup in October 1977 by a pragmatic military clique led by the army commander, General **Kriangsak Chomanan**. In the wake of the bloodbath at Thammasat University, hundreds of students fled the capital to join the insurgent Communist Party of Thailand, giving that movement a new momentum and significance less than two years after the end of the Vietnam War.

see also: Bhumibol Adulyadej, King; Kriangsak Chomanan, General; Maha Vajiralongkorn, King; Seni Pramoj; Thanin Kraivichian; Thanom Kittikachorn, Field Marshal.

### **Than Shwe, Senior General** (Myanmar)

General Than Shwe was appointed prime minister of Myanmar and chairman of the **State Law and Order Restoration Council** (SLORC) on 23 April 1992, succeeding General Saw Maung, who was relieved from office apparently suffering from a mental disorder. Than Shwe was born on 2 February 1933 in Kyaukse, Mandalay Division. He received a secondary education only, failing to finish, and began employment as a postal clerk. He later enlisted in the military, joining the ninth intake of the Army Officer Training School, and after graduating in 1953, he became an infantry officer and rose steadily in rank. In 1958, Than Shwe was assigned to the Directorate of Education and Psychological Warfare and later to psychological warfare field units. Throughout the late 1960s and 1970s he served in various field commands as well as general and divisional staff positions. By 1971, he was a battalion commander acquiring the rank of lieutenant colonel during 1972. In 1980, he became commander of the 88th Light Infantry Division overseeing several major military operations. In 1981 he was appointed to the Central Executive Committee of the **Burma Socialist Programme Party**. In 1983 he was appointed commander of the Southwest Military Region and subsequently chairman of the Irrawaddy Division Party Committee. He was promoted to brigadier general in 1984. In 1985 he was promoted to major general and appointed vice chief of staff (army), effectively head of the army. Than Shwe was promoted to lieutenant general in November 1987. He became the deputy minister of defence in July

1988. Following the **1988 Democracy Uprising** and the 18 September 1988 coup that installed the SLORC, Than Shwe became its vice chairman. On 18 March 1990, Than Shwe became a full general, vice-commander of the Myanmar Armed Forces (*Tatmadaw*) and commander-in-chief of the Myanmar Army. When Senior General Saw Maung unexpectedly resigned on 23 April 1992 for health reasons, Than Shwe replaced him as chairman of SLORC and commander-in-chief of the armed forces, at the same time promoting himself to senior general. He eventually gave up his command of the army in March 1993. When the **State Peace and Development Council** (SPDC) was created in November 1997, Than Shwe assumed the office of chairman.

Under Than Shwe, economic control over the economy was relaxed, and Myanmar joined **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** while at the same time maintaining tight controls over the media and political dissent. He released **Aung San Suu Kyi** in the late 1990s but returned her to detention in 2003. Throughout his rule, his government, and particularly the military, were widely criticized internationally for extensive human rights abuses. The government received especially virulent criticism in 2007 following its violent crackdown on the Buddhist monk-led **Saffron Revolution** and the delayed response to the Cyclone Nargis disaster in 2008. Than Shwe was frequently rumoured to be at odds with army commander and SPDC vice chairman Vice Senior General Maung Aye. His paranoia led him to place the regime's third in command, **Khin Nyunt**, under house arrest during an ostensible anti-corruption drive that resulted in the dismantling of the intelligence service and cemented Than Shwe's grip on power. Although believed to be opposed to democratization, Than Shwe oversaw the seven-step **Roadmap to Democracy** including the completion of the National Convention in 2007, the referendum that approved the **2008 Constitution**, and the machinations that led up to the 2010 democratic vote and transition to nominal civilian rule in March 2011. After **Thein Sein** assumed the office of president, Than Shwe stepped down and largely retreated from public view.

see *also*: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Aung San Suu Kyi; Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP); Constitution 2008; Democracy Uprising 1988; Khin Nyunt, General; Roadmap to Democracy; Saffron Revolution 2007; State Law and Order Restoration Council; State Peace and Development Council; Thein Sein.

### **Thanat Khoman** (Thailand)

Thanat Khoman served as Thailand's foreign minister between 1959 and 1971. His major contribution was in promoting regional reconciliation and cooperation. He played a key role in mediating between Indonesia and Malaysia in the mid-1960s; the choice of Bangkok as the venue for the founding meeting of **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** in August 1967 was a testament to his active part in institution-building. Thanat Khoman was born in 1914 in Bangkok into a Sino–Thai family. He studied law in France and entered his country's diplomatic service in 1940. He served in Tokyo during part of the Pacific War but, on his return to Bangkok, associated himself with the resistance to Japan's dominion. In that company, he was a member of a clandestine mission to the headquarters of the Allied **Southeast Asia Command** in Ceylon (Sri Lanka) in February 1945. After the war he held several diplomatic posts, rising to the rank of ambassador to Washington in 1957. He was removed as foreign minister with the incumbency coup by the military in 1971, in part because of his declared interest in a rapprochement with the People's Republic of China. After stepping down as a technocratic foreign minister, he entered politics and became the leader of the **Democrat Party** between 1979 and 1982 and a deputy prime minister between 1980 and 1982, after which he retired from political life. He passed away on 3 March 2016 at the age of 101.

see *also*: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Democrat Party; Southeast Asia Command 1943–6.

### **Thanathorn Juangroongruangkit** (Thailand)

Within a period of barely two years, Thanathorn Juangroongruangkit became a household name

in Thailand. A rising star who has emerged as a vocal and activist opponent of the establishment and the military junta, Thanathorn was born in 1978 into a wealthy family that migrated from China and eventually made its fortune from Thai Sumit Group, which deals with auto parts.

Thanathorn was a graduate of Thammasat University, where he read mechanical engineering. He also possesses three master's degrees: in economics, finance, and international business law. More importantly, while at Thammasat he immersed himself in the university's storied culture of student activism. Thanathorn served as president of the Thammasat Student Union and later vice secretary-general of the Student Federation of Thailand. In these offices, he became a staunch advocate for land rights and the plight of the poor, and was actively involved in several student protests towards those ends. He also had a stint working for the UN as an aid worker in Africa before returning to take over the reins of the business from his late father, which he did with great success. His uncle, Suriya Juangroongruangkit, was a minister in the government of **Thaksin Shinawatra** and later a senior member of the military-backed **Palang Pracharat Party**.

Thanathorn led the **Future Forward Party** for the March 2019 elections, which he not only contested and won, but was later nominated by a coalition of anti-junta opposition parties as their candidate for the post of prime minister in an eventual unsuccessful attempt to prevent the incumbent, **Prayuth Chan-ocha**, from returning to office. In the event, Thanathorn's standing as a parliamentarian was short-lived, as cases accumulated against him and the Future Forward Party immediately after the election. Most of these cases were made on grounds of procedural transgressions of election laws, such as his alleged failure to transfer his shares in a media firm in time for the registration period for general election candidates, a charge he denies. In November 2019, he was found guilty and convicted by the Constitutional Court and banned from politics for ten years.

see *also*: Future Forward Party; *Palang Pracharat Party*; Prayuth Chan-ocha, General; Thaksin Shinawatra.

### Thanin Kraivichian (Thailand)

Thanin Kraivichian became a controversial prime minister of Thailand in October 1976 when the deaths of students in the **Thammasat University Massacre** provided the opportunity for a military coup. He was in office for only a year when he was deposed by another military coup, but without bloodshed. Thanin was born on 5 April 1927 in Bangkok. He was trained as a lawyer at Gray's Inn, London. After a period in legal practice, he embarked on a career as a jurist and by 1976 had attained the position of senior judge in the country's Supreme Court. Thanin did not enjoy a political base. The key to his appointment as prime minister was his close association with King **Bhumibol Adulyadej**, who was suspicious of military rule and wished the country to have a civilian conservative leader. Thanin fitted the bill as a compromise candidate acceptable to the so-called National Administrative Reform Council, in whose name the military had seized power. In office, however, he showed himself to be ideologically so dogmatic and ill-attuned to political responsibility that his removal in October 1977 by General **Kriangsak Chomanan** was greeted with a sense of national relief. He was immediately appointed to the Privy Council and was a member until 13 October 2016 when, following the passing of Bhumibol, the Privy Council president, **Prem Tinsulanonda**, was appointed temporary regent for a month and a half and Thanin took his place. After Prem returned to assume the office of the presidency, Thanin was retired from the Privy Council by Bhumibol's successor, **Maha Vajiralongkorn**.

*see also:* Bhumibol Adulyadej, King; Kriangsak Chomanan, General; Maha Vajiralongkorn, King; Prem Tinsulanonda, General; Thammasat University Massacre 1976.

### Thanom Kittikachorn, Field Marshal (Thailand)

Field Marshal Thanom Kittikachorn was prime minister of Thailand in October 1973 when brutal military reaction to student protest at the lack of constitutional progress prompted King **Bhumibol Adulyadej** to advise him to go into exile

overseas. His return to Thailand in September 1976, ostensibly to enter a Buddhist monastery, provoked a recurrence of protests which culminated the following month in many student deaths in the **Thammasat University Massacre** in Bangkok, which provided the opportunity for a military coup.

Thanom Kittikachorn was born on 11 August 1911 and began his professional military training at the Chulachomkiao Royal Military Academy in Bangkok before the coup in 1932 that put an end to the absolute monarchy. After rising to the rank of lieutenant general in the mid-1950s, he entered politics as a close associate of Field Marshal **Sarit Thanarat**, who was effective military dictator from 1957 until his death in 1963. Thanom, who was then deputy prime minister, became prime minister continuously (with one interruption) until his deposition in 1973. In that period, he depended conspicuously on the support of his deputy, General **Praphas Charusathien**. After his controversial return from exile, he lived a private life in retirement. He died on 16 June 2004.

*see also:* Bhumibol Adulyadej, King; Praphas Charusathien, Field Marshal; Sarit Thanarat, Field Marshal; Thammasat University Massacre 1976.

### Thein Sein (Myanmar)

Thein Sein became president of Myanmar after being elected in the country's first democratic election in decades in November 2011. He has been credited as the person who set Myanmar on the path of political reform and liberalization which has been abruptly halted by the February 2021 coup.

Thein Sein was born in Kyonku village in Irrawaddy Division on 20 April 1945. He joined the ninth intake of the Defence Services Academy, graduating in 1968. He held few combat roles, serving mostly in bureaucratic positions. In 1993 he attained the rank of brigadier general and became the first brigadier to hold the position of general staff officer in the War Office in Yangon, an office he assumed in 1991. In 1996 he was promoted to major general and assigned the command of the newly established Triangle Military Region Command in



northeastern Shan State where he served from 1997 to 2001. As a regional commander, Thein Sein also became a member of the **State Peace and Development Council** and Secretary-3 of the ruling junta in 2003. He became adjutant general of the War Office in 2001 and was promoted to lieutenant general in 2002. With the detention of **Khin Nyunt** in late 2004, Thein Sein became Secretary-1. During this time he also chaired the National Convention Convening Commission that oversaw the drafting of what would become Myanmar's current constitution. In April 2007, Thein Sein was appointed interim prime minister to replace the ailing Soe Win. After Soe Win's death on 12 October 2007, Thein Sein formally became prime minister (on 24 October). He was promoted to general in 2007 and continued to hold the position of Secretary-1 in the military junta, making him the country's fourth highest-ranking general. As prime minister he oversaw improvements in bilateral relations with Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, and Bangladesh. In the wake of the Cyclone Nargis disaster in May 2008, Thein Sein led the National Disaster Preparedness Central Committee tasked with emergency preparedness.

Thein Sein retired from the military on 29 April 2010, along with 22 other high-ranking military officers, to lead the **Union Solidarity and Development Party** (USDP) for the November 2010 election. The party went on to win an overwhelming majority of seats in a controversial election marred by widespread irregularities. Thein Sein ran as a representative for Zabuthiri township in the Naypyidaw Union Territory where he won a purported 91.2 per cent of the vote. On 4 February 2011, he was elected by the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's Presidential Electoral College as President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, making him the first non-interim civilian president in 49 years. He also concurrently headed the National Defence and Security Council, an extra-legal body with ill-defined powers but definite authority to reinstitute military rule in the event of an emergency. As president, Thein Sein sought and won Myanmar's bid to chair **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** in 2014, which he hosted to resounding success. He has also pushed numerous

reform initiatives including relaxation of controls on the media, the suspension of a controversial dam project led by China, engagement with **Aung San Suu Kyi** which paved the way for the **National League for Democracy's** (NLD) involvement in by-elections in April 2012, and support for a peace process with the country's numerous ethnic insurgent organizations. Widely considered a moderate reformist, Thein Sein became the first Myanmar leader to visit the United States in 46 years in September 2012. He was also nominated for the 2012 Nobel Peace Prize. As president, Thein Sein oversaw the successful conduct of the country's first fully open election in 2015, in which NLD won by a landslide against his own USDP. After handing over power on 30 March 2016 in a low-key ceremony, Thein Sein entered the monkhood.

*see also:* ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Aung San Suu Kyi; Khin Nyunt, General; National League for Democracy; State Peace and Development Council; Union Solidarity and Development Party.

**Thieu, Nguyen Van** (Vietnam) *see* **Nguyen Van Thieu**

**Thongloun Sisoulith** (Laos)

Thongloun Sisoulith is currently president of Laos. Thongloun is a northerner born in Hua Phan Province in November 1945. He studied at the Neo Lao Hak Sat Pedagogical College in Hua Pan from 1962 to 1969 and was later educated in the Soviet Union. Thongloun was deputy minister of foreign affairs from 1987 to 1992, minister of labour and social welfare from 1993 to 1997, and a member of the National Assembly from 1998 to 2000. In March 2001 he became deputy prime minister and president of the State Planning Committee. Passed over for the position of prime minister in 2006, Thongloun was appointed deputy prime minister and foreign minister in 2006, replacing Somsavat Lengsavat and ranking fourth in the **Lao People's Revolutionary Party** (LPRP) Politburo. In April 2016 he assumed the position of prime minister on the back of younger members of the party who are better known for their political

and technocratic credentials than their achievements in the revolution. After extensive contribution to economic policy over the last decade and a half, Thongloun Sisoulith ascended to the position of party secretary and state president at the 11th Party Congress in March 2021 at the age of 75, succeeding **Bounnhang Vorachith** in both offices. He topped the list of 71 members of the Central Committee's secretariat, and is the first occupant of the top positions who does not possess a military background. During his term as prime minister, Thongloun acquired a reputation of being a firm advocate of the anti-corruption campaign. Using the hitherto emaciated State Inspection Agency, the government under Thongloun began arresting high profile officials on charges of corruption, with 30 alone charged in 2016–17, although it has been surmised that some of this effort was linked to power struggles within the party. As president, Thongloun faces a monumental task of addressing the country's growing debt burden, of which up to 75 per cent take the form of bilateral debt to the People's Republic of China, against the backdrop of an economic afflicted by the **Covid-19** pandemic.

see also: Bounnhang Vorachith; Covid-19; Lao People's Revolutionary Party.

### **Thongsing Thammavong** (Laos)

Thongsing Thammavong was prime minister of Laos from 2010 to 2016. He assumed the position on 23 December 2010 after the surprise resignation of **Bouasone Bouphavanh**. His position was strengthened after the Ninth Congress of the **Lao People's Revolutionary Party** (LPRP) in 2011. Thongsing has been a member of the LPRP's Politburo since 1991. He was previously president of the National Assembly from 2006 to 2010. Thongsing was born on 12 April 1944 in the northeastern province of Huaphan. He joined the revolutionary movement in August 1959 and became a member of the LPRP in July 1967. Thongsing studied military medicine and served during the war on the Laos–Vietnam border from 1959 to 1960 before becoming involved in education in Huaphan Province and later at the national level from 1976 to 1979. After studying politics and administration from 1980 to 1981, he became a standby member of

the Party Central Committee. Thongsing was minister of information and culture from 1983 to 1988. From 1989 to 1991 he was party secretary and vice-president of the People's Supreme Assembly, then was promoted to acting president, a position he held during 1991–2. He was elected as a standing Politburo member and head of the Party Central Committee Organization Board at the fifth Party Congress in 1991, and re-elected at the sixth Congress. He was elected mayor of Vientiane in 2002. In 2006 he was elected president of the National Assembly. Thongsing was close to the former president, **Nouhak Phoumsavan**. Following the 2010 Congress, Thongsing moved up into the number two position in the Politburo, second only to **Choummaly Sayasone**, president of Laos and general secretary of the LPRP, and assumed the position of prime minister. In what some saw as a surprise, he opted out of the Central Committee list at the 2016 Congress and stepped down from office under a cloud of allegations of corruption and economic mismanagement. During his time as prime minister, Thongsing was seen as instrumental in the deepening of relations with the People's Republic of China.

see also: Bouasone Bouphavanh; Choummaly Sayasone; Lao People's Revolutionary Party; Nouhak Phoumsavan.

### **Timor Gap** (Indonesia/Timor-Leste)

The Timor Gap refers to a depression in between a shallow, vast continental shelf lying adjacent to the Australian coast and a narrow, deep continental shelf lying adjacent to the Timor coast in the Timor Sea. It contains a 60,000-square-kilometre body of water with a maximum depth of 3,000 metres where the maritime borders of Timor-Leste, Australia, and Indonesia intersect. This depression lies some 300 miles north of Australia but only 60 miles south of Timor-Leste. Contained within this body of water are several resource-rich areas, including the Greater Sunrise complex of fields discovered in 1974 and estimated to hold more than 5 trillion cubic feet of natural gas and 200 million barrels of a light crude oil known as condensate. This area is critical not only to the sovereignty of the fledgling country of Timor-Leste, but to its economy as well.

Following contention over the terms of delimitation that arose because of variations in the depth of the continental shelf overall, the Timor Gap Cooperation Treaty concluded by the governments of Indonesia and Australia on 27 October 1989 provided for the delimitation of the continental shelf boundary between the south coast of the then Indonesian island of Timor and the northern coast of Australia. The treaty came into force on 9 February 1991. Delimitation took the form of three zones, two to be subject respectively to the control of Indonesia and Australia and the third to be subject to joint control and exploitation. The prospect of rich oil and natural gas reserves in the Timor Sea was a determining factor in protracted negotiations and their outcome. At the time, the conclusion of the treaty was important. Not only did it resolve a longstanding problem of competitive access to natural resources, but it also set the seal on reconciliation between Jakarta and Canberra, especially over the issue of East Timor, which was annexed by Indonesia in 1976 in a move that Australia remained highly critical of but recognized. That issue was revived as a bone of political contention after the massacre of Timorese demonstrators by Indonesian security forces in the capital, Dili, in November 1991. That bloody episode, which provoked public protest in Australia, was not allowed to stand in the way of the practical implementation of the Timor Gap Cooperation Treaty. In December 1991 Indonesia and Australia signed agreements with a number of international oil companies, permitting them to explore for oil and natural gas in the zone of joint administration in the Timor Sea. The discovery of oil in the joint seabed zone was announced in February 1994. Portugal, which had left its Timor colony in 1974, brought an action against Australia before the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on the grounds that its rights as administering power had been violated by the treaty. In July 1995, the ICJ ruled that it did not have jurisdiction in the matter; it could not rule on the annexation of East Timor by Indonesia, which had not recognized the compulsory jurisdiction of the court and was not a party to the action.

After the UN-supervised referendum in August 1999 in which the vast majority of

registered voters opted for independence, which was ratified by Indonesia's **People's Consultative Assembly** (MPR) in the following October, the status of the treaty was clarified. Acting on behalf of East Timor, in February 2000, the United Nations signed a Timor Gap oil and gas exploration treaty with Australia, which had the effect of upholding the terms of the 1989 treaty in favour of East Timor (not Indonesia) and Australia. This treaty established cooperation zones that covered about 65,000 kilometres divided into three zones, with the revenue being split between Dili and Canberra in accordance with the zonal divisions. On 20 May 2002, the Timor Sea Treaty replaced the Timor Gap Cooperation Treaty of 1989 after East Timor gained independence. The new treaty was signed between the newly independent Government of East Timor (Timor-Leste) and Australia, after the latter refused to take the matter of contested maritime boundaries to the International Court of Justice, with the aim of developing the petroleum resources in a section of the seabed between Australia and East Timor known as the Joint Petroleum Development Area. This treaty had only a single zone with 90 per cent of the revenue derived from this area of the seabed going to Timor-Leste. In 2007, Timor-Leste reluctantly signed the Treaty on Certain Maritime Arrangements in the Timor Sea (CMATS) with Australia, which will expire in 2057; this treaty replaced Article 22 of the Timor Sea Treaty, bringing its validity in line with CMATS's. The CMATS provided for the equal distribution of revenue derived from the disputed Greater Sunrise oil and gas field between Australia and Timor-Leste. The field is located in the Timor Gap where Australia and Timor-Leste have overlapping claims over the continental shelf or seabed. The Timor Sea Treaty can be renewed at any point if both Dili and Canberra are in consensus. Nevertheless, the Timor Sea Treaty was viewed as disadvantageous by Timor-Leste, thereby leading **José 'Xanana' Gusmão** to declare the negotiation of a new treaty to be of primary personal interest.

In March 2018, the Timor Sea Treaty was signed between Australia and Timor-Leste. The treaty resolved longstanding differences on the guiding principle for delimitation, where

Australia favoured the principle of prolongation while Timor-Leste advocated the principle of equidistance. The treaty provided for a permanent maritime boundary between the two countries, based on a median line drawn between their opposite coasts predicated mostly on Timor-Leste's equidistance argument, along with two connecting lateral lines to the east and west that run north to intersect with the 1972 Australia–Indonesia continental shelf boundary lines. The treaty also concluded a formula for the sharing of revenue from extracted resources, providing for up to 80 per cent ownership of oil and gas revenues from the Greater Sunrise oilfield, although that figure would be reduced by 10 per cent in the event Timor-Leste refuses the option of having the oil refined in Australia or another offshore site. The treaty allows for future negotiations over the boundary after resources have been exhausted, and with the agreement of Timor-Leste and Indonesia.

see also: Gusmão, José 'Xanana'; People's Consultative Assembly.

### **Timor Gap Cooperation Treaty** (Indonesia/Timor-Leste) see **Timor Gap**

### **Timor-Leste Crisis 2006** (Timor-Leste)

In May 2006, the state capital of Timor-Leste, Dili, descended into violence between competing factions of security forces that lasted for several months. This resulted in the displacement of around 150,000 people who fled their homes in Dili to escape the violence, taking shelter at the United Nations' internally displaced persons camps. At least 30 people were reported killed.

The crisis was triggered by the poor handling of the dismissal of the 591 soldiers who went on a strike complaining of poor working conditions and that, as 'Westerners', they were being passed over for promotion because most of the military leadership were 'Easterners', where the original nationalist resistance movement was based. This deepened tensions between security forces in the eastern and western regions of the country, with the latter often being accused of 'half-hearted resistance' during Indonesia's occupation of the territory. But the crisis was also a consequence of pent-up

frustration over high unemployment rates in Dili, as well as a general disillusionment with the **Fretilin** government in power amidst allegations of corruption. Unable to arrest the violence, the Timorese government requested help from the international community. Led by Australia, about 2,700 troops comprising military personnel from Australia, Malaysia, New Zealand, and Portugal arrived in Dili to disarm the factions and restore order on the streets.

The descent into violence also reflected deep divisions within the political elite, particularly between the unpopular prime minister **Mari Alkatiri** and President **José 'Xanana' Gusmão**, which cast a dark shadow. Alkatiri, who had overseen the decision to dismiss the soldiers, resigned on 27 June after coming under intense domestic pressure for his handling of the crisis, as well as accusations that he and interior minister Rogerio Lobato had armed fighters against his political opponents, which he denied. He was replaced by **José Ramos-Horta**, the foreign and defence minister, who was sworn in on 10 July. In response to the crisis, the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) was created on 25 August with the mandate of restoring order and stability, rebuilding the armed forces and the police, as well as providing assistance to the Timor-Leste government in the presidential and parliamentary elections in 2007. Accordingly, 1,500 foreign police were deployed in Timor-Leste to boost the police presence and capability.

What happened in those few months in 2006 reflected a political crisis involving internal divisions and revealed the weakness of the *Fretilin* government. Moreover, the reintroduction of foreign troops barely a year after UN mission peacekeepers withdrew also raised serious questions at the time about the viability of the young nation.

see also: Alkatiri, Mari; *Fretilin*; Gusmão, José 'Xanana'; Ramos-Horta, José.

### **Timor Sea Treaty 2002** (Timor-Leste) see **Timor Gap**

### **Tonkin Gulf Dispute** (Vietnam)

The Tonkin Gulf dispute between the People's Republic of China and Vietnam is a dispute over

maritime boundary delimitation and territorial jurisdiction in the **South China Sea**, in particular within that body of water that is surrounded on three sides by Vietnam's northern provinces, China's Guangxi Province, and Hainan Island. Disagreement over the delimitation of the Sino-Vietnamese boundary stemmed from the differing interpretations of the Sino-French Treaty of 1887; its obscure content and vague language did not offer a readily identifiable line or the supporting evidence for such a line to be drawn.

Negotiations on the delimitation of the maritime boundary in the Gulf of Tonkin began in 1974, but talks stalled as relations between Vietnam and China deteriorated after 1978. Talks did not resume until 1991 with the normalization of relations between Hanoi and Beijing, where they decided to settle all outstanding border and territorial issues, including those in the Gulf of Tonkin. The first significant milestone was a Memorandum of Understanding signed by both parties in October 1993 on the principles for handling the Gulf of Tonkin dispute, which involved the establishment of an expert working group. On 25 December 2000, Chinese president Jiang Zemin and his Vietnamese counterpart, **Tran Duc Luong**, signed the Agreement on the Demarcation of Waters, Exclusive Economic Zones, and Continental Shelves in the Gulf of Tonkin. With this, Beijing and Hanoi found consensus on a delimitation line in the Gulf which comprises 21 points from the Bei Lun River in the north to the southern mouth of the Gulf, as well as delineation of a territorial boundary, exclusive economic zones, and continental shelves. At the same time, the two countries also signed an agreement on fishing cooperation in the Gulf of Tonkin. However, a resolution to the dispute over the demarcation of maritime boundaries beyond the mouth of the Gulf of Tonkin remains elusive due to their longstanding territorial dispute over the Paracel Islands, which have been under China's physical control since 1974.

*see also:* South China Sea; Tran Duc Luong.

### **Tonkin Gulf Incident 1964** (Vietnam)

An alleged attack on two US destroyers on patrol in the Gulf of Tonkin by North Vietnamese torpedo boats on 4 August 1964 prompted a US congressional resolution on 7 August.

That resolution endorsed US military reprisals against naval bases and oil storage facilities and sanctioned a subsequent sustained aerial bombardment. It was revealed later that for the previous six months the United States had been sponsoring clandestine armed raids against North Vietnam and had also prepared a draft resolution for Congress which, if and when passed, would serve as a declaration of war and permit overt military action north of the 17th parallel of latitude. The retaliatory air strikes, launched some 12 hours after reports of the alleged North Vietnamese attacks had reached Washington, were possible only because of prior target planning. The Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, which authorized the president to 'take all necessary measures to repel any armed attack against the forces of the United States', was approved with only two dissenting votes. In January 1971 in an expression of congressional disillusionment with the conduct of the Vietnam War, the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution was repealed. A US National Security Agency report released in 2007 revealed unequivocally that the purported attack by North Vietnamese vessels on the US destroyers on 4 August 1964 never actually happened.

### **Tran Dai Quang** (Vietnam)

Elected by the national assembly to the largely ceremonial position of the presidency of Vietnam in January 2016 and confirmed in the role in April, Tran Dai Quang passed away due to a prolonged illness on 21 September 2018 after only slightly more than two years in office. He was due to address the United Nations General Assembly the week of his death.

Tran Dai Quang was born on 12 October 1956 in Kim Son District, in the northern province of Ninh Binh, and possesses a doctorate from the National Academy of Public Administration in Ho Chi Minh City. A hardliner who demonstrated little tolerance, he spent the majority of his years in government with the Ministry of Public Security, rising to the rank of minister. He also held the rank of police general and was a member of the Politburo. His tenure as president coincided with corruption scandals in the ministry where he served as minister from 2011 to 2016. He was elected to the presidency to

replace **Truong Tan Sang**, who retired. Despite his active diplomatic role during his brief term in office, Quang was known for his aversion for publicity. Prior to his passing, he had been seeking treatment for his illness in Japan.  
see also: *Truong Tan Sang*.

### **Tran Duc Luong** (Vietnam)

Tran Duc Luong was elected president of Vietnam in September 1997. He was born on 5 May 1937 in Quang Ngai Province. He trained as a geologist and also studied economic management in Moscow. He rose to the post of general director of the Mining and Geology General Department in 1982. He was then made an alternative member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party. Luong became a full member in 1986 and a deputy prime minister in the following year with industrial and technological responsibilities. He held that position until being elevated to presidential office but was elected to the party's Politburo in 1996. He then became a standing member of the Politburo during its eighth National Assembly Convocation, and deputy to the 10th and 11th national assemblies. Without military experience and a personal power base, he was regarded as a compromise choice for president without strong views either for or against economic reform. Tran Duc Luong was re-elected in 2002. In June 2006, he announced his resignation and was succeeded by **Nguyen Minh Triet**.  
see also: *Nguyen Minh Triet*.

### **Trans-Pacific Partnership** (Brunei/Malaysia/Singapore/Vietnam)

The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) was an ambitious attempt at establishing a multilateral free trade agreement comprising the economies of the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Peru, Chile, Japan, Singapore, Malaysia, Brunei, and Vietnam. TPP built on the Trans-Pacific Strategic Economic Partnership Agreement (TPSEP) of 2005 involving Brunei, Chile, Peru, and Singapore. The United States and Australia expressed interest in joining TPSEP in 2008, and this subsequently led to the conceptualization of TPP. Unlike existing bilateral FTAs or the **Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership** (RCEP), TPP aimed to set higher hurdles

for membership and thence became seen as a more exclusive regional trade institution. For example, unlike these other mechanisms which essentially focus on border measures, TPP's more comprehensive coverage would have included 'behind border' measures that cover environmental and labour issues, intellectual property rights, and telecommunications. Moreover, aside from moving beyond the traditional focus on the removal of trade barriers, TPP would have also been potentially punitive for regional countries, particularly those with developing economies, as it appeared to privilege commercial interests over consumer interest. The high membership hurdles led TPP to be viewed as a US-led trade institution, as opposed to RCEP, which is seen to be anchored by **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** and China. Though TPP was signed on 4 February 2016, it was dealt a fatal blow a year later in January 2017, when newly elected US president Donald Trump withdrew his country from the partnership agreement. Nevertheless, the remaining signatories scrambled to recast and renegotiate the agreement, eventually arriving at the **Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership** or CPTPP.

see also: *ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967-*; *Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership*; *Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership*.

### **Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (ASEAN) 1976** (Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/Laos/Malaysia/Myanmar/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand/Timor-Leste/Vietnam)

A Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia was concluded by the heads of government of **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** on the island of Bali on 24 February 1976. Based on respect for the sanctity of national sovereignty, the **Bali Summit** treaty set out a code of conduct for regional relations. It also made provision for the pacific settlement of disputes with a High Council, captured in article 14 of the treaty, to facilitate that end among

signatories in the event of a failure to resolve matters through direct negotiations. The promulgation of the treaty was part of an attempt by ASEAN to display political solidarity and confidence in the wake of revolutionary communist success in Indochina during 1975. It was also made open for accession by other regional states in an abortive effort at the time to build political bridges to Indochina. Brunei signed the treaty on joining ASEAN in January 1984. It was not until after the end of the Cold War that Vietnam and Laos formally sought to adhere to the treaty at the annual meeting of ASEAN foreign ministers in Manila in July 1992. Cambodia and Myanmar acceded to the treaty in 1995.

In December 1987 a protocol was inserted into the treaty permitting states outside Southeast Asia to accede to the treaty following the consent of all the Southeast Asian states that were already signatories. A second protocol was inserted into the treaty in July 1998 to include the consent of all regional member states (including the new ones) for such accession. A third protocol was inserted into the treaty in July 2010 so as to allow the accession of regional organizations to the treaty with the consent of all regional member states. In July 2001, the rules of procedure of the treaty High Council were adopted. As of 2021, a total of 23 High Contracting Parties outside the Southeast Asian region have acceded to the treaty: Papua New-Guinea in 1989; India and China in 2003; Japan, Pakistan, Russia, and South Korea in 2004; New Zealand, Australia, and Mongolia in 2005; France in 2006; Timor-Leste, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka in 2007; North Korea in 2008; the United States in 2009; Canada and Turkey in 2010; the European Union, the United Kingdom, and Brazil in 2012; Norway in 2013; Chile, Egypt, and Morocco in 2016; Iran and Argentina in 2018; Germany, Bahrain, and Peru in 2019; South Africa, Colombia, and Cuba in 2020; and the Netherlands in 2021. Accession to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation was made a membership requirement of the **East Asia Summit**. The Treaty of Amity and Cooperation was also referenced in the **Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea** signed in Phnom Penh in November 2002. The machinery for dispute settlement has never been invoked by any of the ASEAN states to resolve

intra-mural differences. However, after chairing the Special Informal Foreign Ministers' Meeting on 22 February 2011 to discuss the **Preah Vihear Temple Dispute** involving Cambodia and Thailand, then Indonesian foreign minister Marty Natalegawa reflected that while the High Council has never been formally invoked, 'for all practical purposes the Special Informal ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting constituted such a council'.

see also: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Bali Summit (ASEAN) 1976; Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (ASEAN) 2002; Declaration on the South China Sea (ASEAN) 1992; East Asia Summit 2005–; Preah Vihear Temple Dispute.

### **Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation 1977 (Laos/Vietnam)**

A Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation between the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, valid for a period of 25 years, was concluded between the two governments in Vientiane on 15 July 1977. The treaty set out to affirm the special relationship between the two states in the context of strained ties with **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** governments and the deteriorating association between Vietnam and the People's Republic of China. The preamble stated that the two governments 'endeavouring to protect and develop the special Vietnam–Laos relationship to make the two countries inherently united in the national liberation cause, remain united forever in national construction and defence'. The treaty made provision for defence cooperation but the actual terms were incorporated in a secret protocol, as was the basis for the demarcation of their common border. At the time, the treaty was believed to make legal provision for the deployment in Laos of Vietnamese troops which had been in the country from the early 1950s and which were not withdrawn until the late 1980s. In February 2000, secretary of Vietnam's Communist Party, **Le Kha Phieu**, while receiving a high-level military delegation from Laos, spoke of the 'special friendship' between the two countries and peoples.

see *also*: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Le Kha Phieu, General.

### **Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation 1978** (Vietnam)

A Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation between the Soviet Union and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, valid for a period of 25 years, was concluded between the two governments in Moscow on 3 November 1978. Such a treaty had been sought by the Soviet Union for some time but had been resisted by Vietnam until faced with the prospect of external threat from the People's Republic of China. On Vietnam's part, signature constituted an attempt to deter China from military retaliation in response to its planned invasion of Cambodia, which began on 25 December 1978. Article Six of the treaty stipulated that 'In case either party is attacked or threatened with attack, the two signatories to the Treaty shall immediately consult each other with a view to eliminating that threat, and shall take appropriate and effective measures to safeguard peace and security of the two countries'. In the event, the treaty failed to deter China, which launched a punitive attack on Vietnam in February 1979. The Soviet Union provided considerable economic and military assistance to Vietnam in support of its policy in Cambodia until the late 1980s, when relations with China began to be repaired. The Soviet Union also deployed aircraft and naval vessels in Vietnam but did not at any time intervene on behalf of its treaty partner. The treaty lapsed with the break-up of the Soviet Union in December 1991, to be succeeded by a new accord with Russia in June 1994 which covered continued use of **Cam Ranh Bay** and outstanding debts by Vietnam.

see *also*: Cam Ranh Bay.

### **Treaty of Peace, Friendship, and Cooperation 1979** (Cambodia/Vietnam)

A Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation between the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the **People's Republic of Kampuchea** (Cambodia), valid for a period of 25 years, was concluded between the two governments in Phnom Penh on 18 February 1979. The incumbent

Cambodian administration had been established through force of Vietnamese arms only the previous month. The treaty was intended to give legal force to a special relationship between Vietnam and Cambodia demanded from 1976 by the government in Hanoi of the **Khmer Rouge** regime, which it had overthrown. The preamble asserted that 'the independence, freedom, peace and security of the two countries are closely interrelated'. The treaty served in particular to provide a legal basis for the presence in Cambodia of Vietnamese troops, who had been represented as volunteers when they invaded in December 1978, acting on behalf of the so-called Kampuchean National United Front for National Salvation. In the event, the treaty failed in its political and military purposes. Vietnam withdrew its main force units from Cambodia in September 1989 and, in the interest of rapprochement with the People's Republic of China, was obliged to leave the government that it had implanted in January 1979 to its own political devices to come to a settlement of the Cambodian conflict.

see *also*: Kampuchea, People's Republic of (PRK); Khmer Rouge.

### **Tripoli Agreement 1976** (Philippines)

In December 1976, at a meeting in the Libyan capital, Tripoli, a provisional agreement was reached on regional autonomy between the Philippines government and the insurgent **Moro National Liberation Front** (MNLF). MNLF had launched a separatist rebellion in the Muslim-inhabited southern provinces of the Philippines in October 1972 in the wake of a declaration of martial law by President **Ferdinand Marcos** in the previous month. Negotiations had begun from the end of 1974 but soon ran into difficulty. They were resumed two years later after a visit to Tripoli in November 1976 by **Imelda Marcos**, who enlisted the good offices of President Gaddafi who had become the most prominent international backer of Muslim nationalism in the Philippines. The Tripoli Agreement provided for a ceasefire and terms for political autonomy in 13 provinces in the islands of Mindanao, Sulu, and Palawan. The agreement was never implemented with the full consent of both



parties, however, and subsequent negotiations broke down. Of the 13 provinces identified, only four had Muslim majorities because of the internal migration of Christians from the north. President Marcos proceeded unilaterally to proclaim an autonomous region in March 1977 and to hold a referendum on the terms of autonomy within the 13 provinces in April. The outcome was a predictable vote in favour of a very limited form of autonomy and against the kind of devolution of power favoured by MNLF. The precarious ceasefire broke down during the remainder of 1977. Negotiations did not resume until after President Marcos was succeeded in office by **Corazón Aquino**. On the basis of a plebiscite conducted in 1989, the Aquino government established the Autonomous Region for Muslim Mindanao in four provinces in 1990. This set the stage for the Final Peace Agreement brokered by Indonesia between Manila and the MNLF in 1996. However, disagreements within MNLF over whether the Final Peace Agreement reflected the spirit of the Tripoli Agreement led to the fragmentation of the movement and a resurgence of violence, which in turn shifted the initiative to the **Moro Islamic Liberation Front**.

see also: Aquino, Corazón; Marcos, Ferdinand; Marcos, Imelda; Moro Islamic Liberation Front; Moro National Liberation Front.

### **Truong Chinh** (Vietnam)

Truong Chinh, who was born Dang Xuan Khu, was an influential member of the hierarchy of the Communist Party of Vietnam who served as head of state between 1981 and 1987. His ideological outlook owed much to Chinese example, and his *nom de guerre* was a Vietnamese translation of the term Long March. Truong Chinh was born in 1907 in Nam Dinh Province into a well-known family of scholars. He was educated in Hanoi and after acquiring his baccalaureate worked as a schoolteacher. He was attracted to **Ho Chi Minh's** revolutionary movement as a teenager and became a member of the Communist Party of Indochina on its foundation. He spent six years in prison from 1930 and on release worked for the Communist Party as a journalist. One of Ho Chi Minh's most trusted colleagues, Truong Chinh was elected general

secretary of the Communist Party in 1941, holding that position until 1956 when he was relieved of office because of his close identification with a harsh programme of land reform. He remained a member of the Politburo during the course of the **Vietnam War**, sustaining a reputation as a party hardliner. When **Le Duan** died in July 1986, Truong Chinh replaced him as general secretary of the Communist Party until the end of the year, when a radical change of economic course was signalled at its sixth national congress. He died on 1 October 1988 from injuries sustained in a fall.

see also: Ho Chi Minh; Le Duan; Vietnam War.

### **Truong Tan Sang** (Vietnam)

Truong Tan Sang was elected by the National Assembly to the largely ceremonial post of president in July 2011 and served until 2016. Seen as a conservative, Truong was an outspoken critic of reformists in the party, and in particular of former prime minister **Nguyen Tan Dung's** economic reforms.

Truong was born in the southern province of Long An in 1949 and holds a bachelor of law degree. His political career began in 1969 when he joined the Communist Party of Vietnam. In 1971 he was imprisoned in Phu Quoc by the South Vietnamese government and was released under the **Paris Peace Agreements** of 1973. From 1983 to 1986 Truong headed Ho Chi Minh City's forestry department, as well as its new economic zone development department. In 1986, Truong was promoted to the standing board of the city's party committee. In 1991, Truong Tan Sang became a member of the party Central Committee, and in the following year he became the chairman of Ho Chi Minh City Peoples' Committee. In 1996, he became secretary of the party's Ho Chi Minh branch. That year he also joined the Politburo as its 14th ranking member. Following several promotions, Truong became the second highest ranking member in the Politburo after **Nguyen Phu Trong** in 2001. He became the executive secretary of the party secretariat in 2006. Upon taking office as president in July 2011, succeeding **Nguyen Minh Triet**, Truong declared the objectives of his presidency to be the modernization and industrialization of Vietnam by 2020 and the

peaceful resolution of its territorial claims with the People's Republic of China in the Spratly Islands. His tenure, however, has been marked foremost by his excoriation of Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung, whose economic policies came under fire for fostering widespread corruption and mismanagement of the country's debt-laden **State Owned Enterprises**. The acrimony between Truong and Nguyen peaked at the sixth plenary of the Communist Party in October 2012, when Nguyen barely survived an unprecedented attempt to remove him from power. Despite being a candidate for the post of party secretary, Truong stepped down in March 2016 after completing his term as president and was succeeded by **Tran Dai Quang**.

see also: Nguyen Minh Triet; Nguyen Phu Trong; Nguyen Tan Dung; Paris Peace Agreements 1973; State Owned Enterprise Reform; Tran Dai Quang.

### **Tsunami 2004** (Indonesia/Malaysia/Thailand)

On 26 December 2004 an earthquake of 9.0 magnitude with an epicentre under the Indian Ocean near the west coast of the Indonesian island of Sumatra was triggered. It unleashed a series of massive waves, which reached heights of over ten metres and took over 230,000 lives in 14 countries, including Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand. Also known as the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, Indonesian tsunami and Boxing Day tsunami, it was one of the deadliest natural disasters on record. Indonesia was worst hit, specifically the western coast of Aceh including Banda Aceh, Calang, and Melauboh, where over 170,000 were reported killed and about 500,000 left homeless.

The natural disaster saw an outpouring of immediate aid as governments, international organizations, humanitarian organizations, private sector corporations, community groups, and individuals around the world pledged financial, medical, and technical support. The World Bank had estimated the amount of aid needed at about US\$5 billion, and by 1 January 2005 over US\$1.8 billion had been pledged. On top of financial aid, governments also dispatched rescue teams to aid in search and rescue, restoration, and repair efforts. The pledging

of support was not without controversy. In fact, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan assiduously called for contributors to honour their pledges while citing previous cases where they were dishonoured. The US government was harshly criticized for its original pledge of US\$15 million, a sum many deemed paltry. Subsequently the amount was increased to US\$35 million, and eventually tenfold to US\$350 million.

Claims of inefficiency and corruption dogged the Indonesian government as Supreme Audit Agency chief Anwar Nasution admitted that administration of the US\$600 million National Disaster Management and Refugee Coordination Board fund was plagued by irregularities. Jakarta was also accused of being slow to accept foreign aid in Aceh, the worst-hit region but also at the time a special region of Indonesia where the **Aceh Independence Movement** (*Gerakan Aceh Merdeka*, GAM) was waging a separatist insurgency. While Jakarta and GAM declared an unofficial truce immediately following the disaster, tensions remained high as sporadic clashes between both sides erupted. The Indonesian government was also accused of using the tsunami disaster to penetrate hitherto impenetrable GAM strongholds by insisting that military personnel escort foreign aid workers entering areas of known insurgent activity. This led the UN to express concerns that these demands could create bottlenecks in the distribution of aid, prompting further allegations that the government was attempting to conceal corruption and human rights abuses in Aceh. However, the massive devastation that followed the tsunami of 2004 eventually compelled Jakarta and GAM to resolve their longstanding dispute. A series of negotiations culminated in a memorandum of understanding between both parties that confirmed commitment to a 'peaceful, comprehensive, and sustainable solution' to the conflict in Aceh. Dubbed the Helsinki Peace Accord, the agreement included a call to establish an immediate ceasefire, disarm rebel fighters, provide amnesty to GAM members, reduce and restrict government troop movements in Aceh, allow Aceh-based parties to participate in politics, allow Aceh to use its own regional flag, crest, and hymn, establish a human rights court to

expose abuses committed during the conflict, and establish a truth and reconciliation commission in Aceh. The memorandum was signed in Helsinki, Finland, on 15 August 2005 and paved the way for the first democratic elections in Aceh after 30 years of insurgency.

see also: Aceh Independence Movement.

### **Tudung Controversy 2002** (Singapore)

In what was described by the *New York Times* as 'the most potent act of civil disobedience this tightly controlled nation has seen in years', four schoolgirls in Singapore were suspended in February 2002 after repeatedly turning up in their public schools wearing the *tudung* (headscarves worn by Malay-Muslim women), thereby violating a strict uniform policy set by the Ministry of Education. The parents of the four girls protested their suspension, arguing that the policy was unconstitutional as it violated their right to religious freedom. They threatened legal action and hired Karpal Singh, a Malaysian legal counsel, to represent them in their attempt to take the government to court over the issue. Singh, however, failed to obtain the necessary practising certificate from the Singapore Supreme Court.

The Singapore government's justification for the policy was twofold. First, they opined that schools constituted public space for social interaction and the promotion of integration of different races at a young age. To that end, the *tudung* accentuates differences rather than emphasizes similarities and is therefore detrimental to social cohesion. Second, the government was concerned that allowing Muslim girls to wear the *tudung* to school would set an unwelcome precedent for other requests in the name of religious freedom. Critics however, pointed to the inconsistency in this policy given the government's support for Special Assistance Plan schools that cater to the ethnic Chinese elite as well as the freedom that Sikh students, based on a decree inherited from the British colonial administration, enjoyed in wearing their turbans in school.

Underlying the controversy is the government's sensitivity to issues of race and religion. Chronic race riots in the 1950s and 1960s have

been seared into national memory in the island-state, and its government has demonstrated no qualms about bringing to bear the weight of the state against attempts to undermine harmony and stability among Singapore's various ethnic and religious groups. The timing of the controversy, though, was inopportune, for it occurred just after the secular state had cracked down on the Singapore cell of **Jemaah Islamiyah** which led to the arrest of 13 suspected militants. Nevertheless, the domestic political fallout from the issue was marginal. The opposition Singapore Malay National Organization (PKMS) tried to increase pressure over this issue, but other Muslim organizations such as the Islamic Religious Council of Singapore, the highest Islamic body in the country, were quick to denounce their comments and offer support to the government's position on the grounds of traditional Islamic knowledge. However, in what was derided by the Singapore government as a departure from the **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** norm of non-interference in the internal affairs of member states, politicians and government officials from Malaysia and Brunei were vocal in their criticisms of Singapore's handling of the issue. see also: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; *Jemaah Islamiyah*.

### **Tuol Sleng** (Cambodia)

Tuol Sleng is the name of the notorious interrogation centre used by the **Khmer Rouge** regime during its rule in Cambodia between April 1975 and December 1978. The centre takes its name from the suburb in which it is located, while the actual building had served as a high school. Some 20,000 prisoners were brutally interrogated and put to death in Tuol Sleng, but only after having provided detailed confessions of political delinquency. The bulk of the inmates were themselves Khmer Rouge, including cadres of high standing, who were charged with a range of so-called counterrevolutionary offences. Tuol Sleng represented a savage symbol of the paranoia that progressively gripped the Khmer Rouge regime under **Pol Pot**. After Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia in December 1978 and the establishment in January 1979 of

the **People's Republic of Kampuchea**, the centre was converted into a genocide museum, in part to justify the legitimacy of the implanted regime. In May 1999, Kang Kek Ieu (better known by his revolutionary *nom de guerre* of Duch), the Khmer Rouge commandant of Tuol Sleng, was discovered working with relief organizations in northwestern Cambodia. His whereabouts had been known to the authorities for the previous two years but he was arrested, ostensibly into protective custody, only in the same month as his location had become public knowledge. In September 1999, he was formally indicted on a charge of genocide together with Khmer Rouge military commander **Ta Mok**. In July 2007, Duch was officially charged with war crimes and crimes against humanity by the United Nations-backed Extraordinary

Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia. Duch's lawyers appealed against these charges, but they were unsuccessful. In July 2010, Duch was found guilty of crimes against humanity, torture, and murder, and sentenced to 35 years' imprisonment. A subsequent appeal was rejected. Tuol Sleng was renamed as the 'Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum' and is open to the public. The site has four buildings, Buildings A, B, C, and D. Building A consists of the cells in which the bodies of the last victims were discovered; Building B holds galleries of photographs of the late prisoners; Building C consists of the schoolrooms that served as prison cells; and Building D holds other memorabilia such as instruments of torture.

*see also:* Kampuchea, People's Republic of (PRK); Khmer Rouge; Pol Pot; Ta Mok.

# U

## U Nu (Burma/Myanmar)

U Nu was the first prime minister of Burma after independence from Britain in January 1948. He came to high office under tragic circumstances following the assassination of the nationalist leader **Aung San** and other cabinet colleagues in July 1947. He held office until 1958, with an interruption during 1956–7, and then again from 1960 to 1962, when military intervention marked an end to civilian politics.

U Nu was born on 25 May 1907 in Wakema and was educated at Rangoon University where he became president of the Students' Union in the mid-1930s. After graduation, he became a schoolteacher and was active in the nationalist organization *Dobama Asiayone* (Our Burma Association). He was interned by the colonial authorities at the outbreak of the Second World War and then released after the Japanese occupied the country. He served as foreign minister in the wartime government headed by Ba Maw and then became deputy to Aung San in the **Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL)**, which spearheaded the drive for independence after the defeat of the Japanese. As prime minister, he faced constant turbulence arising from having to cope with communist and ethnic minority insurrection as well as factional infighting which proved to be beyond his capacity to control. U Nu was imprisoned between 1962 and 1966. He was allowed to leave Burma in April 1969 ostensibly for Buddhist pilgrimage but sought to organize resistance from Thailand against the rule of General **Ne Win** until 1973, when he left to spend a year in the United States before passing the rest of the decade in India. He returned to Burma to retire in 1980 after an amnesty, but made an ineffectual attempt to return to active politics in August 1988 in the wake of the bloody confrontation between the armed forces and civilians demonstrating for greater democracy. He set up a League for Democracy and Peace and then proclaimed a 'parallel' government in September, which proved to be empty gestures

incapable of significant impact. He was placed under house arrest in December 1989 and then released in April 1992. As a politician, U Nu has always been a respected figure of integrity but regarded as unworldly and not really suited to the turbulence of public life. He died in Yangon on 14 February 1995, aged 87.

see also: **Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL)**; **Aung San**; **Ne Win, General**.

## **UMNO (United Malays National Organization)** (Malaya/Malaysia)

The United Malays National Organization (UMNO) remains arguably the most important political party in Malaysia. It was established in May 1946 as a Malay united front with which to challenge the British **Malayan Union Proposal**. The terms of that constitutional proposal included the deposition of the Malay rulers or sultans of the states of the peninsula as well as liberal provision for citizenship for Chinese and Indians of migrant origin. The British proposal had been influenced by the perceived mixed conduct of the different communities during the wartime Japanese occupation, with the Malays regarded as collaborators. The movement's founder and first president was Dato Onn bin Jafar, then chief minister of the state of Johor. He mobilized Malays on the basis of their acute concern that they would lose their political birthright in the country of which they were the indigenous people. He also drew on the support of a powerful lobby in Britain of former members of the Malayan civil service who were committed to the Malay cause, as well as that of the Malay rulers, who constituted living symbols of Malay identity (see **Conference of Rulers**). UMNO's campaign was successful, and Britain withdrew the Malayan Union Proposal in favour of one setting up a Federation of Malaya, in which the rights of the Malay rulers were restored and access to citizenship would be made more difficult.

UMNO was then institutionalized as the main political party, claiming a prerogative

right to protect the interests of the Malays which it has maintained ever since. Because the British colonial authorities, facing a communist insurrection, believed that independence could be conceded only when the racial communities had come to political terms, Dato Onn attempted to turn UMNO into a multiracial party. This initiative proved to be premature, and in the face of rank-and-file resistance, he was obliged to resign in favour of **Tunku Abdul Rahman**, who led the successful campaign for independence. To that end, he was able to work out a viable accommodation at elite level with corresponding Chinese and Indian parties which, as the **Alliance Party**, enjoyed notable electoral success. Malaya became independent in August 1957, with UMNO as the dominant party and providing the prime minister, a situation which continued with the advent of the wider Federation of Malaysia in September 1963. In the wake of an electoral reverse and communal violence in the **May 13 Racial Riots** in 1969, UMNO expanded the ruling coalition to include its main Malay political rival within **Barisan Nasional** (National Front, BN), which was registered as a party in 1974. However, the separate identity and political pre-eminence of UMNO was maintained and strengthened through its extensive network of business activities cultivated in the 1980s by the leadership of **Mahathir Mohamad** and **Daim Zainuddin**.

A major split in the party occurred during the late 1980s. At the UMNO General Assembly in April 1987, the prime minister and party president, Mahathir Mohamad, only narrowly fended off a challenge to his leadership by the minister for trade and industry, **Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah**. In February 1988 the federal High Court ruled that UMNO was an unlawful society because 30 of its branches had not been properly registered when its General Assembly and triennial elections had been held in 1987. Mahathir then secured permission to register an alternative party called UMNO *Baru* (New UMNO) to which all members of the deregistered party would have to apply to join. In May 1989 Mahathir's opponents secured permission to register a Malay party called **Semangat '46** (Spirit of 1946) which was an attempt to attach legitimacy arising from the founding of UMNO

to the new entity. UMNO's political dominance was restored, however, in general elections in October 1990, when having dropped the 'new' label and still leading BN, it succeeded in maintaining a two-thirds parliamentary majority at the expense of *Semangat '46* and its Malay and Chinese partners. UMNO's pre-eminent position was reinforced through a resounding electoral victory in April 1995 when it won 88 seats, not to mention Tengku Razaleigh's return to the UMNO fold following the ignominious dissolution of *Semangat '46* a year later.

UMNO had confined its activities exclusively to peninsular Malaysia until 1991, when it contested by-elections in Sabah in northern Borneo in an attempt to pose a more effective challenge to the ruling **Sabah United Party** than the **United Sabah National Organization (USNO)**. It succeeded in this enterprise in March 1994, when defections from the former, which had been returned to power with a narrow majority the month before, led to a loss of its parliamentary position.

UMNO's leading position diminished significantly with the outcome of the next elections in November 1999, when its strength in the federal Parliament was reduced to 74 seats. It also lost control of the state of Terengganu to **Parti Islam Se-Malaysia (PAS)**, which was the main beneficiary of the Malay vote swing against UMNO. That swing had been precipitated by the dismissal, arrest, trial, and conviction of former deputy prime minister and deputy UMNO president **Anwar Ibrahim**, which elicited extensive domestic and international criticism.

In a surprise move, Mahathir announced in the 2002 UMNO General Assembly that he would step down from his position as prime minister. Amidst dramatic scenes on stage at the assembly, Mahathir later acceded to requests from colleagues to continue for a stipulated period in order to oversee a smooth transition in leadership. In October 2003, Mahathir finally stepped down as UMNO president and Malaysian prime minister, after 22 years at the helm, and handed power to his designated successor, **Abdullah Ahmad Badawi**. The post-Mahathir era for UMNO and Malaysia began with a resounding victory at the March 2004 elections, when UMNO won 109 seats, 32

more than in 1999, as it led BN to a landslide victory which included regaining the state government of Terengganu. Nevertheless, a combination of failed promises, underachievements, and exasperating societal polarization, not to mention his falling out with his predecessor, turned the tables on Abdullah Badawi and UMNO at the following election in March 2008. BN performed poorly and lost its two-thirds parliamentary majority for the first time in its electoral history, while UMNO won only 79 seats. The dismal performance led immediately to calls for Abdullah Badawi's resignation. In order to avoid an acrimonious party election and a likely leadership challenge, Abdullah Badawi resigned from all posts in June 2009, paving the way for **Najib Tun Razak**, son of Malaysia's second prime minister **Tun Abdul Razak**, to come into office. Leadership change carried hopes for the restoration of confidence in UMNO and BN. Najib moved swiftly to initiate several reforms within UMNO through an amendment to its constitution so as to enhance the party's credibility and improve transparency in its election process, long disparaged as extremely corrupt. The new system extended voting rights to 150,000 party grassroots leaders, departing from the previous practice which limited voting to 2,600 delegates privileged to attend the party assembly (a system that encouraged chronic vote-buying). It also abolished the quota system for nomination of candidates vying for party posts. In September 2010, Najib launched his **One Malaysia** (1Malaysia) campaign, which stressed national unity, ethnic tolerance, and efficient governance. The results of these reforms were mixed. At the general election in May 2013, UMNO improved its performance by winning 88 parliamentary seats. However, not only did UMNO fail to lead BN to regain the two-thirds majority, but the coalition lost the popular vote to the opposition **Pakatan Rakyat**. Invariably, this has fed rumours of yet another impending leadership change, with members of the UMNO old guard such as Mahathir and Daim suggesting that Najib had to be held responsible for the BN's inability to turn the tide. As revelations of malfeasance surrounding the **1MDB** state investment fund gradually surfaced, the leadership

of Najib came under heavier scrutiny not only from international media, civil society, and the opposition, but also from within the party. Led by Mahathir's visceral criticisms, other UMNO leaders began to voice concerns and called for greater transparency and accountability from the party president. Among these were Najib's deputy, **Muhyiddin Yassin**. Najib responded to these calls by demonstrating an authoritarian streak, precipitating factionalism within the party in the process. Mahathir resigned along with other UMNO elders such as Daim and Rafidah Aziz, while Muhyiddin and Mukhriz Mahathir, *menteri besar* of Kedah and Mahathir's son, were sacked. Along with rank and file members, these would form the rump leadership of a new party, **Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia** (*Bersatu*), that for all intents and purposes was created in UMNO's image. Reeling from the split, UMNO fared poorly at the 2018 polls, securing only 54 parliamentary seats in its worst showing ever. This number would whittle down further to 38 after a host of defections, including 15 that went to *Bersatu*, the result of a mass exodus that followed in light of the election result. The devastating defeat presented an opportunity for reform. In the event, results of party elections in 2018 suggested otherwise, as **Zahid Hamidi** won the presidency in a three-way contest against the old warhorse Tengku Razaleigh and Khairy Jamaluddin, the son-in-law of former prime minister and UMNO president Abdullah Badawi who many saw as the personification of a future, reformed UMNO. Notwithstanding the 2018 election outcome, events soon contrived to bring UMNO back into federal power. Unresolved differences within the ruling **Pakatan Harapan** coalition led to the breakaway of *Bersatu* and the collapse of the government. Seizing the opportunity, UMNO, which was already in the *Muafakat Nasional* coalition with erstwhile nemesis PAS, aligned with **Perikatan Nasional** led by *Bersatu*, without any prejudice of having to formally join the coalition. The uneasy relationship has brought UMNO back to centre stage. At the UMNO general assembly in March 2021, the party decided to cease cooperation with *Bersatu* by the next general election, prompting the eventual resignation of Prime Minister Muhyiddin in August.

The appointment of **Ismail Sabri Yaacob** to replace him marked the return of the office of the prime minister to UMNO hands.

Since the Mahathir era, three trends have become evident in UMNO. First, the relationship between the party and business interests has deepened considerably. Once a party which drew its bedrock support from teachers and civil servants, UMNO has increasingly relied on its ties to big business in order to entrench and retain its influence in the country. Second, communalism has become a signal feature of UMNO's rhetoric, as demonstrated in the aspersions frequently cast with impunity at minorities, particularly the ethnic Chinese, at its general assemblies and on other occasions by some of its leaders. Third, despite faring poorly in elections since 2008, even to the extent of losing in 2018, subsequent events have illustrated in profound ways the institutionalized nature of UMNO's influence in Malaysian politics.

see also: 1MDB; Abdul Rahman, Tunku; Alliance Party; Anwar Ibrahim; Badawi, Tun Abdullah Ahmad; *Barisan Nasional* (BN); Conference of Rulers; Daim Zainuddin, Tun; Ismail Sabri Yaacob, Datuk Seri; Mahathir Mohamad, Tun; Malayan Union Proposal 1946; May 13 Racial Riots 1969; Muhyiddin Yassin, Tan Sri; Najib Tun Razak, Datuk Seri Mohamad; One Malaysia; *Pakatan Harapan*; *Pakatan Rakyat*; *Parti Islam Se-Malaysia*; *Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia*; *Perikatan Nasional*; Razaleigh Hamzah, Tengku; Sabah United Party; *Semangat '46*; United Sabah National Organization (USNO); Zahid Hamidi, Ahmad.

### **Union Solidarity and Development Association (Myanmar) see Union Solidarity and Development Party**

### **Union Solidarity and Development Party (Myanmar)**

The Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) is widely known as the party of the Myanmar armed forces or *Tatmadaw*. The party was registered on 2 June 2010 by the Union Election Commission and is the successor to the mass organization of the **State Peace and**

**Development Council** (SLORC), the Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA). The party is headquartered in **Naypyidaw**.

USDA was formed by SLORC on 15 September 1993 to act as a form of mass organization. To a large degree it replaced the **National Unity Party** (NUP) as the regime's chosen political vehicle after the poor showing of NUP in the 1990 election. The association was organized nationwide with an infrastructure extending down to the township level. USDA disbanded with the creation of USDP on 29 March 2010. Its members were enrolled in the new party and assets transferred over. Although it was supposed to purge itself of government officials and civil servants in accordance with the **2008 Constitution**, members like then Prime Minister **Thein Sein**, who was party chairman, and junta number three, **Shwe Mann**, himself later also chairman of the party, remained in its ranks. Although the inclusion of government officials was in violation of the constitution, the party was approved by the election commission. In the lead-up to the 2010 election, the party was criticized for unethical recruitment practices, including offering low-interest loans to farmers and national identity cards to unregistered party sympathizers, especially in central Myanmar and Rakhine State. In the event, USDP won 883 seats out of a total 1,154 seats contested, giving it a formidable majority. On formation of the government, the majority of cabinet members were appointees from USDP who, as per constitutional rules, resigned their parliamentary seats. During by-elections to elect members of Parliament to replace those appointed to the cabinet, however, USDP was soundly defeated by the **National League for Democracy** (NLD), winning only one seat as opposed to NLD's 43 seats out of the 45 available. In hindsight, the by-election outcome was a sign of things to come. By the time of the 2015 election, NLD had re-emerged as a major force, securing a landslide victory at the polls. In a dramatic decline, USDP was consigned to only 11 seats. With NLD on the ascent and USDP on the decline, the nascent democratic transition in Myanmar would gather greater pace, the outcome of which was an even worse performance by the latter at the 2020 election when it



was reduced to a mere seven seats. In the face of humiliating defeat that devastated its hopes of assuming the presidency, USDP attempted to challenge the legitimacy of the election result on grounds that it had evidence of widespread fraud. The challenge was backed by the *Tatmadaw* and its leader, Senior General **Min Aung Hlaing**, who was due to retire and was known to have nursed ambitions for the presidency. In the event, the Union Election Commission disregarded the protestations and moved to validate the result, triggering a string of events that culminated in the coup of 1 February 2021.

The party was initially led by Thein Sein until May 2011, when the ambitious Shwe Mann took over as temporary chairman. On 16 October 2012, Thein Sein was again elected as chairman of USDP at its first party Congress in Naypyidaw. His reassumption of the chairmanship was undertaken in contravention of the constitution which forbade sitting office holders to serve as chairman of a political party. Shwe Mann would succeed Thein Sein again in May 2013, only to be removed two years later after falling out with Thein Sein. After serving as USDP chairman again for another year, Thein Sein would hand over leadership of the party to Than Htay, a low-profile former brigadier general who served as a minister in Thein Sein's cabinet.

see also: Constitution 2008; Min Aung Hlaing, Senior General; National League for Democracy; Naypyidaw; Shwe Mann; State Peace and Development Council; Thein Sein.

### **United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship (Thailand)**

The United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship (UDD), also known as the 'Red Shirts' for their distinctive apparel, was a political pressure group formed to oppose the **People's Alliance for Democracy** (PAD), the 2006 coup, and those supporting the coup, including the **Democrat Party**-led government of **Abhisit Vejjajiva**. Prominent leaders of UDD included **Jatuporn Prompan** and Nattawut Saikua. UDD was allied with the **Pheu Thai Party**.

UDD was established in 2006 to oppose the military coup that ousted Prime Minister

**Thaksin Shinawatra**. It organized demonstrations during the 2006–7 period of military rule and opposed the military's 2007 Constitution. While it halted protests after the December 2007 electoral win by the pro-Thaksin **People's Power Party** (PPP), the seizure of Government House by PAD prompted UDD to reform, and several violent confrontations ensued between the two groups. The dissolution of PPP and the ascent of Abhisit Vejjajiva and his Democrat Party-led coalition met with studied hostility, and major street demonstrations against the new government were organized by UDD. A major rally held in April 2009 in Bangkok calling for Abhisit's resignation resulted in clashes with the military that injured at least 120 people. On 14 March 2010 UDD held the largest political demonstration in Thai history in Bangkok, bringing in people from the north and northeast as well as organizing thousands of Bangkok-based supporters. The protests centred on the symbolic Democracy Monument in central Bangkok and later spread to the important Rajaprasong commercial district. The Abhisit government responded by imposing a number of security measures, including use of the Internal Security Act. On 10 April, military units attempting to disperse protestors were repulsed in a violent confrontation that left 25 killed and over 800 injured. On 19 May the military again moved to disperse protestors after almost a week of violent confrontations. Although military measures resulted in the surrender of key leaders Nattawut and Jatuporn, a number of protestors and soldiers were killed and injured. After two months of protests, 91 people had been killed and some 2,100 injured, mostly protestors.

One of the chief grievances of UDD was that the Abhisit government was illegitimate because it came to power with backing from the military and the judiciary, and not via popular elections. UDD called for the dissolution of Parliament and fresh elections. They were vocal about the perceived interference of the military, judiciary, and certain members of the Privy Council in politics. UDD drew its support from the rural areas of the north and northeast and Bangkok urban dwellers originally from those areas, and its followers took pride in their rural

and often lower-class origins, although numerous middle-class supporters and intellectuals were involved as well. Closely identified with Thaksin Shinawatra, UDD campaigned for his return to Thailand, although not all its members support the exiled former prime minister. In any event, this made UDD a natural ally of *Pheu Thai*, and several of its members, including Jatuporn and Nattawut, were elected during the July 2011 general elections. In the wake of the 22 May 2014 coup that removed the democratically elected *Pheu Thai* government, talk was rife of the remobilization of UDD, particularly in the pro-Thaksin stronghold in the northeastern region, to oppose the military administration, but nothing transpired.

see also: Abhisit Vejjajiva; Democrat Party; Jatuporn Prompan; People's Alliance for Democracy; People's Power Party; *Pheu Thai* Party; Thaksin Shinawatra.

### United Nations: Cambodia 1991–3 (Cambodia)

The United Nations became actively involved in the conflict in Cambodia from December 1978, following the Vietnamese invasion of the country. Vietnam's military occupation and the legitimacy of the government that it installed in Phnom Penh from January 1979 were challenged during the 1980s through the annual passage of resolutions in the UN General Assembly and by upholding the representation of the ousted **Khmer Rouge** regime. An **International Conference on Cambodia**, New York 1981, which convened under the auspices of the UN secretary-general, failed to resolve the conflict. A second **International Conference on Cambodia**, Paris 1989 (July–August), held as the Cold War was coming to an end, also proved abortive. The four contending Cambodian factions were unable to agree on terms for power-sharing during an interim period before elections under international supervision to determine the political format and future of the country. In the wake of that failure, Stephen Solarz, a US Congressman, advocated publicly that the United Nations should assume the interim administration of Cambodia as the means to promote a political settlement. This

suggestion was taken up by the Australian government, which conducted a feasibility study whose results were published early in 1990. The Australian study attracted the serious attention of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council. Their officials proceeded to draft a framework document, which was eventually accepted on 28 August 1990 by the four Cambodian factions as the basis for settling the conflict.

Central to the UN plan was a provision for bypassing the problem of power-sharing, which had stood in the way of an accord. In place of an instrument for effective power-sharing, it was proposed to have a **Supreme National Council (SNC)**, on which all Cambodian factions would be represented. The SNC was described as the unique legitimate body and source of authority in which, throughout the transitional period, the sovereignty, independence, and unity of Cambodia would be enshrined. This body would delegate to the UN all powers necessary to implement a peace agreement. The SNC was set up among the Cambodian parties at a meeting in Jakarta on 10 September 1990; the framework document was then endorsed unanimously in turn by the Security Council and the General Assembly of the UN. Contention among the Cambodian parties delayed the election of Prince **Norodom Sihanouk** as chairman of the SNC until July 1991. His election cleared the way for the reconvening of the **International Conference on Cambodia**, Paris 1991, and for a comprehensive political settlement to be concluded on 23 October.

The terms of the Paris accord called on the United Nations Security Council to establish **UNTAC (United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia)** with civilian and military components under the direct responsibility of the UN secretary-general. UNTAC was accorded a mandate to conduct free and fair elections for a Constituent Assembly in a neutral political environment. The Constituent Assembly would approve a new constitution and then transform itself into a legislative assembly which would have responsibility for creating a new Cambodian government. To serve this end, UNTAC assumed responsibility for supervising, monitoring, and verifying a ceasefire and

the withdrawal of all foreign forces, as well as the regroupment, cantonment, and ultimate disposition of all Cambodian forces and their weapons during the transitional period before general elections ultimately scheduled for May 1993. In addition, in order to ensure a neutral political environment conducive to free and fair elections, five key ministries of the government in Phnom Penh, which was not to be dismantled, were to be placed under UNTAC's direct administrative control.

UNTAC was established formally in March 1992 after the Security Council had sanctioned the dispatch of some 22,000 civilian and military personnel with an initial budget of US\$1.9 million in the largest and most costly UN peacekeeping operation ever mounted at that point. Headed by Yasushi Akashi, an undersecretary-general for disarmament, UNTAC faced early difficulty in upholding the ceasefire as military clashes between Khmer Rouge and Phnom Penh government forces took place in battles for territorial and population control with the elections in mind. However, even more serious problems set in from June 1992, when the demobilization of the four factions was to have begun in a part of the plan intended to regroup about 70 per cent of all contending forces in UNTAC-controlled regroupment zones. The Khmer Rouge, deployed primarily in western Cambodia, refused to cooperate. Their representatives on the SNC complained that UNTAC had not verified the withdrawal of Vietnamese forces, large numbers of whom were alleged to be still in Cambodia in disguise. They also took exception to the limited role of the SNC and the extent to which the administration of most of the country had remained in the hands of the incumbent government in Phnom Penh, which had been installed as a direct result of Vietnam's original invasion. Indeed, they asserted that UNTAC was in active collusion with that government in its exclusive political interest. Khmer Rouge obstruction took the form of active harassment of UN personnel, including their detention and appropriation of their equipment, especially vehicles. The Khmer Rouge went further in refusing to participate in the elections arranged for May 1993. In October 1992 the UN Security Council

acted unanimously in setting a deadline of the following month for Khmer Rouge compliance. When this did not materialize, trade sanctions were imposed from January 1993 on Khmer Rouge-controlled zones but without real effect. Nonetheless, the Security Council reaffirmed its intention that UNTAC proceed with elections in May. By the end of January 1993, a total of 20 political parties had registered to take part in the elections. Apart from murderous intimidation by the Khmer Rouge, directed primarily at Vietnamese residents, strong evidence emerged of political violence employed by agents of the Phnom Penh government at the expense of their non-communist electoral rivals. Despite the absence of an ideal neutral political environment, UNTAC conducted the elections in late May 1993 as planned, with considerable success.

With a turnout of some 90 per cent, most of the seats for the 120-member Constituent Assembly were shared between two parties, with 58 seats for **FUNCINPEC** (National United Front for an Independent, Neutral, Peaceful and Cooperative Cambodia), led by Prince **Norodom Ranariddh**, a son of Prince Sihanouk, and 51 seats for the **Cambodian People's Party (CPP)**, led by **Hun Sen**. Prince Sihanouk intervened to forge an interim coalition between the two rivals after CPP sought to challenge the electoral outcome through threat of territorial secession. The Constituent Assembly convened in June 1993 and by September had agreed the terms of a new constitution, based in part on the restoration of the monarchy, resumed by Norodom Sihanouk on 24 September 1993. A new coalition government was formed at the end of October with Prince Ranariddh and Hun Sen as first and second prime ministers respectively. The constitutional process was endorsed by the UN, whose mandate for Cambodia came to a substantive end on 26 September with the departure of Yasushi Akashi, the head of UNTAC, although not all of its peacekeeping forces were withdrawn until mid-November 1993. Many aspects of the UN operation were flawed, in particular its quasi-administrative role in supervising and controlling key ministries within the incumbent government in Phnom Penh. Moreover, it was constrained by a peacekeeping mandate that

prevented military enforcement against violent recalcitrant factions. In the event, a calculated risk in holding elections paid off because of the courage of the Cambodian people in taking part, and also because the Khmer Rouge had begun to lose their military momentum and to fragment.

see also: Cambodian People's Party (CPP); FUNCINPEC; Hun Sen; International Conference on Cambodia, New York 1981; International Conference on Cambodia, Paris 1989; International Conference on Cambodia, Paris 1991; Khmer Rouge; Ranariddh, Prince Norodom; Sihanouk, King Norodom; Supreme National Council; UNTAC (United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia).

### United Nations: East Timor 1999–2002 (Indonesia/Timor-Leste)

The United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) was established on 25 October 1999 by the Security Council, with overall responsibility for administration, and was empowered to exercise all legislative and executive authority. The United Nations has been involved with the issue of East Timor from the time of Indonesia's invasion of the former Portuguese territory in December 1975. It had never acknowledged Indonesia's jurisdiction but failed to make any impact on the government in Jakarta during the rule of President **Suharto**. With his political downfall in May 1998, Indonesia under the interim administration of President **B. J. Habibie** appeared unwilling to concede more than a status of special autonomy for the territory. That situation changed unexpectedly in January 1999 when Habibie offered the inhabitants of East Timor the choice between autonomy and independence. In May 1999 an agreement was reached between the secretary-general of the United Nations and the foreign ministers of Indonesia and Portugal whereby Indonesia would assume responsibility for security during the referendum in August, which would be conducted by a UN Assessment Mission in East Timor (UNAMET). That referendum took place on 30 August against a background of rising

violence mounted by pro-integrationist armed militia inspired by the local military determined to block independence. That violence became endemic with the announcement of the referendum result on 4 September; almost four-fifths of voters had supported independence. The scorched-earth policy of the armed militia precipitated the withdrawal of the UNAMET. On 15 September, the UN Security Council adopted a unanimous resolution authorizing a multinational force to use all necessary means to restore peace in East Timor. It had been understood that Australia would provide the largest contingent in the International Force East Timor (INTERFET) whose advance units flew into Dili from Darwin on 20 September under the command of an Australian major general. That force was effective in restoring law and order to the ravaged territory, but the conspicuous role of Australia generated political tensions with Indonesia and some other members of **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)**. It was against that background that the UN Security Council established UNTAET in October 1999 and made provision for the replacement of INTERFET by a UN force led by a Filipino general who arrived in Dili in January 2000. INTERFET's role formally ended on 23 February 2000 when Australia's Major General Peter Cosgrove handed over responsibility for security in East Timor to a UN peacekeeping force led by Lieutenant General Jaime de los Santos.

UNTAET oversaw the establishment and operation of a National Consultative Council, later National Council, which comprised Timorese political and community leaders assembled to deliberate the matter of independence, and a transitional Cabinet. Elections for a Constituent Assembly were held on 30 August 2001, which resulted in a major victory for **Fretilin**. The mandate of UNTAET ended with the independence of East Timor on 20 May 2002. The UN presence in the newly independent country would nevertheless continue with the formation of the United Nations Mission of Support to East Timor, UNMISSET, for a few more years.

see also: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; *Fretilin*; Habibie, B. J.; Suharto.

**United Nations: Irian Jaya 1962–9**

(Indonesia)

**Irian Jaya** is the Indonesian term for the western half of the island of New Guinea, which had been an integral part of the Netherlands East Indies. Although the Dutch agreed to transfer sovereignty to an independent Indonesia in December 1949, they insisted on retaining administrative control of West New Guinea, with the future of the territory to be subject to further negotiations. Their refusal to relinquish control became a matter of great controversy during the 1950s, leading to a breach in diplomatic relations, **Confrontation**, and an international crisis involving US–Soviet competition. A US initiative prompted renewed negotiations in 1962 with formal mediation by a US diplomat, Ellsworth Bunker, under the auspices of U Thant, then acting secretary-general of the United Nations. An accord was concluded on 15 August 1962 whereby the territory would be transferred first to UN and then to Indonesian administration. In addition, it was agreed that an ‘act of free choice’ with UN advice, assistance and participation would take place before the end of 1969 in order to determine whether or not the territory’s inhabitants wished to remain subject to Indonesian jurisdiction.

The initial transfer to UN authority took effect from 1 October 1962, with administration placed under a UN Temporary Executive Authority (UNTEA). Indonesia replaced UNTEA as agreed from 1 May 1963, despite a campaign by Jakarta to advance the date of transfer to 1 January and to suggest that a determination of opinion would not be necessary. Indonesia’s assumption of administration was not popular within Irian Jaya, and armed resistance was mounted by a **Free Papua Movement**. In the event, an ‘act of free choice’ of a kind was conducted in the territory during July and August 1969. But the overseeing UN representatives were denied full opportunity to judge the true merits of a plebiscitary exercise by village notables alone, who voted by 1,025 to nil in favour of continued union with Indonesia. The report of the visiting UN mission on the test of opinion confirmed the result but contained clear reservations. The UN General Assembly endorsed the report but not before

attracting criticism, in particular from a number of African countries. President **Suharto** announced Irian Jaya’s incorporation into the Republic of Indonesia as its 26th province on 17 September 1969.

see also: **Confrontation**; **Free Papua Movement**; **Irian Jaya**; **Suharto**.

**United Nations: Northern Borneo****1963** (Indonesia/Malaysia/Philippines)

The controversy over the formation of the Federation of Malaysia, which was contested by Indonesia and the Philippines, led to the United Nations playing a role in assessing the political preferences of the inhabitants of the British colonies of North Borneo and Sarawak. A ministerial-level meeting in Manila in June 1963 between representatives of Indonesia, Malaya, and the Philippines resulted in the Manila Agreements in July to welcome the formation of Malaysia, to include the Borneo territories, provided the support of their people was ‘ascertained by an independent and impartial authority, the Secretary-General of the United Nations or his representative’. Secretary-General U Thant agreed to dispatch such a representative with a team to northern Borneo to examine the conduct and verify the outcome of recent elections in North Borneo and Sarawak and, above all, to ascertain whether or not Malaysia had been a major, if not the main, issue. Further controversy arose over the participation of Indonesian and Philippine observers and, more importantly, the announcement by Malaya on 29 August 1963 that Malaysia would be established on 16 September that year, even though the findings of the United Nations mission were not due to be made public until 14 September. The United Nations team of nine assessors led by Laurence Michelmore, one of its officials, did not begin its work until 26 August. Nonetheless, the secretary-general published his report on 13 September, finding that ‘there is no doubt about the wishes of a sizeable majority of the peoples of these [Borneo] territories to join in the Federation of Malaysia’. He felt obliged, however, to reprimand the government of Malaya for fixing the date for the establishment of the new Federation before his conclusions had been reached and made known. The Federation of Malaysia

succeeded Malaya without difficulty in membership of the United Nations but the pointed admonition by the secretary-general became the basis of Indonesia's refusal to recognize the new Federation and to reinstate its campaign of **Confrontation**.

see *also*: Confrontation.

### **United Sabah National Organization (USNO)** (Malaysia)

The United Sabah National Organization (USNO) was one of the first political parties to be formed in northern Borneo in the expectation of the establishment of Malaysia. It was set up in 1961 by Tun **Mustapha Harun**, a traditional Suluk leader, whose constituency was among the Muslim community. USNO played a leading part in the coalition government of the state from 1963. Mustapha began his political career in the office of constitutional head of state but stepped down in 1965 to return to USNO, leading it to electoral victory in April 1967, after which he assumed the position of chief minister. USNO, with a Chinese partner within the Sabah Alliance, then dominated state politics until defeated in elections in 1976 following a split within its ranks and federal suspicion that Mustapha had secessionist ambitions. Although in opposition in Sabah, USNO entered the federal **Barisan Nasional** (National Front, BN) but was never fully a political partner, which became evident when it opposed the transfer of the island of Labuan to the authority of the central government. USNO was expelled from BN in 1984. It contested the state elections of 1985 under the leadership of Mustapha, who failed in a constitutional coup to unseat the duly elected government of Joseph Pairin Kitingan's **Sabah United Party** (PBS). USNO remained in the political wilderness until PBS withdrew from BN just before federal elections in October 1990. This act of political betrayal revived Mustapha's utility to the government in Kuala Lumpur, which with his cooperation set up a branch of the nationally dominant **UMNO (United Malays National Organization)** in Sabah. Sabah's chief minister responded by forging a state-level coalition with dissident USNO members in April 1993. BN acted in turn to expel USNO again from membership, while

Mustapha was appointed as federal minister for Sabah affairs, a post which he had first held in 1966. In August 1993 USNO was formally deregistered, ostensibly on the initiative of the Registrar of Societies. A number of its senior members joined the incumbent PBS, while Mustapha resigned from the federal cabinet and from UMNO after Ghafar Baba had been replaced as its deputy president by **Anwar Ibrahim**. Since then, several subsequent attempts to re-register the party have been rejected by the Registrar of Societies on ambiguous grounds. Meanwhile, up to 95 per cent of the USNO membership is believed to have joined UMNO Sabah. An attempt by remnant USNO members to contest the 2013 federal and state elections under the banner of the Sabah State Reform Party led to resounding defeat.

see *also*: Anwar Ibrahim; *Barisan Nasional* (BN);

Mustapha bin Datuk Harun, Tun; Sabah United Party; UMNO (United Malays National Organization).

### **UNTAC (United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia)** (Cambodia)

The United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) was established as a direct result of the peace agreement concluded at the **International Conference on Cambodia** held in Paris in October 1991. To ensure its implementation, the UN Security Council was invited to establish a transitional authority with civilian and military powers under the direct responsibility of the UN secretary-general delegated to it by the **Supreme National Council**. Apart from peacekeeping duties, UNTAC was allocated direct responsibility for ensuring a neutral political environment conducive to free and fair elections intended to resolve political conflict. UNTAC was authorized by the Security Council on 28 February 1992 and was provided with 22,000 military and civilian personnel and a budget of around US\$1.7 million. It was headed by Yasushi Akashi, an under-secretary-general.

UNTAC became operational on 15 March 1992. From the outset, UNTAC faced intractable problems in implementing its mandate. Its major difficulty arose from the refusal of the **Khmer Rouge** to cooperate in implementing the military provisions of the Paris agreement

from the middle of 1992. It also failed to assume control of key ministries in Phnom Penh, which allowed the incumbent government imposed by Vietnam to intimidate political opponents. Despite serious shortcomings in its peacekeeping role, UNTAC was able to conduct relatively free and fair elections and overcome a boycott and violence by the Khmer Rouge. A remarkable success was the registration of more than 90 per cent (4.7 million) of eligible voters, while some 360,000 refugees from camps along the border with Thailand were resettled within a nine-month period. Elections held in May 1993 led on to the restoration of a constitutional monarchy, with **Norodom**

**Sihanouk** reinstated as king, despite intervening political turbulence, and then a coalition government. When Yasushi Akashi left Cambodia on 26 September 1993 on the completion of his mission as head of UNTAC, he claimed that the UN had succeeded in its objective of laying a firm foundation for Cambodian democracy. That statement exaggerated the achievement of UNTAC but the outcome of its intervention far exceeded all initial expectations of its peacekeeping role.

*see also:* International Conference on Cambodia, Paris 1991; Khmer Rouge; Sihanouk, King Norodom; Supreme National Council; United Nations: Cambodia 1991–3.

# V

## **Ver, General Fabian** (Philippines)

General Fabian Ver was chief of staff of the armed forces of the Philippines from August 1981 until February 1986, when he resigned his post in the interest of a beleaguered President **Ferdinand Marcos**. During the final stage of the martial law regime, Fabian Ver combined the role of head of the armed forces with that of principal bodyguard to Marcos, to whom he was closely related. Ver was born in 1920 in Ilocos Norte, the birthplace of President Marcos. He was educated at the University of the Philippines, which provided an opportunity for entry into the Reserve Officer Training Corps and then into the paramilitary Philippine Constabulary. He took part in counterinsurgency operations against the **Hukbalahap Movement** guerrillas, specializing in military intelligence. Fabian Ver's career took off after Marcos became president in 1966. In 1971 he had become chief of the Presidential Security Command and director-general of the National Intelligence and Security Authority. His power was based on his close personal relationship with President Marcos and also with **Imelda Marcos**, which permitted him considerable scope for patronage through control of military promotions. He acquired a reputation as a heartless advocate of punitive measures against political opponents of the president and was widely suspected of direct involvement in the assassination of **Benigno Aquino** in August 1983. He was charged with being an accessory in his murder in January and was suspended from military office, but Marcos reinstated him as chief of staff on his acquittal in December. Fabian Ver resigned his post on 16 February 1986 as Marcos sought to shift responsibility for the fraudulent conduct of presidential elections in which he had been challenged by **Corazón Aquino**. It was allegedly fear of arrest by troops still loyal to General Ver that prompted an act of rebellion by the deputy chief of staff, **Fidel Ramos**, and the defence minister, **Juan Ponce Enrile**, on 22 February which led to Marcos's

political downfall three days later. The president overruled General Ver's advice to use force against '**People Power**' – civilian demonstrators blocking the path of his marines to the camp where the rebels were concentrated. After arriving in the United States, Fabian Ver is believed to have attempted to organize a revolt in the Philippines on Marcos's behalf. He is reported to have sought to recruit to Brunei Filipino workers, who would be armed and trained for assassination during a visit to the sultanate by Corazón Aquino in 1986, intending to precipitate such a revolt. In the event, the visit was postponed and arrests took place at a very senior level within the Brunei court. General Ver accumulated vast wealth as a result of his close association with the Marcos family, which he enjoyed during 12 years of foreign exile. He died in Bangkok in November 1998 and, as a former chief of staff, was buried with full military honours in his hometown of Sarrat. *see also:* Aquino, Benigno; Aquino, Corazón; Enrile, Juan Ponce; *Hukbalahap* Movement; Marcos, Ferdinand; Marcos, Imelda; People Power; Ramos, Fidel.

## **Vientiane Action Plan (ASEAN)**

**2004** (Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/Laos/Malaysia/Myanmar/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand/Vietnam)

The **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** Vientiane Action Plan (VAP) was formulated in response to the Bali Concord II in October 2003 and was signed at the **Vientiane Summit** of ASEAN in November 2004. The VAP was the second in a series of action plans – succeeding the Hanoi Plan of Action (HPA) to be implemented for the period 2004–10 – to realize the goals of establishing an ASEAN Community by 2020 as envisioned by the **Declaration of ASEAN Concord II**. The VAP was a vehicle to unify the strategies and goals of the three pillars of the **ASEAN Community**, especially focusing on two dimensions – deepening

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regional integration and narrowing the development gap between the ten member countries. In order to realize aspirations of deeper regional integration, the VAP outlined a set of implementation mechanisms such as proposals to intensify dialogue, make binding commitments, identify appropriate implementation timetables and mechanisms, extend national and regional capacities and competences, and develop institutional frameworks, responses and human resources in a range of areas, especially in the economic sphere. Notably, the VAP also committed ASEAN to the promotion and protection of human rights among member states. The VAP was later replaced by the Roadmap for an ASEAN Community, which would be implemented between 2009 and 2015.

see also: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; ASEAN Community; Vientiane Summit (ASEAN) 2004.

### **Vientiane Agreement on the Restoration of Peace and Reconciliation in Laos 1973** (Laos)

The **Paris Peace Agreements** for Vietnam were signed on 27 January 1973. On 21 February a corresponding agreement was signed for Laos in Vientiane between the royal government and the **Pathet Lao** (Lao Nation) represented as the Patriotic Forces which had been at odds with each other for nearly two decades. Internal conflict in Laos had been tied inextricably to that in neighbouring Vietnam ever since the communist-led **Viet Minh** movement had challenged French rule at the end of the Pacific War in the first phase of the **Indochina Wars**. The revolutionary *Pathet Lao* had functioned as virtually a subordinate branch of the Viet Minh. After the division of Vietnam by the **Geneva Agreements on Indochina** in July 1954, the eastern uplands of Laos became of critical importance to Vietnam's communists seeking to overturn the government in Saigon as an access route for personnel and military supplies from north to south. Effective control of the territory through which the **Ho Chi Minh Trail** passed was sufficient for Vietnam's communists and their Laotian counterparts until the closing stages of the **Vietnam War**, when the United States' military disengagement undermined any residual political

resolve of the government in Vientiane. The agreement reached in Vientiane provided for a ceasefire, the termination of all foreign military intervention, and the establishment within 30 days of a Provisional Government of National Union responsible for conducting national elections. A protocol providing for such a coalition government was not signed until 14 September with the date of formation set for 10 October 1973. That government with Prince **Souvanna Phouma** as prime minister was installed only on 5 April 1974. The coalition failed to function according to the Vientiane Agreement, however, as its demoralized royalist members were subject to increasing intimidation. General elections did not take place and *Pathet Lao* forces assumed progressive control concurrently with the military campaign which brought the communists to power in South Vietnam. By the end of 1975 power had passed to the **Lao People's Revolutionary Party** (LPRP). On 3 December it was announced that King Savang Vatthana had abdicated and that the Lao People's Democratic Republic had been established with **Kaysone Phomvihane**, the general secretary of LPRP, as prime minister. A **Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation** was entered into with Vietnam on 18 July 1977. The Vientiane Agreement failed in its declared purpose, serving instead as the means through which the Laotian revolutionary movement came to power.

see also: Geneva Agreements on Indochina 1954; Ho Chi Minh Trail; Indochina Wars; Kaysone Phomvihane; Lao People's Revolutionary Party; Paris Peace Agreements 1973; *Pathet Lao*; Souvanna Phouma, Prince; Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation 1977; Viet Minh; Vietnam War.

### **Vientiane Summit (ASEAN) 2004** (Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/Laos/ Malaysia/Myanmar/Philippines/ Singapore/Thailand/Vietnam)

The tenth meeting of heads of government of **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** convened in Vientiane on 29 and 30 November 2004. This was the first summit to be hosted in and chaired by Laos. The main agenda of the summit was to work towards achieving the end goals of the **ASEAN Community**

and ASEAN Vision. To that end, ASEAN leaders signed the **Vientiane Action Plan (VAP)**, a six-year plan that would succeed the Hanoi Plan of Action, which would focus on deepening ASEAN integration and narrowing the development gap between ASEAN members. ASEAN leaders also adopted the ASEAN Security Community (ASC) Plan of Action which had been drafted by Indonesia. The Summit was also notable for a moribund attempt at the creation of an ASEAN peacekeeping force, proposed by Indonesia, which was rejected for fear of its implications for sovereignty and the principle of non-interference. The meeting also witnessed the accession of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Korea to the **Treaty of Amity and Cooperation**.

see also: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; ASEAN Community; Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (ASEAN) 1976; Vientiane Action Plan (ASEAN) 2004.

### **Vientiane Summits (ASEAN) September 2016** (Brunei/Cambodia/Indonesia/Laos/Malaysia/Myanmar/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand/Vietnam)

The 28th and 29th ASEAN summits were held in Vientiane on 6–7 September 2016 under the chairmanship of Laos, and were the first ASEAN summits following the establishment of the ASEAN Community on 31 December 2015. Despite the fact that the **ASEAN Charter** mandates two summits a year, the Vientiane summits were held back-to-back for reasons of resource constraints for the hosts as agreed at the **Kuala Lumpur and Langkawi Summit** in 2015. This was another reminder of how taxing the ASEAN diplomatic schedule is, with more than 1,000 meetings held annually. The two summits focused much discussion on the implementation of the **ASEAN Community Vision 2025** and adopted 19 documents including the Master Plan on Connectivity 2025 and Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Work Plan III.

Significantly, the Vientiane summits came on the back of the 12 July 2016 release of a ruling by an UN Arbitral Tribunal, constituted under Annex VII of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, which ruled in favour of the Philippines

and against China on the landmark case that was filed in 2013 after China seized Scarborough Shoal. The tribunal ruling however, was neither mentioned in the Chairman's Statement nor in the Joint Communiqué released at the conclusion of the preceding ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on 24 July 2016, although there were concerns raised about escalating tension in the **South China Sea**. At the same time, a commemorative summit was held to celebrate the 25th anniversary of ASEAN-China dialogue relations.

see also: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; ASEAN Charter (Charter of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations); ASEAN Community; Kuala Lumpur and Langkawi Summit April 2015; South China Sea.

### **Viet Cong** (Vietnam)

Viet Cong is an abbreviation for *Viet-Nam Cong-San* (translated as Vietnamese communists) which came into common usage in the years following the partition of Vietnam by the **Geneva Agreements on Indochina** in 1954. It was employed initially as a pejorative term by the southern government headed by **Ngo Dinh Diem** but was taken up by Western governments and writers as a label for the communist insurgent movement in the south of Vietnam. It was never used by the Vietnamese communists, who founded the **National Liberation Front of South Vietnam** in December 1960 as a political vehicle with which to challenge the government in Saigon.

see also: Geneva Agreements on Indochina 1954; National Liberation Front of South Vietnam; Ngo Dinh Diem.

### **Viet Minh** (Vietnam)

Viet Minh is an abbreviation of *Viet Nam Doc-lap Dong-ming Hoi* (which translates as League for the Independence of Vietnam), which was established in May 1941 in the Chinese border town of Chingsi. The Viet Minh was conceived of initially by the communist leader **Ho Chi Minh** as a national united front with which to solicit allied support, first for defeating Japan and then for liberating Vietnam from French colonial rule. It was founded as the result of

a decision taken by the Communist Party of Indochina at the eighth plenum of its Central Committee. A guerrilla base was set up in the mountains of northern Vietnam where contact was established with agents of the US Office of Strategic Services, the forerunner of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). Viet Minh forces entered Hanoi in the **August Revolution** in 1945 in an attempt to foment a general insurrection. The independence of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam was declared by Ho Chi Minh on 2 September 1945, but the *coup de force* did not survive the Chinese nationalist occupation and then the restoration of French rule. Armed conflict with France began at the end of 1946. In the previous May, the Viet Minh had sponsored the *Lien Viet* (League for the National Union of Vietnam) as an even broader front organization. When the Communist Party of Indochina, ostensibly dissolved in 1945, adopted the name **Lao Dong** (Vietnam Workers Party) in March 1951, the Viet Minh was absorbed into the *Lien Viet* and the term ceased to be employed by the communists. Nonetheless, it remained in general usage to describe the communist-led nationalist movement which successfully challenged French rule in Indochina from the end of the Pacific War until their military success in the **Indochina Wars** at the **Battle of Dien Bien Phu** in May 1954.

see also: August Revolution 1945; Dien Bien Phu, Battle of, 1954; Ho Chi Minh; Indochina Wars; *Lao Dong*.

### Vietnam–US Strategic Partnership

(Vietnam)

Even though the **Vietnam War** ended in 1975, normalization of relations between the United States and Vietnam did not occur until 1995. Yet even after normalization, while trade and investment links grew extensively as Vietnam sought to liberalize its hitherto centrally planned economy, domestic opposition in both countries hampered progress on closer defence cooperation, which only gradually materialized much later. It was only after the turn of the millennium that defence relations were strengthened as both countries found it in their interest to develop closer ties in the face of a rising and more assertive China. Vietnam, with a long

history of disputes with its larger neighbour, was keen to deepen American engagement in the region at a time when the United States was preoccupied with the Middle East and terrorism. The decision taken at a plenary meeting of the Communist Party of Vietnam in July 2003 to step up defence ties and cooperation with the United States was quickly followed by Vietnamese Defence Minister Phan Van Tra's visit to Washington in November 2003 and a port call at Saigon by a US Navy vessel. Relations continued to improve with successive visits by both Vietnamese and American leaders.

Since 2008, there has also been a significant increase in military-to-military engagement such as joint naval activities in the **South China Sea** and the convening of an inaugural annual defence dialogue, signalling a convergence of the strategic interests of the two countries. Vietnamese Prime Minister **Nguyen Xuan Phuc** was the first Southeast Asian leader to visit the White House under the Donald Trump presidency in May 2017. The visit was reciprocated six months later when President Trump made a state visit to Vietnam after attending the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting in Danang. While Vietnamese interest in strengthening defence relations with the United States coincided with increasing Chinese assertiveness in the South China Sea, a healthy long-term strategic partnership will have to rest on more than just pragmatic cooperation over a particular issue. Indeed, US–Vietnam relations are likely to be held back by differing political beliefs on governance, democracy, and human rights.

see also: Nguyen Xuan Phuc; South China Sea; Vietnam War.

### Vietnam War (Cambodia/Laos/Vietnam)

The Vietnam War is commonly understood to refer to the armed conflict between the forces of the United States and the Communist Party of Vietnam which took place primarily from March 1965 until January 1973, when the **Paris Peace Agreements** were signed. The nature of the conflict was more complex and its course more protracted, but it was informed by the common feature of a struggle over the political identity of Vietnam. The Vietnam War passed through two clearly defined historical stages

involving differing forms of American intervention. Its origins are to be found in the determined attempt by the Vietnamese-dominated Communist Party of Indochina (founded in 1930) to thwart the re-establishment of French colonial power after the end of the Pacific War and to set up a Marxist state. In the wake of Japan's surrender in August 1945, the communist front, known as the **Viet Minh** (League for the Independence of Vietnam) seized power in Hanoi in the **August Revolution**; on 2 September **Ho Chi Minh** proclaimed the formation of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. The Viet Minh attracted popular support because of its nationalist credentials, while the French were faced with rising opposition at home.

Direct military confrontation between the Viet Minh and the French first took place at the end of 1946 ostensibly over control of customs but, in effect, over entry of arms in the northern port of Haiphong. The first of the **Indochina Wars** began as a guerrilla struggle on the communist side but progressively became one between conventional formations, culminating in the historic **Battle of Dien Bien Phu** in the early months of 1954. From 1950 the Viet Minh had the advantage of military assistance from the newly established People's Republic of China, whose provision of US-manufactured artillery captured during the Korean War was decisive in the Battle of Dien Bien Phu. The French had attracted military assistance from the United States because of an ability to represent their colonial interest as part of a global struggle against international communism. It took the form of economic aid, military supplies, and logistical support; by the time of the Battle of Dien Bien Phu, the United States was bearing almost 80 per cent of the total cost of France's prosecution of the war.

As the French military position became progressively more untenable with growing popular opposition to the war, an agreement was reached to convene an international conference in Geneva to discuss Korea and Indochina. The fortress of Dien Bien Phu fell to Viet Minh assault on 7 May 1954 in a great psychological victory only the day before the Indochina phase of the conference began. This dramatic triumph did not immediately decide the political future

of Vietnam, in part because China and the Soviet Union wished to avoid a confrontation with the United States. They persuaded their Vietnamese allies to compromise on territorial control and to agree to a provisional demarcation of the country along the line of the 17th parallel of latitude prior to national elections in 1956. The Democratic Republic of Vietnam succeeded to power north of that line. To its south, an anti-communist nationalist government was established, led by former exile **Ngo Dinh Diem**, who established a Republic of Vietnam in 1955 with the support of the United States. That government, with US backing, refused to implement the electoral provisions of the **Geneva Agreements on Indochina** and took effective military action against the southern branch of the communist movement.

The second phase of the Vietnam War may be said to have begun with the establishment in December 1960 of the **National Liberation Front of South Vietnam** (NLF). This equivalent to the Viet Minh was set up on the instruction of the ruling **Lao Dong** (Workers Party) in Hanoi, which had changed its name from the Communist Party of Indochina in 1951. NLF began a series of armed actions against the Saigon government with signal success in the rural areas. The insurgency was reinforced from the north through infiltration of personnel and supplies through a series of routes passing through Laos and then Cambodia known collectively as the **Ho Chi Minh Trail**. The United States became drawn progressively into the war in support of the southern government. This support took the initial form of economic and military assistance, including the provision of some 700 military advisors. US military intervention was incremental, but the first major decision was made by President John F. Kennedy in 1961, which resulted in some 16,000 US ground troops being deployed in Vietnam by the end of 1963. The Vietnam conflict was perceived as a test case in defeating communist-inspired national liberation wars. Countervailing American resolve was required to prevent countries from falling to communism, one after another like dominoes, to use the imagery employed by President Dwight D. Eisenhower in April 1954 (see **Domino Theory**).

The year 1963 was a turning point in the course of the war. The evident unpopularity of the government in Saigon in the face of Buddhist protest as well as its lamentable military performance led to a withdrawal of US support for President Ngo Dinh Diem. His assassination in November 1963 was followed by the assumption of power by a series of military juntas, none of which demonstrated any grasp of the requirements for victory. In consequence, the United States took on a growing responsibility for the conduct of the war on the mistaken assumption that it would be possible to buy time for a better-motivated South Vietnamese Army to resume the burden of fighting. But every addition of US military resources was matched from the north, which was driven by a nationalist zeal and supported materially and diplomatically by communist allies. In March 1965, the United States changed the nature of the conflict by embarking on the continuous aerial bombardment of North Vietnam. The United States had first bombed the north in August 1964 as an act of retaliation for alleged torpedo attacks on patrolling US destroyers in the **Tonkin Gulf Incident**. When this attempt to interdict the flow of supplies southwards and to impose a penal cost on Hanoi for prosecuting the war failed, more US combat troops were introduced into the south. By the end of President Lyndon Johnson's term of office in January 1969, the number of those troops had reached more than half a million but without having been able to inflict a decisive defeat on the communist forces. The turning point in the second phase of the war came at the beginning of 1968 during the Tet festival for the Vietnamese new year. A series of well-coordinated offensives against urban targets were launched by NLF from the end of January, which included the penetration of the US embassy compound in Saigon. The **Tet Offensive** was a military failure conducted at great loss of life by NLF, which gave up control of rural strongholds as a consequence. It was, however, a great psychological victory because of its political impact within the United States, where a popular tide was rising in opposition to a war conducted at great expense in blood and treasure and which did not seem related to American interests. A

political turning point came in March in a primary election in New Hampshire, in which the setback suffered by President Johnson was such that he decided not to stand for re-election in November 1968 and to countenance negotiations with the communist side, which began in Paris by the end of the year.

Johnson's successor, President Richard Nixon, realized that his political future depended on his ability to end the war but was concerned to do so in a way that did not seem to impair the global credibility of the United States. He began to reduce US force levels and advanced in July 1969 a new policy, the **Nixon Doctrine**, which placed the primary responsibility for conducting the war on the South Vietnamese. This policy of so-called **Vietnamization** was underpinned with continued bombing of North Vietnam from Guam and Thailand, as well as from offshore aircraft carriers. The declared US war aim was to maintain the separate political integrity of Vietnam south of the 17th parallel. This end was sustained in negotiations in Paris, which reached a turning point at the end of 1972 following the failure of a conventional military offensive by the North Vietnamese across the 17th parallel in March 1972. The Vietnamese communists revised their long-held view that the United States should remove the government in Saigon and were prepared to settle for the priority of securing an American military withdrawal. After a renewal of US aerial warfare, a final peace agreement was concluded in Paris in January 1973 whereby, in addition to a ceasefire with Vietnamese forces in place, it was agreed that all US forces would be removed from Vietnam in return for the release of US prisoners of war, primarily air force personnel. A power-sharing National Council of National Reconciliation and Concord, a structure for organizing elections, could not be established, however, and the ceasefire broke down. Monitoring of the implementation of the accord by an international commission followed US military withdrawal and release of prisoners but without effect. American support for the Saigon government began to falter as the Watergate scandal undermined Richard Nixon's authority and his threat to resume bombing, should the communists violate the peace accords.

In early 1975 the war began to move to a dramatic culmination after the communist side undertook military probes, which enabled them to seize the provincial capital of Phuoc Long. In March, the Ban Me Thuot Offensive in the central highlands led South Vietnam's President **Nguyen Van Thieu** to order a retreat to the plains, which turned into a spectacular rout. The progressive collapse of his army followed; on 30 April communist forces entered Saigon to receive the surrender from President Dong Van Minh, who had succeeded to office after President Thieu's flight from the country into exile. NLF had maintained that they sought an independent neutral southern state, but in July 1976 the two halves of the country were reunited formally into the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

The Vietnam War was very costly in loss of life and casualties: 47,365 US personnel were killed in action and nearly 11,000 lost their lives through other causes, including accidents. The war memorial in Washington contains the names of 58,196 men and women who died in Vietnam. South Vietnamese military deaths amounted to 254,257. In May 1995, the government in Hanoi released approximate casualty figures of more than one million fatalities from North Vietnam and the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam. Civilian casualties were very heavy both north and south, with more than two million deaths and injuries. The Vietnamese received engineering support from Chinese troops as well as material support from China, the Soviet Union, and its bloc allies. The United States carried the main burden of prosecuting the war in support of the South Vietnamese, but was assisted by the limited military involvement of troops from Australia, New Zealand, South Korea, the Philippines, and Thailand.

The Vietnam War had a wider Indochinese dimension. The Viet Minh had penetrated Laos and Cambodia in the early 1950s in order to pin down French forces and also to establish a fraternal political domain. Vietnamese troops remained in Laos after the Geneva accords in July 1954 to stiffen the counterpart **Pathet Lao** (Lao Nation) against the government in Vientiane, in part to ensure control of military access routes from North to South Vietnam. The

Vietnamese communist military presence was extended to Cambodia during the 1960s for a corresponding purpose, which provided a pretext for the overthrow of Prince **Norodom Sihanouk** and the expansion of the war westwards. The destruction of the Cambodian army by the Vietnamese communists during 1970–1 played an important part in helping the **Khmer Rouge** to seize power in April 1975 some two weeks before the fall of Saigon. In the case of Laos, the **Vientiane Agreement on the Restoration of Peace and Reconciliation in Laos** was signed in February 1973, following the Paris accords for Vietnam, but Laos did not fall under communist rule until after the end of the Vietnam War in April 1975.

see also: August Revolution 1945; Dien Bien Phu, Battle of, 1954; Domino Theory; Geneva Agreements on Indochina 1954; Ho Chi Minh; Ho Chi Minh Trail; Indochina Wars; Khmer Rouge; *Lao Dong*; National Liberation Front of South Vietnam; Ngo Dinh Diem; Nguyen Van Thieu; Nixon Doctrine 1969; Paris Peace Agreements 1973; *Pathet Lao*; Sihanouk, King Norodom; Tet Offensive 1968; Tonkin Gulf Incident 1964; Vientiane Agreement on the Restoration of Peace and Reconciliation in Laos 1973; Viet Minh; Vietnamization.

### **Vietnamization** (Vietnam)

Vietnamization was the term coined in the wake of President Nixon's historic press conference on the island of Guam in July 1969; the **Nixon Doctrine** presaged the United States' military disengagement from Vietnam. Vietnamization was meant to describe the assumption of principal responsibility for fighting the war by the army of the Republic of (South) Vietnam. Its first major test occurred in February 1971 with a military incursion (codenamed Lam Son 719) into Laos in an attempt to interdict the legendary **Ho Chi Minh Trail**. The action proved to be a military disaster. The failure of Vietnamization to substitute for US intervention was confirmed by the inability of the South Vietnamese Army to blunt the communist offensive in March 1972 without the use of US air power. In the wake of the **Paris Peace Agreements** of January 1973, Vietnamization was exposed as no more than

a slogan to extricate the United States from Vietnam when a rout of southern forces during the Ban Me Thuot Offensive in March 1975 led directly to decisive military defeat at the end of the following month.

see also: Ho Chi Minh Trail; Nixon Doctrine 1969; Paris Peace Agreements 1973.

### **Visiting Forces Agreement 1998**

(Philippines)

Signed in 1998, the Visiting Forces Agreement plays a crucial role by framing military activities within the confines of the US–Philippines alliance as expressed in the **Philippines–US Security Treaty 1951**. It allows for the temporary presence of US military forces in the Philippines and informs the implementation of the 2014 **Enhanced Defense Cooperation Act (EDCA)** which is critical for the Philippine military.

Consonant with anti-US sentiments that he has expressed during his term but immediately triggered by a US decision to bar a political ally from entry into the country, President **Rodrigo Duterte** initiated a process to abrogate the agreement in February 2020. By way of a notice of termination signed by Foreign Secretary Teodoro Locsin and dispatched to the US Embassy in Manila, the VFA was to be terminated within 180 days after the US government received written notification. The Duterte administration cited the cancellation of a US visa for a former Philippines police chief, Senator Ronald De La Rosa, an associate of the president, as the main reason behind the decision to terminate the Agreement, arguing that it amounted to a transgression of Philippine sovereignty. In the event, this process was suspended for six months by a Supreme Court decision in April 2020. The suspension was extended for a further six months in November. At issue is a Senate challenge on grounds that the unilateral abrogation of a treaty is beyond the scope of presidential power. Its resumption has become an issue at the 2022 presidential campaign. Because the termination of the VFA is currently on hold (at the time of writing), so too are a series of projects that hitherto were being pursued under EDCA. Meanwhile, Defence Secretary Delfin Lorzana and Foreign Secretary

Locsin have publicly expressed support for the VFA. The VFA has proven instrumental in practical ways to the Philippines in recent years. In 2013, it facilitated US military assistance in the wake of Typhoon Haiyan and the humanitarian crisis that followed. Exercise Balikatan, crucial to the Philippines' counterterrorism efforts in its southern islands, was an annual exercise conducted under its auspices.

see also: Duterte, Rodrigo; Enhanced Defense Cooperation Act (EDCA); Philippines–US Security Treaty 1951.

### **Vo Nguyen Giap, General** (Vietnam)

General Vo Nguyen Giap is regarded as the founding father of the People's Army of Vietnam. He achieved renown as his country's leading military thinker and as the architect of historic victories against France and the United States in the **Indochina Wars** and the **Vietnam War**. General Giap was born in August 1911 to a peasant family in a village in Quang Binh Province north of Hue. A nationalist in his teens, he was detained in 1930 by the French colonial authorities for leading a student protest. He graduated in law from Hanoi University in 1937 and in political economy the following year, by which time he had joined the Communist Party of Indochina founded by **Ho Chi Minh**. Following the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939, he evaded police arrest and made his way to southern China, where he first met the Vietnamese communist leader. Giap's wife and child remained in Hanoi, both dying in prison. He returned to the border region of Vietnam early in 1941 as one of Ho's closest advisors, with responsibility for training a fledgling guerrilla army. In May 1941 he participated in establishing the **Viet Minh** (League for the Independence of Vietnam) which nominally led the nationalist struggle against French colonial rule. After the proclamation of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in Hanoi in September 1945, Giap became minister of the interior as well as commander-in-chief of the armed forces and then minister of defence in 1947. He always upheld the primacy of politics in war. He displayed logistical genius at the **Battle of Dien Bien Phu** in 1954, planning the decisive deployment of heavy artillery in the mountains

surrounding the valley where the French had established their military positions.

After that dramatic victory, the partition of Vietnam and the establishment of a communist government north of the 17th parallel of latitude, Giap led its armed forces continuously against the government in Saigon and US military intervention until final victory and national unification in 1975. He gave up his post as commander-in-chief in 1976 and was removed as minister of defence in 1980 and then from the Politburo in 1982, possibly for opposing the invasion of Cambodia. He retained office as deputy prime minister, to which he was appointed in 1979, until leaving office in August 1991, but devoted much of his time to a commission responsible for training scientists and technicians. When Vietnam and the People's Republic of China began to engage in serious rapprochement in the late 1980s, General Giap played a role in the personal diplomacy. In September 1989 he led the Vietnamese delegation to the Asian Games in Beijing, the highest-ranking Vietnamese to visit the Chinese capital openly for over a decade. He also played a personal role in reconciliation with the United States through participation in historical seminars in Hanoi on the Vietnam War. Giap passed away on 4 October 2013, a celebrated Vietnamese war hero.

see also: August Revolution 1945; Dien Bien Phu, Battle of, 1954; Ho Chi Minh; Indochina Wars; Viet Minh; Vietnam War.

### **Vo Van Kiet** (Vietnam)

Vo Van Kiet was appointed chairman of the Council of Ministers of Vietnam in August 1991, elevated from the position of deputy to **Do Muoi**, who had become secretary-general of the ruling Communist Party. His appointment indicated Vietnam's continuing commitment to market-based economic reforms with which Vo Van Kiet had been closely identified. He was born Phan Van Hoa in Can Tho in southern Vietnam in 1922 to a peasant family and became involved in the revolutionary movement in

the early 1940s. He rose in the party hierarchy working in the south of the country and held the post of secretary of the Saigon Municipal Party Committee at the end of the **Vietnam War** in 1975. He continued to hold high party office in what became Ho Chi Minh City but demonstrated a signal interest in practical economic matters with growing impatience with sterile dogma. In 1982 he was elected a full member of the Politburo and also a vice-chairman of the Council of Ministers. He became identified with the programme of economic reform after the Communist Party's sixth National Congress in December 1986. He was appointed acting chairman of the Council of Ministers in March 1988 on the death of Pham Hung but failed to retain that position, which was filled in June by the more conservative Do Muoi. His succession to Do Muoi in 1991 was reconfirmed when the National Assembly elected him to the new office of prime minister in September 1992 in which he concentrated on economic matters and developing closer relationships with **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)**. He continued in office until September 1997 when he was succeeded as prime minister by **Phan Van Khai**.

A pragmatic reformist and proponent of **Doi Moi**, Vo Van Kiet as prime minister presided over a period of economic growth and development in Vietnam and sought to improve the country's relations with the international community. His efforts on the latter count led to the lifting of a trade embargo by the United States in 1994, membership in ASEAN in 1995, and the development of a personal rapport with several international statesmen, including **Lee Kuan Yew**. After leaving office in September 1997 and the Politburo of the Communist Party that December, Vo Van Kiet remained an outspoken supporter of reforms, calling for press freedom and dialogue with dissidents. He died on 11 June 2008.

see also: ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Do Muoi; *Doi Moi*; Lee Kuan Yew; Phan Van Khai; Vietnam War.



# W

## Wahid, Abdurrahman (Indonesia)

Abdurrahman Addakhil Wahid, often known by the sobriquet Gus Dur, was born on 7 September 1940 in Jombang, East Java. His paternal grandfather, Hasyim Asy'ari, was the founder of the **Nahdlatul Ulama** (NU), a highly influential traditionalist *Sunni* organization in Indonesia with over 40 million followers. His father, Abdul Wahid Hasyim, was Indonesia's first minister of religious affairs. Wahid's early education was in Jakarta, where he subsequently assumed a position as a teacher at a *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) in Jombang and later as a headmaster at a *madrasah* (Islamic school). In 1963, he received a scholarship from the Ministry of Religious Affairs to pursue further studies at the Al-Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt. In 1966, he enrolled at the University of Baghdad. Upon his return to Indonesia, Wahid worked as a journalist for major publications such as *Tempo* and *Kompas* and built a sound reputation as a social commentator. In 1977, he joined the Hasyim Asy'ari Islamic University as dean of the Faculty of Islamic Beliefs and Practices.

Though Wahid had twice previously declined membership in the NU's Religious Advisory Council, he was eventually persuaded to join by his maternal grandfather, Bisri Syansuri, a notable religious scholar and NU strongman. Wahid quickly positioned himself as a reformer in NU, which at this point was embroiled in controversy related to the massacre of Communist Party members after the fall of President **Sukarno**. As part of a seven-person internal reform committee, Wahid managed to distance NU from partisan politics by reorienting the party's attention to social engagement. In 1984, he was nominated as NU's new chairman at its National Congress, a move which was warmly received by the **New Order** regime. Under Wahid, NU supported President Suharto and his party, **Golkar**, and endorsed the state **Pancasila** ideology. Other NU initiatives under Wahid's chairmanship included the reform of

the *pesantren* education system and the creation of a new generation of NU Muslim intellectuals, known as NU *Muda* (Young NU Members), which promulgated alternative Islamic discourses widely described as progressive and secular. Because of his popularity and successful revitalization of NU, Wahid was re-elected for a second term in 1989.

With the advent of the political reform movement, NU came under mounting pressure to form its own party in order to challenge the scandal-stricken *Golkar*. In 1998, Wahid acceded and **Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa** (National Awakening Party, PKB) was formed. On 7 February, Wahid was announced as PKB's candidate for the presidential election. Following the withdrawal of incumbent president **B. J. Habibie**, Wahid secured the official nomination from the Central Axis, a political coalition put together by Amien Rais, chairman of the **People's Consultative Assembly** (MPR). On 20 October 1999, Wahid won the first ever democratic presidential election in Indonesia, winning with 373 votes to **Megawati Sukarnoputri's** 313 votes, and became the country's fourth president.

Wahid's presidential administration focused heavily on political reform. Immediately after the election, Wahid formed his first cabinet, the National Unity Cabinet, and set about abolishing the ministries of Information and Welfare, both known to be among the most corrupt agencies under the New Order regime. In tandem with policies of decentralization, Wahid also moved to reform the armed forces by rolling back its **Dwi Fungsi** doctrine that mandated its involvement in national politics, and replacing generals who questioned his authority over the military. Not surprisingly, this move proved unpopular with certain segments in the military and was initially met with resistance which placed the military's relationship with the president under considerable strain. This was manifested during the outbreak of violence between Christians and Muslims in Ambon, when Wahid's orders to the military not to

permit **Laskar Jihad** to enter the fray went unheeded, leading the president to declare a state of emergency.

Aside from reforming the military, Wahid's presidency was known for its commitment to pluralism, religious tolerance, and equality among races. Wahid set the stage for the transformation of difficult relations with the restive Aceh Province, when he reopened negotiations with the **Aceh Independence Movement** and with the Chinese community, and when he ended decades of institutionalized discrimination by declaring Chinese New Year a holiday and lifting bans on Chinese script and the importing of Chinese publications. Wahid also adopted a more conciliatory approach towards the **Ahmadiyah** sect when he invited Mirza Tahir Ahmad, the fourth leader of the Ahmadi, to Jakarta as a goodwill gesture.

Notwithstanding its reformist credentials, the Wahid presidency was tainted by allegations of corruption involving the mismanagement of monies by the *Badan Urusan Logistic* (BULOG or State Logistics Agency) and misuse of donation funds from the sultan of Brunei earmarked for humanitarian assistance to Aceh. Economic reforms also progressed at a glacial pace, leading to widespread impatience and dissatisfaction. The government struggled to attract foreign direct investment, and as a consequence the national debt ballooned. Matters came to a head in November 2000, when 151 members of the **People's Representative Council** signed a petition calling for Wahid's impeachment. On 23 July 2001, the MPR unanimously voted to impeach Wahid and replace him with Megawati Sukarnoputri. Wahid continued his involvement in national politics after his impeachment. He rallied to be considered a candidate for the 2004 elections but was disqualified on medical grounds. Abdurrahman Wahid died in Jakarta on 30 December 2009 as a result of multiple health problems and was buried in Jombang, East Java. A state funeral was held for him followed by a mourning period of seven days.

see also: Aceh Independence Movement; *Ahmadiyah*; *Dwi Fungsi*; *Golkar*; Habibie, B. J.; *Laskar Jihad*; Megawati Sukarnoputri; *Nahdlatul Ulama*; New Order; *Pancasila*; *Partai*

*Kebangkitan Bangsa*; People's Consultative Assembly; People's Representative Council; Sukarno.

### Widodo, Joko (Indonesia)

Joko Widodo, or 'Jokowi' as he is affectionately known, is currently serving as president of the Republic of Indonesia after securing reelection in 2019. Jokowi was born on 21 June 1961, in the city of Solo (Surakarta) and possesses an engineering degree from Gadjah Mada University. Prior to ascending to the heights of national office, the former businessman served as mayor of Solo, his hometown, and later governor of Jakarta, the most populous city in Southeast Asia. A relative political unknown when he entered national politics, Jokowi's rise has been nothing short of meteoric. Jokowi's popularity rests on his humble demeanour, consultative style of administration, and a natural connection with people. Moreover, he is neither a scion of any of several powerful political families in Indonesia nor a business tycoon, although he was a successful businessman in his own right. On the contrary, the former furniture and flooring businessman is known for his frugal lifestyle, and for having refused a salary while he served as the elected mayor of Solo, a position he relinquished to become the governor of Jakarta on a **Partai Demokrasi Indonesia-Perjuangan** (PDI-P) ticket in September 2012. His popular appeal was enhanced by the policies he pursued after winning the gubernatorial elections, such as a free healthcare scheme, his 'blusukan' frequent impromptu visits to local government offices, and the launch of a long-awaited mass transit rail system in the sprawling city. Significantly, PDI-P also started to rejuvenate in consonance with the growing popularity of Jokowi, so much so that he was immediately identified as a leading presidential candidate for the party despite not being part of the inner circle of its leadership. At the same time, the 'Jokowi effect' was also perceived to be a much-needed catalyst to hasten party efforts at overturning their fortunes in legislative elections as PDI-P sought to return to the pinnacle of power.

True to form, Jokowi was unveiled as the PDI-P presidential candidate in March 2014

after finally winning the trust of **Megawati Sukarnoputri**. The 2014 presidential election proved to be essentially a popularity contest, where the unvarnished reputation of Jokowi as a competent administrator and principled reformer ultimately conveyed him to power at the expense of **Prabowo Subianto**, whom he defeated by securing 53 per cent of the popular vote, although the immediate post-election period was marked by the latter's refusal to concede defeat.

Jokowi's first years in office were marked by a rift with Megawati, his erstwhile patron who was nevertheless threatened by his rapid ascent. Differences surfaced when as president, he refused to appoint Budi Gunawan, an ally of Megawati, as chief of police over allegations of corruption. The fact that he appointed only four PDI-P members in his 34-member cabinet also did not endear him to his erstwhile political benefactor. In response, former president Megawati chose the occasion of the PDI-P congress in April 2015 to sound a warning to the sitting president that he was but a party functionary and by extension, beholden to the party leader. Exceptionally striking was the fact that Jokowi was not given the floor at all during the congress. Although widely recognized as foreign to the oligarchic structure of Indonesian politics, Jokowi nevertheless quickly demonstrated political acumen by repairing ties with Megawati and surrounding himself with powerful interlocutors like former general Luhut Binsar Pandjaitan.

In terms of policies, Jokowi's first term was spent for the most part improving social services, overhauling a bureaucratic culture of inertia, and rebuilding and repairing decrepit infrastructure that was a major deficiency in the Indonesian economy in order to advance his signature **Global Maritime Fulcrum** strategy conceived to enhance connectivity across the archipelago. In a marked departure from **Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono**, Jokowi demonstrated a disinterest in foreign policy and was absent from the United Nations General Assembly during his term in office even as Indonesia was campaigning for a non-permanent security council seat. This did not prevent

his pursuit of controversial initiatives that complicated relations with neighbours, however, such as sinking illegal foreign fishing vessels apprehended in Indonesian waters and executing foreign drug traffickers. Jokowi's political position was dealt a blow in 2017 when his ally, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama or 'Ahok', was convicted of the crime of blaspheming Islam during the campaign to defend his Jakarta governorship and sentenced to two years' imprisonment. The conviction was preceded by a series of protests staged by conservative Muslim groups against Ahok (see **Anti-Ahok Protests 2016**). The protests also prompted Jokowi to shore up his support among conservative Islamic constituents, which he subsequently did by choosing **Ma'aruf Amin**, chairman of **Majelis Ulama Indonesia** and formerly a senior cleric in **Nahdlatul Ulama**, as his vice-presidential candidate for the 2019 presidential election.

While Jokowi came into office with the reputation of being a reformer, the arid reality is that he struggled to rein in the endemic, institutionalized corruption in the Indonesian political and bureaucratic system even as he struggled to consolidate his position within PDI-P and fend off attacks from conservative Islamists. Be that as it may, following a bitter and divisive campaign that saw the Prabowo Subianto camp attack him for allegedly being a communist and a closet Christian, Jokowi managed to prevail and was re-elected for a second and final term as president of the republic of Indonesia in 2019. One of his first acts after re-election was to invite his adversary, Prabowo, to join his Onward Indonesia cabinet. In August 2019, Jokowi announced his intention to initiate a move of the Indonesian national capital from the overcrowded and environmentally-stressed city of Jakarta to East Kalimantan. He has been among the most vocal **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** critics of the February 2021 coup in Myanmar. Jokowi's eldest son Gibran Rakabuming Raka was elected mayor of Solo, a position Jokowi held early on in his own political career, in February 2021, prompting speculation that he is being groomed for high office.

see *also*: Anti-Ahok Protests 2016; ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Global Maritime Fulcrum; Ma'aruf Amin; *Majelis Ulama Indonesia*; Megawati Sukarnoputri; *Nahdlatul Ulama*; *Partai Demokrasi Indonesia–Perjuangan*; Prabowo Subianto; Yudhoyono, Susilo Bambang.

### Workers' Party (Singapore)

Until 2011, the Workers' Party (WP) had a chequered record in Singapore politics for more than a quarter of a century, attaining only minimal parliamentary representation. Since then it has achieved a major breakthrough and now commands the opposition bloc in Parliament. It was founded in November 1957 by the former chief minister **David Marshall** and modelled on the British Labour Party. An immediate showing was made in city council elections with communist support. Withdrawal of that support left it without any seats after general elections in 1959 brought the **People's Action Party (PAP)** to power. Marshall then won a by-election in the Anson constituency in 1962 through a return of communist backing after left-wing defection from the ruling PAP over the formation of Malaysia. After Marshall resigned from the party in January 1963 in frustration at communist control, the WP became moribund for nearly a decade. In 1971 Marshall's law partner, **J. B. Jeyaretnam**, revived the party, which he eventually used as his personal political vehicle. Ten years later, in October 1981, Jeyaretnam became the first opposition member of Parliament in over a decade when he won a by-election, also in Anson. In Parliament, he distinguished himself with carping criticism of government and was returned by his constituency in general elections in December 1984. Jeyaretnam lost his seat and was disqualified from politics for five years in November 1986 after the High Court confirmed his conviction for making a false declaration of the WP accounts and being fined an amount which automatically carried that penalty.

The WP failed to secure any seats in elections in September 1988 but was successful in one constituency in August 1991, through **Low**

**Thia Kiang**. In elections in January 1997, Low retained his seat, while J. B. Jeyaretnam entered Parliament as the sole non-constituency member, a position allocated to up to three losing opposition candidates. He was removed from this position in 2001, however, after being declared bankrupt. A falling out between Jeyaretnam and Low in 2001 led to the former's departure from the party. Low took over as secretary-general, and after a period of rebuilding, the party experienced something of a revival under his leadership. Under Low Thia Kiang, a strategy to rebrand the party away from the ideologically adversarial approach of Jeyaretnam to a more constructive policy-focused manner of political engagement and also to enhance its recruitment process and talent pool began to reap dividends. Low led a five-member WP team to a landmark victory in **Aljunied Group Representation Constituency** at the April 2011 general election by wresting a Group Representation Constituency (GRC) from PAP for the first time since this 'super constituency' model was introduced in June 1988. The fortunes of WP improved further in the ensuing two years, when it won both by-elections it contested against PAP in the single-seat wards of Hougang in May 2012 and Punggol East in January 2013. The party's progress stalled at the 2015 election, however, as a combination of the passing of **Lee Kuan Yew** and 50th anniversary independence celebrations ushered PAP to a resounding victory and limited WP to six parliamentary seats. A party leadership election contest in 2016 saw Low Thia Kiang retain leadership over a challenge from Chen Show Mao. Low would eventually hand over the reins of party leadership to Pritam Singh, who succeeded him as secretary-general in 2018. By the 2020 elections, WP managed to secure ten parliamentary seats with a platform that advocated for a minimum wage and greater flexibility in citizens' usage of their central provident fund contributions. The party was further bolstered by popular sympathy in the wake of legal investigations into local governance at the WP-controlled Aljunied GRC. In addition, WP also managed to assemble a dynamic and youthful professional team of candidates with substantial popular

appeal. The party was however thrust into a state of crisis in November 2021 when one of its parliamentarians, Raeesha Khan, confessed to lying in Parliament. The confession triggered an investigation by the parliamentary Committee of Privileges, which released its findings on 10 February 2022 and recommended a fine for

the parliamentarian and further investigations of party leaders Pritam Singh and Faisal Manap for possible perjury.

see *also*: Aljunied Group Representation Constituency; Jeyaretnam, J. B.; Lee Kuan Yew; Low Thia Khiang; Marshall, David; People's Action Party.

# X

## **Xayaburi Dam** (Cambodia/Laos/ Thailand/Vietnam)

Situated on the lower stretches of the Mekong River in northern Laos, the Xayaburi Dam is a proposed US\$3.5 billion, 1,285-megawatt hydropower project whose construction is spearheaded by Thailand's second largest construction company, C. H. Karnchang, and financed by Thai banks. Once completed, the Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand has also undertaken to purchase 95 per cent of the electricity generated by the dam.

While the success of the Xayaburi Dam project is critical to the Laotian economy, its construction has also proven to be controversial. Environmental activists have decried the construction of the dam, arguing that because it is located upstream, its operation would impede the flow of sediment and the migration of fish downstream. Concomitantly, this would have negative consequences for the ecosystem as well as the livelihoods of more than 60 million people who reside in the Mekong Delta, many of whom rely heavily on fishing and agriculture. In addition to this, environmental activists have also expressed concern that the

completion of the Xayaburi Dam might set a precedent for the building of other dams in the lower Mekong. In order to protect the ecosystem and ensure the environmental sustainability of the Mekong River, an inter-governmental body known as the **Mekong River Commission** (MRC) was established via the instrument of a treaty between Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Vietnam in 1995. With the creation of this body, projects on the river envisaged by any one signatory state could only proceed after consultation with and agreement from other members of the MRC.

Because of environmental issues related to the construction of the dam, the Thai government has come under strong political pressure to enforce a moratorium on construction activities until environmental concerns have been addressed. Both Cambodia and Vietnam strongly oppose the Xayaburi Dam as their agriculture industries will be threatened by the hydropower project. Laos, however, is keen to proceed in earnest with construction, as electricity from the dam will generate much-needed income for its economy.

*see also:* Mekong River Commission.

# Y

## **Yang di-Pertuan Agong** (Malaysia)

*Yang di-Pertuan Agong* (Supreme Ruler) is the official title of Malaysia's reigning constitutional monarch. Monarchy in Malaysia has long enjoyed a special political standing, in part because of its symbolic role in the emergence of Malay nationalism during the **Malayan Union Proposal** crisis from 1946. Its prerogatives have been jealously guarded but have come under challenge as economic development has generated change within Malay society. The distinctive feature about monarchy in Malaysia is that the office is held for five years only on a rotational rather than on a hereditary basis. The constitutional predecessor of Malaysia, the Federation of Malaya, was created from a number of states in the Malay Peninsula which had been in formal treaty relations with the British Crown, making them sovereign entities in legal theory. On independence in 1957, the nine hereditary Malay rulers of Malaya agreed to occupy the office of Supreme Ruler in turn on an agreed notion of seniority. That arrangement has continued from the establishment of Malaysia in 1963.

In 1983 a political crisis occurred over the issue of the royal assent to Acts of Parliament which the government of **Mahathir Mohamad** had sought to remove by constitutional amendment. Another **constitutional crisis** arose early in 1993 over the same government's attempt to remove the right of the hereditary rulers to immunity from criminal prosecution after an alleged act of assault by a former king. In May 1994, Malaysia's Parliament passed an amendment to the constitution whereby any bill which had been endorsed by both its houses would be deemed to have become law within 30 days, whether or not assented to by the king. On 13 December 2011, Abdul Halim Shah, the sultan of Kedah, became the first monarch to hold the office twice, having first held the position from 1970 to 1975. He was also the oldest hereditary ruler to have ascended the throne. The

incumbent is Abdullah Ahmad Shah of Pahang, who ascended the throne on 31 January 2019.

In February 2020, the constitutional monarch was thrust into the fray of national affairs against the backdrop of the political crisis precipitated by the **Sheraton Move** which collapsed the **Pakatan Harapan** government. After holding meetings with elected representatives and the leaders of the major political parties, Sultan Abdullah declared **Muhyiddin Yassin** the eighth prime minister of Malaysia. In January 2021, he also approved the Muhyiddin government's request for the declaration of a state of emergency purportedly to deal with the growing **Covid-19** pandemic crisis. While the state of emergency allowed the government to manage the pandemic, it also provided much relief for a besieged Muhyiddin who was struggling to keep his minority **Perikatan Nasional** government in power. As the political uncertainty worsened, relations between the palace and the ruling government grew testy over the announcement of the lifting of the state of emergency made on 26 July 2021, but evidently without consultation with Sultan Abdullah. Following the resignation of Muhyiddin Yassin on 16 August, Sultan Abdullah exercised the powers of the *Yang di-Pertuan Agong* to appoint **Ismail Sabri Yaakob**, the **UMNO** vice-president who had been appointed deputy prime minister only a month earlier, to the office of prime minister after satisfactorily ascertaining that he commanded the confidence of a majority of parliamentarians. Looking ahead, the *Yang di-Pertuan Agong* will be looked to as a stabilising force amidst the growing uncertainty and instability of the Malaysian political landscape.

see *also*: Constitutional Crises; Covid-19;

Ismail Sabri Yaakob, Datuk Seri; Mahathir Mohamad, Tun; Malayan Union Proposal 1946; Muhyiddin Yassin, Tan Sri; *Pakatan Harapan*; *Perikatan Nasional*; Sheraton Move 2020; UMNO (United Malays National Organization).

## Yingluck Shinawatra (Thailand)

Yingluck Shinawatra was Thailand's first female prime minister. Yingluck was born in Chiang Mai on 21 June 1967. She earned a bachelor's degree from Chiang Mai University in 1988 and a master's in public administration in 1991 at Kentucky State University in the United States. She worked in her family's businesses, becoming an executive in several of her older brother's enterprises. Yingluck is the younger sister of exiled former prime minister **Thaksin Shinawatra**, and the sister-in-law of another former prime minister, **Somchai Wongsawat**.

Yingluck's ascent to power was as dramatic as her downfall. Notwithstanding her relative inexperience and personal reluctance, Yingluck was named the **Pheu Thai Party's** top candidate under the party-list system for the July 2011 elections despite being neither a party leader nor an executive committee member. With *Pheu Thai's* absolute majority win, a coalition government was formed and Yingluck was appointed prime minister on 5 August. Against the backdrop of a deeply polarized political climate between pro- and anti-Thaksin forces, Yingluck's government faced constant criticism from detractors, including for its handling of the 2011 floods and apparent inability to fulfil promises made during the electoral campaign despite the fact that the Thai economy had stabilized during the early months of her tenure. As a *Pheu Thai* prime minister, she faced pressure in the form of demands from pro-Thaksin forces to craft an amnesty bill for those accused of politically motivated offences after the 2006 coup, ostensibly to secure his pardon.

Yingluck, who set political reconciliation as a major policy goal, laboured to establish a cordial relationship with the military. To defuse tensions, her government delayed proposed tabling of changes to the military-inspired constitution. Initially dismissed as merely a puppet of her brother, Yingluck did grow in confidence as prime minister during her term, demonstrating deft diplomatic skills while developing her own independent power base. In July 2013, Yingluck took on the important position of defence minister, purportedly with the support of the army chief, General **Prayuth Chan-ocha**,

making her the first female in a position traditionally the preserve of retired senior military officers.

She was unable, however, to mend fences with the traditional Bangkok elite and royalists who were bent on removing all vestiges of her brother's rule. To that end, her political opponents brought charges of malfeasance and neglect against her for her government's controversial rice buy-back scheme, which they lambasted as a populist ploy to secure the rural support base. At the same time, opposition forces also opposed her party's proposed amnesty bill, which they viewed as paving the way for Thaksin's return to Thailand. The traditional elite and royalists took to the streets in October 2013 and reignited mass protest, calling for Yingluck's dismissal. A gambit to dissolve Parliament and call elections, which were held on 2 February 2014 amidst protests and blockades at several voting stations, backfired on Yingluck when the Constitutional Court declared the election result null and void on the grounds that because voting could not be completed within the same day (because of the blockades), the process was unconstitutional. The same court found her guilty on charges of abusing her power by transferring a senior official out of the National Security Council and replacing him with a loyalist. In the event, Yingluck was forced to resign on 7 May 2014. She was detained and later released by the military after the coup of 22 May 2014. In January 2015 she was formally impeached under the **National Council for Peace and Order** and banned from politics for five years. As she was about to stand trial on charges of criminal negligence levied against her in January 2016, she fled the country in August 2017 and was tried, convicted, and sentenced *in absentia* to five years' imprisonment. It was widely suspected that she was not stopped from fleeing by the junta authorities, for fear that she would emerge a martyr from the trial. Yingluck was given Serbian citizenship in 2019.

see also: National Council for Peace and Order; *Pheu Thai* Party; Prayuth Chan-ocha, General; Somchai Wongsawat; Thaksin Shinawatra.



**Young Turks (Thailand)**

Young Turks is the name given to a group of regimental and battalion commanders who became influential in Thai politics from the mid-1970s and who promoted an abortive coup in April 1981. The core of the group were graduates of class seven of the Chulachomklao Royal Military Academy. They had experienced advanced professional training as well as service in Vietnam and involvement in counter-insurgency in Thailand. The group coalesced in the wake of the collapse of military rule in October 1973 during a highly volatile democratic interlude brought to a close by a bloody coup in October 1976 following the **Thammasat University Massacre**. After an incumbency coup in October 1977 which made General **Kriangsak Chomanan** prime minister, the Young Turks, who took their name from the movement established at the heart of the Ottoman Empire in 1908, played an arbiter role within a factionalized military. Their withdrawal of support from General Kriangsak prompted his resignation in February 1980 and the succession to office by General **Prem Tinsulanonda**. Charging weakness of political leadership, the Young Turks organized a coup attempt on 1 April 1981, but Prem escaped from Bangkok to Korat in the northeast of the country with the royal family. The failure to attract support from King **Bhumibol Adulyadej**, who endorsed Prem's action, led to the collapse of the coup attempt within days. Most of the Young Turks were dismissed or transferred within the army, but some of their number were involved in a subsequent abortive coup in September 1985. They represented a complex mixture of self-seeking and professional interests concerned with both protecting military privilege and preventing a perceived degeneration of the political process allegedly influenced by civilian-business participation.

see also: Bhumibol Adulyadej, King; Kriangsak Chomanan, General; Prem Tinsulanonda, General; Thammasat University Massacre 1976.

**Yudhoyono, Susilo Bambang**  
(Indonesia)

Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, also popularly known as 'SBY', was Indonesia's first directly elected president when he defeated **Megawati**

**Sukarnoputri** in the October 2004 election. In July 2009, he secured a landslide victory with 61 per cent of the vote to become the first Indonesian president to be re-elected.

Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono was born in Pacitan in East Java on 9 September 1949 into a well-to-do family. After graduating from the Indonesian Military Academy and topping his class in 1973, he joined the army and undertook various tours of duty, steadily rising through the ranks. Yudhoyono also attended the Infantry Officer Advanced Course at Fort Benning in the United States in the 1980s as well as the US Army Command and General Staff College in Kansas in 1991, during which time he obtained a master's degree in business management from Webster University. Yudhoyono held territorial commands in Jakarta and South Sumatra, and served as chief of the armed forces social and political affairs staff. He received a doctorate in agricultural economics from Bogor Agricultural Institute in 2004. In 2005, he was awarded two honorary doctorates in law and political science, from Webster University and Thammasat University respectively. Yudhoyono retired from the military in January 2000 and began his political career in the government of **Abdurrahman Wahid**, where he served first as minister of mining and energy, and later, as coordinating minister for political, social, and security affairs in August 2000. He was dismissed by President Wahid in 2011 when he disobeyed orders issued by the president, himself under siege and facing impeachment, to declare a state of emergency. This act of defiance earned him a reputation as a liberal and democrat. Yudhoyono returned to government as coordinating minister for political, social, and security affairs in the '*Gotong Royong*' cabinet of Megawati Sukarnoputri, under instructions to improve counterterrorism efforts in the wake of the October 2002 terrorist bombings in Bali. However, he resigned in March 2004 after falling out with Megawati and announced his candidature for the upcoming presidential elections through the vehicle of **Partai Demokrat**, with **Yusuf Kalla** as his running mate. Together, they managed to secure a 60 per cent majority mandate at the second round of the 2004 presidential election that allowed him to form the 'United Indonesia' Cabinet in October. In 2009,

he secured a convincing first round victory for a second term, winning a 60.8 per cent majority, and proceeded to form a coalition government with **Partai Keadilan Sejahtera**, **Partai Amanat Nasional**, **Partai Persatuan Pembangunan**, and **Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa**. Despite securing a strong mandate, he flattered to deceive during a second term that was characterized more by ceremony than substantive reform or change.

While his supporters celebrate him as a democrat and a 'thinking general', his career has not been without controversy. As a soldier, Yudhoyono served as chief of staff when mobs linked to the military attacked Megawati Sukarnoputri's **Partai Demokrasi Indonesia** party headquarters in 1996. His complicity in those events was never conclusively proven. During East Timor's transition to independence in 1999, he was appointed chief of territorial affairs and reported directly to then-commander of the armed forces, General Wiranto. Though Wiranto was later indicted for war crimes by the East Timor tribunal, no charges were brought against Yudhoyono on the grounds that he was not part of the inner circle of military commanders accused of turning a blind eye to violence in East Timor. Nor has Yudhoyono been immune to controversy as a politician and as president. The Indonesian government's approval of a RP6.7 trillion bank bailout for Bank Century in 2008 was heavily criticized, and Yudhoyono was derided after auditors found evidence of violations by the bank. He has also been criticized for his reluctance to take action against the police chief and attorney general after evidence surfaced that they were complicit in attempts to frame officials from the **Corruption Eradication Commission**. On other occasions, Yudhoyono has been derided for being weak on domestic issues, particularly in relation to the assertiveness of religious groups. His inability or reluctance to act against perpetrators of anti-**Ahmadiyah** attacks was instructive in that regard, as was his government's impotence to prevent radical Muslim groups from disrupting plans to hold the Miss World beauty pageant in Jakarta (the pageant had to be relocated to Bali). Towards the end of his tenure, Yudhoyono was exercised by a series of corruption scandals that plagued his party, and his inability to find within its top

ranks a successor to mount a challenge for the Indonesian presidency.

see also: *Ahmadiyah*; Corruption Eradication Commission; Kalla, Yusuf; Megawati Sukarnoputri; *Partai Amanat Nasional*; *Partai Demokrasi Indonesia-Perjuangan*; *Partai Demokrat*; *Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa*; *Partai Persatuan Pembangunan*; Wahid, Abdurrahman.

### Yusuf, Irwandy (Indonesia)

Irwandy Yusuf is the former governor of the special Indonesian province of Aceh. He was born in Bireuen, Aceh, on 2 August 1960. A veterinarian who graduated from the Syiah Kuala University in Banda Aceh, he pursued a master's degree in veterinary science at Oregon State University in the United States in 1993.

Irwandy was elected with 39.3 per cent of the popular vote at the 2006 elections, a historic democratic process for the people of Aceh after 30 years of brutal confrontation between the Indonesian military forces and the Acehnese separatist movement, the **Aceh Independence Movement** (*Gerakan Aceh Merdeka*, GAM). Irwandy himself was an active member of GAM from 1990, where he served in multiple roles, most notably as intelligence operations chief. He was arrested in 2003 and sentenced to nine years' imprisonment in the Keudah Prison in Banda Aceh, and was interred there during the **2004 Tsunami**. He managed to escape from his cell by fleeing to the second floor of the building and punching his way through the asbestos ceiling where he held on to the roof for two hours before the waves subsided. Following the tsunami, the Indonesian Government and GAM settled on a peace agreement which paved the way for an end to the insurgency and the advent of democratic elections in Aceh. The elections saw two factions emerge from within GAM to vie for the governorship of Aceh – one led by Irwandy, who was in favour of integration into the Indonesian polity, and another by Malik Mahmud, a popular GAM stalwart who was a key voice that articulated the aspirations of the separatist movement from exile but who nevertheless was standing as a candidate of **Partai Persatuan Pembangunan**. Irwandy won the contest, running as an independent. During his leadership, Irwandy actively championed the conservation

of Aceh's rainforest, to the extent of personally joining official raids on illegal logging. He eventually found himself embroiled in controversy, however, when he issued a permit for a palm-oil company, PT Kallista Alam, to use 1,605 hectares of peat swamp for a plantation in the Tripa conservation zone, one of the last refuges of the endangered Sumatran orangutan, in 2011. This provoked widespread anger among Acehnese who claimed that he had betrayed his homeland and his cause. In 2012, he lost his re-election bid

to fellow former GAM member **Zaini Abdullah**, amidst claims of voter fraud and intimidation. However, he was re-elected governor for a second term in 2017, only to be arrested a year later in July 2018 on bribery charges. He was subsequently sentenced to seven years' imprisonment in April 2019. The sentence was increased by an additional year in August 2019.

see also: Abdullah, Zaini; Aceh Independence Movement; *Partai Persatuan Pembangunan*; Tsunami 2004.

## Z

### **Zahid Hamidi, Ahmad** (Malaysia)

Ahmad Zahid Hamidi became acting president of **UMNO** as **Najib Tun Razak** relinquished that office after the May 2018 general election when the party lost power. He was confirmed as **UMNO** president following the party elections on 30 June 2018, when he prevailed over the challenges from Khairy Jamaluddin and **Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah**.

The 68-year-old veteran politician, who possesses a doctorate in communications obtained from Universiti Putra Malaysia, hails from Perak, where he has represented the constituency of Bagan, his hometown in Perak. As **UMNO** Youth leader, Zahid aligned himself with his predecessor, **Anwar Ibrahim**. During the Malaysian political crisis precipitated by the **Asian Financial Crisis** of 1997–8, he famously fired the first salvos of attack against **Mahathir Mohamed** in 1998, triggering a chain of events which led to the eventual dismissal, trial, and incarceration of his political patron, not to mention his own exile. Often portrayed as the wingman of more established politicians, Zahid returned from the political wilderness in 2004 when he was rehabilitated by **Abdullah Badawi** and made a deputy minister. He was promoted to full minister in the prime minister's department four years later and went on to helm powerful ministries such as Defence and Home Affairs in the government led by Najib Razak. While he distanced himself from the **1MDB** scandal as it gathered momentum, unlike his predecessor in the office of deputy prime minister, **Muhyiddin Yassin**, he did not openly question Najib.

In June 2018, Zahid was elected president of **UMNO** following a close three-cornered fight which featured, for the first time, a live televised debate among candidates. However, in a surprise move on 18 December 2018, he caved in to mounting pressure from within the party to take responsibility for the exodus of party members of Parliament after the May 2018 general election, not to mention a raft of corruption

charges against himself, took leave, and stepped aside from the presidency of **UMNO**. Although charges against him have not been dropped, Zahid resumed the party presidency at the end of June 2019. Even so, his close association with Anwar has occasioned concern among senior **UMNO** leaders averse to any cooperation with the ambitious opposition leader. A measure of relief was secured when party elections which would have almost certainly seen his position challenged was postponed for 18 months because of the **Covid-19** pandemic. Despite aligning his party with the **Perikatan Nasional** government led by **Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia**, Zahid persistently reiterated that the support of **UMNO** was not unconditional. As **UMNO** president, he eventually withdrew the party from the ruling coalition on 7 July 2021, precipitating developments that culminated in the resignation of Muhyiddin Yassin in August.

During his political career, Zahid developed considerable influence by way of being a strong grassroots politician. His election as **UMNO** president at a time of crisis for the party was widely seen as a mandate to return the party to its former glory rather than a vote for reform. By virtue of leading **UMNO** Zahid is also chairman of **Barisan Nasional**.

see also: **1MDB**; Anwar Ibrahim; Asian Financial Crisis 1997–8; Badawi, Tun Abdullah Ahmad; *Barisan Nasional* (BN); Covid-19; Mahathir Mohamad, Tun; Muhyiddin Yassin, Tan Sri; Najib Tun Razak, Datuk Seri Mohamad; *Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia*; *Perikatan Nasional*; Razaleigh Hamzah, Tengku; **UMNO** (United Malays National Organization).

### **ZOPFAN (Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality) 1971** (Indonesia/Malaysia/Philippines/Singapore/Thailand)

A joint declaration of determination 'to exert initially necessary efforts to secure the recognition of, and respect for, Southeast Asia as a Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality, free from any

form or manner of interference by outside Powers' was signed on 27 November 1971 in Kuala Lumpur by the foreign ministers of Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Singapore, and a special envoy of the National Executive Council of Thailand. The five delegates had convened to discuss a Malaysian proposal that Southeast Asia as a region be neutralized through guarantees from the United States, the Soviet Union, and the People's Republic of China. Indonesia's strong objection to virtual policing rights being accorded to outside powers was primarily responsible for collective endorsement of an alternative proposal allocating exclusive responsibility for managing regional order to regional states. The **Kuala Lumpur Declaration** of the ZOPFAN formula was adopted officially as corporate policy at the **Bali Summit**, the first meeting of heads of government of **ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)** held in February 1976 when it was included within a **Declaration of ASEAN Concord**. That declaration called on member states, individually and collectively, to take active steps for the early establishment of the zone. Subsequently, there have been recurrent reaffirmations by ASEAN of ZOPFAN's desirability, but practical steps towards its realization have not been taken.

The concept of ZOPFAN has been supported most strongly by Indonesia, whose foreign policy it closely reflects. Malaysia has also been supportive because of its role in pressing for neutralization, which was acknowledged as a desirable objective in Kuala Lumpur in November 1971. Other regional states have been willing to provide only formal backing because of the practical difficulties of implementation. A major obstacle to implementation has been the absence of a shared strategic perspective among the ASEAN states, which

is pointed up by the very concept of ZOPFAN. That concept reflects the view of those governments that wish to see regional order determined by the resident states of Southeast Asia. Not all regional governments share this view because of a concern that they would be at the mercy of the strongest regional powers. For that reason, they prefer to maintain defence cooperation with states beyond the region in order to have access to external sources of countervailing power. It is noteworthy that all member governments of ASEAN have defence cooperation agreements of one kind or another with extra-regional states, while even Indonesia has permitted limited access by US naval vessels to its East Java port of Surabaya. Vietnam, which joined ASEAN in July 1995, still permits a residual Russian naval presence to remain in **Cam Ranh Bay**. In December 1995, in an attempt to lend substance to ZOPFAN, ASEAN's heads of government concluded a treaty purporting to establish a nuclear weapon-free zone in Southeast Asia. However, by the end of the century, at the meeting of ASEAN foreign ministers in Singapore in July 1999, only passing reference was made to ZOPFAN, in noting consultations with nuclear weapon states over their accession to the protocol to the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (SEANWFZ). In response to the announcement of the Australia-UK-US security partnership (AUKUS) in September 2021 to build nuclear-powered submarines for the Australian navy, Malaysia expressed reservations by making reference to ZOPFAN.

*see also:* ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Bali Summit (ASEAN) 1976; Cam Ranh Bay; Declaration of ASEAN Concord 1976; Kuala Lumpur Declaration 1971.

## Postscript

Under the chairmanship of Brunei, ASEAN (**Association of Southeast Asian Nations**) concluded the combined 38th and 39th summits in October 2021 with little fanfare but some noteworthy highlights. Not surprisingly, the focus of the summits was on the continued fight against **Covid-19**, with member states expressing their determination to emerge stronger from the pandemic and a desire to reopen borders. To that end, progress was being made on the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework, which was described as a consolidated exit strategy meant to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on member states. ASEAN leaders also acknowledged the continued contributions from individual member states as well as dialogue partners to the Covid-19 ASEAN Response Fund which now has pledged contributions amounting to approximately US\$25.8 million, some US\$10.5 million of which are to be used to procure vaccines. Other issues however witnessed less progress. Having agreed on a single negotiating draft at the **Singapore Summit in November 2018**, little further headway was made on the code of conduct for the **South China Sea** disputes, which meant that ASEAN and China was unable to meet its aspirational deadline to complete negotiations by 2021.

Another noteworthy development at the summits was the absence of representation from Myanmar. Mindful that the coup in Myanmar threatened to undermine its international reputation, and concerned for the fact that the junta was making little progress on the five-point plan previously agreed with ASEAN, foreign ministers of member states met virtually on 15 October 2021 in order to discuss Myanmar's representation at the summits. Over objections from the foreign minister of the **State Administrative Council**, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and the Philippines supported the Brunei chair in expressing concern for the situation in Myanmar. Recognizing the ongoing legitimacy dispute between the Myanmar military junta and ousted lawmakers from the

**National League for Democracy**, the ASEAN member states took the unprecedented move to restrict the participation of Myanmar at the summit summits to 'non-political representation'. The decision was a landmark for the fact that it was the first time ASEAN publicly set a condition for representation of a member state at a key meeting. Needless to say, in a display of recalcitrance on the part of the junta, the Myanmar seat at the summit summits was left empty.

The summits concluded with the handing over of the reins of ASEAN chairmanship from Brunei to Cambodia. In January 2022, Cambodian prime minister **Hun Sen** visited **Naypyidaw**, where he met with **Min Aung Hlaing** under a cloud of controversy. At issue was whether the visit was undertaken in his capacity as the Cambodian head of government or, given that Phnom Penh now exercised the prerogative of the ASEAN chair, as an emissary for the regional body. Hun Sen's remarks, made prior to his arrival at Naypyidaw, that he would welcome Myanmar participation in the ASEAN Summit to be hosted by Cambodia at the end of the year was met with consternation, especially in regional capitals that insisted on upholding the position of restricting Myanmar to 'non-political representation' until stipulated conditions were met. Having raised eyebrows with what appeared to be his unilateral unconditional invitation to the Myanmar military junta that set him at variance with key ASEAN states including Indonesia, Hun Sen would later walk back from it by aligning his position with ASEAN and stressing the importance of progress on the five-point consensus before official representation from Myanmar could be received. As ASEAN struggled to handle this most recent permutation of its Myanmar conundrum, within the country violence continued unabated, and, in some respects, even intensified in terms of attacks on civilians both in urban centres as well as ethnic borderland townships and provinces. On 6 December 2021, **Aung San Suu Kyi** was found guilty of inciting

dissent and contravening Covid-19 regulations and was sentenced to four years' imprisonment. The sentence was later halved by Min Aung Hlaing, who also permitted her to serve it under house arrest. Nevertheless, the former state councillor was given a further prison sentence of an additional four years the following January, after being found guilty of importing and possession of communications equipment as well as another slew of Covid-19-related-Covid-19 related violations. Altogether, Aung San Suu Kyi faces close to a dozen charges that carry a combined maximum prison sentence of more than 100 years.

Campaign fever gripped the Philippines in view of the upcoming presidential elections scheduled to be held on 9 May 2022. In September 2021, *Partido Federal ng Pilipinas*, a new party platform formed by President **Rodrigo Duterte** in 2018, nominated Ferdinand 'Bong-bong' Marcos Jr, son of the late dictator, **Ferdinand Marcos**, as its presidential candidate. The nomination of Marcos Jr was supported by several other parties including **Lakas —CMD**, which also selected rising star Sara Duterte, the outspoken and independent-minded daughter of the incumbent president, to be their vice-presidential candidate. Against the backdrop of entrenched oligarchical politics in the Philippines, the emergence of Marcos Jr as the front runner in the race for the presidency all but suggests a near-complete restoration of the Marcos brand.

A further striking feature of electoral politics in the region in recent months has been the resurgence of the fortunes of **UMNO** in Malaysia. Voted from power at the May 2018 general election, a combination of infighting among **Pakatan Harapan** parties, popular disenfranchisement, and political malaise contrived to

catapult **UMNO** back to power at the federal level following the collapse of the **Perikatan Nasional** government of **Muhyiddin Yassin**, and at state levels via state legislative elections in Malacca, Johor, and indirectly, Sarawak. While elections are not due in Thailand, the sudden expulsion of 21 parliamentarians from the ruling **Palang Pracharat Party**, ostensibly for planning to oust **Prayuth Chan-ocha** from office, suggests infighting within its ranks that could complicate his re-election prospects. Having had to fend off several no-confidence debates since securing office at the 2019 election, the departure of this faction from the ruling party will further complicate matters for the already-besieged already besieged incumbent prime minister as he rebuilds his constellation of allies to head off challenges to his position in the near future. Meanwhile, in Indonesia, **Joko Widodo** consolidated power further by absorbing **Partai Amanat Nasional** into his ruling coalition in August 2021. Meanwhile, as political aspirants jockey for nomination for the presidential election to be held on 14 February 2024, rumblings continue about the possibility of amending the constitution to allow the incumbent a third term in office.

*see also:* ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–; Aung San Suu Kyi; Covid-19; Duterte, Rodrigo; Hun Sen; *Lakas—CMD*; Marcos, Ferdinand; Min Aung Hlaing, Senior General; Muhyiddin Yassin, Tan Sri; National League for Democracy; Naypyidaw; *Pakatan Harapan*; *Palang Pracharat Party*; *Partai Amanat Nasional*; *Perikatan Nasional*; Prayuth Chan-ocha, General; Singapore Summit (ASEAN) November 2018; South China Sea; State Administrative Council; **UMNO** (United Malays National Organization); Widodo, Joko.

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 Phankham Viphavanh  
 Phnom Penh Summit (ASEAN) 2002  
 Phnom Penh Summit (ASEAN) April 2012  
 Phnom Penh Summit (ASEAN) November  
 2012  
 Regional Comprehensive Economic  
 Partnership  
 Singapore Summit (ASEAN) 2007  
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 Singapore Summit (ASEAN) November 2018  
 Souphanouvong, Prince  
 Souvanna Phouma, Prince  
 Thai–Lao Border War 1987–8  
 Thongloun Sisoulith  
 Thongsing Thammavong

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 Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation 1977  
 Vientiane Action Plan (ASEAN) 2004  
 Vientiane Agreement on the Restoration of Peace and Reconciliation in Laos 1973  
 Vientiane Summit (ASEAN) 2004  
 Vientiane Summits (ASEAN) September 2016  
 Vietnam War  
 Xayaburi Dam

**Malaysia, Federation of**

1MDB  
 Abdul Rahman, Tunku  
 ABIM  
 ADMM (ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting) 2006  
 ADMM-Plus  
 AFTA (Association of Southeast Asian Nations Free Trade Area) 1993–  
 Alliance Party  
*Al-Ma'unah*  
 Ambalat  
*Angkatan Perpaduan Ummah*  
 Anglo-Malayan/Malaysian Defence Agreement 1957–71  
 Anwar Ibrahim  
 APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) 1989–  
 Article 11 Coalition  
 ASA (Association of Southeast Asia) 1961–7  
 ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–  
 ASEAN Charter (Charter of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations)  
 ASEAN Community  
 ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) 1994–  
 ASEM (Asia–Europe Meeting) 1996–  
 Asian Financial Crisis 1997–8  
 Badawi, Tun Abdullah Ahmad  
 Bali Summit (ASEAN) 1976  
 Bali Summit (ASEAN) 2003  
 Bali Summit (ASEAN) 2011  
 Baling Talks 1955  
 Bandar Seri Begawan Summit (ASEAN) April 2013  
 Bandar Seri Begawan Summit (ASEAN) October 2013  
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 Bangkok Summit (ASEAN) June 2019  
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*Barisan Alternatif* (BA)  
*Barisan Nasional* (BN)  
*Beratu*  
*Bersih*  
*Bumiputera*  
 Buy British Last Policy  
 Cebu Summit (ASEAN) 2006  
 Chiang Mai Initiative  
 Chin Peng  
 Cobbold Commission 1962  
 Cobra Gold Military Exercises  
 Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership  
 Conference of Rulers  
 Confrontation  
 Constitutional Crises  
 Corregidor Affair 1968  
 Covid-19  
 Daim Zainuddin, Tun  
*Dakwah*  
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 Declaration of ASEAN Concord II 2003  
 Declaration of ASEAN Concord III 2011  
 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (ASEAN) 2002  
 Declaration on the South China Sea (ASEAN) 1992  
 Democratic Action Party (DAP)  
 East Asia Summit 2005–  
 Emergency 1948–60  
 Exchange of Letters 2009  
 Five Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA)  
 Fuad, Tun Mohammad (Donald Stephens)  
*Gerakan Rakyat Malaysia*  
 Ghazalie Shafie, Tun Mohamad  
 Hadi Awang, Abdul  
 Hanoi Summit (ASEAN) 1998  
 Hanoi Summit (ASEAN) April 2010  
 Hanoi Summit (ASEAN) October 2010  
 Hanoi Summit (ASEAN) June 2020  
 Hanoi Summit (ASEAN) November 2020  
 Harris Mohamed Salleh, Datuk  
 Herzog Affair 1986  
 Hindraf (Hindu Rights Action Force)  
 Horsburgh Lighthouse  
 Hua Hin Summit (ASEAN) February 2009

- Hua Hin Summit (ASEAN) October 2009  
 Islam  
 Ismail Sabri Yaakob, Datuk Seri  
 Jakarta Summit (ASEAN) 2011  
*Jemaah Islamiyah*  
 Johor, Strait of  
*Konfrontasi*  
 Kuala Lumpur Declaration 1971  
 Kuala Lumpur Summit (ASEAN) 1977  
 Kuala Lumpur Summit (ASEAN) 2005  
 Kuala Lumpur and Langkawi Summit  
 (ASEAN) April 2015  
 Kuala Lumpur Summit (ASEAN) November  
 2015  
*Kumpulan Militan Malaysia*  
*Kumpulan Mujahidin Malaysia*  
 Lahad Datu Crisis 2013  
 Lim Guan Eng  
 Lin Kit Siang  
 Lim Yew Hock  
 Limbang Claim  
 Lina Joy Issue  
 Loi Tack  
 Mahathir Mohamad, Tun  
 Malacca Strait  
 Malacca Strait Patrol  
 Malayan Union Proposal 1946  
 Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA)  
 Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC)  
 Manila Summit (ASEAN) 1987  
 Manila Summit (ASEAN) April 2017  
 Manila Summit (ASEAN) November 2017  
 Maphilindo  
 May 13 Racial Riots 1969  
 Memali Incident 1985  
 Muhyiddin Yassin, Tan Sri  
 Musa Hitam, Tun  
 Muslim Unity Front  
 Mustapha bin Datuk Harun, Tun  
 Najib Tun Razak, Datuk Seri Mohamad  
 Naypyidaw Summit (ASEAN) May 2014  
 Naypyidaw Summit (ASEAN) November 2014  
 New Economic Model  
 New Economic Policy  
 Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat  
 One Malaysia (1Malaysia)  
 Ong Boon Hua  
*Pakatan Harapan*  
*Pakatan Rakyat*  
*Parti Amanah Negara*  
*Parti Bangsa Dayak Sarawak*  
*Parti Bersatu Sabah*  
*Parti Islam Se-Malaysia*  
*Parti Keadilan Rakyat*  
*Parti Pejuang Tanah Air*  
*Parti Pesaka Bumiputera Bersatu*  
*Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia*  
 Pedra Branca  
*Pembela*  
*Perikatan Nasional*  
 Philippines' Claim to Sabah  
 Phnom Penh Summit (ASEAN) 2002  
 Phnom Penh Summit (ASEAN) April 2012  
 Phnom Penh Summit (ASEAN) November 2012  
 Port Klang Free Zone Controversy  
*Pulau Batu Puteh*  
 Razak, Tun Abdul  
 Razaleigh Hamzah, Tengku  
 Regional Comprehensive Economic  
 Partnership  
*Rukunegara* 1970  
 Sabah United Party  
 Sarawak United People's Party  
*Semangat '46*  
 Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)  
 Sheraton Move 2020  
 Singapore Strait  
 Singapore Summit (ASEAN) 1992  
 Singapore Summit (ASEAN) 2007  
 Singapore Summit (ASEAN) April 2018  
 Singapore Summit (ASEAN) November 2018  
 Sipadan–Ligitan  
 South China Sea  
 Taib Mahmud, Tun Pehin Sri Abdul  
 Terrorism in Southeast Asia  
 Trans-Pacific Partnership  
 Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (ASEAN) 1976  
 Tsunami 2004  
 UMNO (United Malays National  
 Organization)  
 United Nations: Northern Borneo 1963  
 United Sabah National Organization (USNO)  
 Vientiane Action Plan (ASEAN) 2004  
 Vientiane Summit (ASEAN) 2004  
 Vientiane Summits (ASEAN) September 2016  
 Zahid Hamidi, Ahmad  
 ZOPFAN (Zone of Peace, Freedom and  
 Neutrality) 1971



**Myanmar (Burma)**

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 ADMM-Plus  
 AFTA (Association of Southeast Asian Nations Free Trade Area) 1993–  
 Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL)  
 ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) 1967–  
 ASEAN Charter (Charter of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations)  
 ASEAN Community  
 ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) 1994–  
 ASEM (Asia–Europe Meeting) 1996–  
 Aung San  
 Aung San Suu Kyi  
 Bali Summit (ASEAN) 2003  
 Bali Summit (ASEAN) 2011  
 Bandar Seri Begawan Summit (ASEAN) April 2013  
 Bandar Seri Begawan Summit (ASEAN) October 2013  
 Bangkok Summit (ASEAN) 1995  
 Bangkok Summit (ASEAN) June 2019  
 Bangkok Summit (ASEAN) November 2019  
 Buddhism  
 Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP)  
 Cebu Summit (ASEAN) 2006  
 Chiang Mai Initiative  
 Chin  
 Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Constitution 2008  
 Constructive Engagement  
 Covid-19  
 Declaration of ASEAN Concord II 2003  
 Declaration of ASEAN Concord III 2011  
 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (ASEAN) 2002  
 Declaration on the South China Sea (ASEAN) 1992  
 Democracy Uprising 1988  
 East Asia Summit 2005–  
 Hanoi Summit (ASEAN) 1998  
 Hanoi Summit (ASEAN) April 2010  
 Hanoi Summit (ASEAN) October 2010  
 Hanoi Summit (ASEAN) June 2020  
 Hanoi Summit (ASEAN) November 2020  
 Hua Hin Summit (ASEAN) February 2009  
 Hua Hin Summit (ASEAN) October 2009  
 Insurgencies, Myanmar

Islam  
 Jakarta Summit (ASEAN) 2011  
 Kachin  
 Karen  
 Khin Nyunt, General  
 Kuala Lumpur Summit (ASEAN) 2005  
 Kuala Lumpur and Langkawi Summit (ASEAN) April 2015  
 Kuala Lumpur Summit (ASEAN) November 2015  
 Lancang-Mekong Cooperation  
 Lanzin  
 Manila Summit (ASEAN) April 2017  
 Manila Summit (ASEAN) November 2017  
 Mekong River Project  
 Min Aung Hlaing, Senior General  
 National League for Democracy  
 National Unity Government  
 National Unity Party  
 Naypyidaw  
 Naypyidaw Summit (ASEAN) May 2014  
 Naypyidaw Summit (ASEAN) November 2014  
 Ne Win, General  
 Panglong Agreement  
*Paukphaw* Relationship  
 Phnom Penh Summit (ASEAN) 2002  
 Phnom Penh Summit (ASEAN) April 2012  
 Phnom Penh Summit (ASEAN) November 2012  
 Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership  
 Roadmap to Democracy  
 Rohingya  
 Saffron Revolution 2007  
 Shan  
 Shwe Mann  
 Singapore Summit (ASEAN) 2007  
 Singapore Summit (ASEAN) April 2018  
 Singapore Summit (ASEAN) November 2018  
 State Administration Council  
 State Law and Order Restoration Council  
 State Peace and Development Council  
 Than Shwe, Senior General  
 Thein Sein  
 Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (ASEAN) 1976  
 Union Solidarity and Development Association  
 Union Solidarity and Development Party  
 U Nu  
 Vientiane Action Plan (ASEAN) 2004

Vientiane Summit (ASEAN) 2004  
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 2016

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Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG)  
 ADMM (ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting)  
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 ADMM-Plus  
 AFTA (Association of Southeast Asian Nations  
 Free Trade Area) 1993–  
 APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation)  
 1989–  
 Aquino, Benigno  
 Aquino, Benigno Simeon Cojuangco, III  
 Aquino, Corazón  
 Arbitral Tribunal Award 2016  
 ASA (Association of Southeast Asia) 1961–7  
 ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian  
 Nations) 1967–  
 ASEAN Charter (Charter of the Association of  
 Southeast Asian Nations)  
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 Bali Summit (ASEAN) 1976  
 Bali Summit (ASEAN) 2003  
 Bali Summit (ASEAN) 2011  
 Bandar Seri Begawan Summit (ASEAN) April  
 2013  
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 October 2013  
 Bangkok Declaration (ASEAN) 1967  
 Bangkok Summit (ASEAN) 1995  
 Bangkok Summit (ASEAN) June 2019  
 Bangkok Summit (ASEAN) November 2019  
 Cebu Summit (ASEAN) 2006  
 Chiang Mai Initiative  
 Clark Air Base  
 Cobra Gold Military Exercises  
 Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro  
 (CAB) 2014  
 Contemplacion, Flor: Hanging 1995  
 Corregidor Affair 1968  
 Covid-19  
 Declaration of ASEAN Concord 1976  
 Declaration of ASEAN Concord II 2003  
 Declaration of ASEAN Concord III 2011  
 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the  
 South China Sea (ASEAN) 2002

Declaration on the South China Sea (ASEAN)  
 1992  
 Duterte, Rodrigo  
 East Asia Summit 2005–  
 EDSA (Epifanio de los Santos Avenue)  
 EDSA II  
 Enhanced Defense Cooperation Act (EDCA)  
 Enrile, Juan Ponce  
 Estrada, Joseph Ejercito  
 Hanoi Summit (ASEAN) 1998  
 Hanoi Summit (ASEAN) April 2010  
 Hanoi Summit (ASEAN) October 2010  
 Hanoi Summit (ASEAN) June 2020  
 Hanoi Summit (ASEAN) November 2020  
 Hua Hin Summit (ASEAN) February 2009  
 Hua Hin Summit (ASEAN) October 2009  
*Hukbalahap* Movement  
 Islam  
 Jakarta Summit (ASEAN) 2011  
*Jemaah Islamiyah*  
 Kuala Lumpur Declaration 1971  
 Kuala Lumpur Summit (ASEAN) 1977  
 Kuala Lumpur Summit (ASEAN) 2005  
 Kuala Lumpur and Langkawi Summit  
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 Lahad Datu Crisis 2013  
*Lakas*–CMD  
*Lakas*–NUCD  
 Liberal Party  
 Macapagal, Diosdado  
 Macapagal-Arroyo, Gloria  
 Magsaysay, Ramón  
 Maguindanao Massacre 2009  
 Manila Hostage Crisis 2010  
 Manila Pact 1954  
 Manila Summit (ASEAN) 1987  
 Manila Summit (ASEAN) April 2017  
 Manila Summit (ASEAN) November 2017  
 Maphilindo  
 Marawi Siege 2017  
 Marcos, Ferdinand  
 Marcos, Imelda  
 Misuari, Nur  
 Moro Islamic Liberation Front  
 Moro National Liberation Front  
*Nacionalista* Party  
 National Democratic Front

Naypyidaw Summit (ASEAN) May 2014  
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 New People's Army  
*Partido Demokratiko Pilipino–Lakas ng Bayan*  
 (PDP-Laban)  
*Partido Liberal ng Pilipinas*  
 People Power  
 Philippines' Claim to Sabah  
 Philippines–US Security Treaty 1951  
 Phnom Penh Summit (ASEAN) 2002  
 Phnom Penh Summit (ASEAN) April 2012  
 Phnom Penh Summit (ASEAN) November  
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 Ramos, Fidel  
 Reform the Armed Forces Movement (RAM)  
 Regional Comprehensive Economic  
 Partnership  
 Reproductive Health Bills  
 Rizal, José  
 Roxas, Manuel A.  
 Scarborough Shoal Dispute  
 SEATO (Southeast Asia Treaty Organization)  
 1955–77  
 Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)  
 Sin, Cardinal Jaime  
 Singapore Summit (ASEAN) 1992  
 Singapore Summit (ASEAN) 2007  
 Singapore Summit (ASEAN) April 2018  
 Singapore Summit (ASEAN) November 2018  
 Sisón, José María  
 South China Sea  
 Subic Bay Naval Base  
 Terrorism in Southeast Asia  
 Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (ASEAN)  
 1976  
 Tripoli Agreement 1976  
 United Nations: Northern Borneo 1963  
 Ver, General Fabian  
 Vientiane Action Plan (ASEAN) 2004  
 Vientiane Summit (ASEAN) 2004  
 Vientiane Summits (ASEAN) September 2016  
 Visiting Forces Agreement 1998  
 ZOPFAN (Zone of Peace, Freedom and  
 Neutrality) 1971

**Singapore, Republic of**

ADMM (ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting)  
 2006  
 ADMM-Plus

AFTA (Association of Southeast Asian Nations  
 Free Trade Area) 1993–  
 Aljunied Group Representation Constituency  
 Anglo–Malayan/Malaysian Defence  
 Agreement 1957–71  
 APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation)  
 1989–  
 ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian  
 Nations) 1967–  
 ASEAN Charter (Charter of the Association of  
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 ASEAN Community  
 ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) 1994–  
 ASEM (Asia–Europe Meeting) 1996–  
 Bali Summit (ASEAN) 1976  
 Bali Summit (ASEAN) 2003  
 Bali Summit (ASEAN) 2011  
 Bandar Seri Begawan Summit (ASEAN) April  
 2013  
 Bandar Seri Begawan Summit (ASEAN)  
 October 2013  
 Bangkok Declaration (ASEAN) 1967  
 Bangkok Summit (ASEAN) 1995  
 Bangkok Summit (ASEAN) June 2019  
 Bangkok Summit (ASEAN) November 2019  
*Barisan Sosialis*  
 Cebu Summit (ASEAN) 2006  
 Chiam See Tong  
 Chiang Mai Initiative  
 Cobra Gold Military Exercises  
 Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement  
 for Trans-Pacific Partnership  
 Contemplacion, Flor: Hanging 1995  
 Covid-19  
 Declaration of ASEAN Concord 1976  
 Declaration of ASEAN Concord II 2003  
 Declaration of ASEAN Concord III 2011  
 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the  
 South China Sea (ASEAN) 2002  
 Declaration on the South China Sea (ASEAN)  
 1992  
 East Asia Summit 2005–  
 Five Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA)  
 Goh Chok Tong  
 Goh Keng Swee  
 Hanoi Summit (ASEAN) 1998  
 Hanoi Summit (ASEAN) April 2010  
 Hanoi Summit (ASEAN) October 2010  
 Hanoi Summit (ASEAN) June 2020

- Hanoi Summit (ASEAN) November 2020  
 Herzog Affair 1986  
 Horsburgh Lighthouse  
 Hua Hin Summit (ASEAN) February 2009  
 Hua Hin Summit (ASEAN) October 2009  
 Hussein Onn, Tun  
 Iskandar Development Region  
 Islam  
 Jakarta Summit (ASEAN) 2011  
*Jemaah Islamiyah*  
 Jeyaretnam, J. B.  
 Johor, Strait of  
 Kuala Lumpur Declaration 1971  
 Kuala Lumpur Summit (ASEAN) 1977  
 Kuala Lumpur Summit (ASEAN) 2005  
 Kuala Lumpur and Langkawi Summit  
 (ASEAN) April 2015  
 Kuala Lumpur Summit (ASEAN) November  
 2015  
 Lee Hsien Loong  
 Lee Kuan Yew  
 Lim Yew Hock  
 Low Thia Kiang  
 Malacca Strait  
 Malacca Strait Patrol  
 Manila Summit (ASEAN) 1987  
 Manila Summit (ASEAN) April 2017  
 Manila Summit (ASEAN) November 2017  
 Marshall, David  
 Mas Selamat Kastari  
 Naypyidaw Summit (ASEAN) May 2014  
 Naypyidaw Summit (ASEAN) November 2014  
 Ong Teng Cheong  
 Pedra Branca  
 People's Action Party  
 Phnom Penh Summit (ASEAN) 2002  
 Phnom Penh Summit (ASEAN) April 2012  
 Phnom Penh Summit (ASEAN) November  
 2012  
*Pulau Batu Puteh*  
 Rajaratnam, Sinnathamby  
 Regional Comprehensive Economic  
 Partnership  
 Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)  
 Singapore Strait  
 Singapore Summit (ASEAN) 1992  
 Singapore Summit (ASEAN) 2007  
 Singapore Summit (ASEAN) April 2018  
 Singapore Summit (ASEAN) November 2018  
 Terrorism in Southeast Asia  
 Trans-Pacific Partnership  
*Tudung* Controversy 2002  
 Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (ASEAN)  
 1976  
 Vientiane Action Plan (ASEAN) 2004  
 Vientiane Summit (ASEAN) 2004  
 Vientiane Summits (ASEAN) September 2016  
 Workers' Party  
 ZOPFAN (Zone of Peace, Freedom and  
 Neutrality) 1971
- Thailand, Kingdom of**  
 Abhisit Vejjajiva  
 ADMM (ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting)  
 2006  
 ADMM-Plus  
 AFTA (Association of Southeast Asian Nations  
 Free Trade Area) 1993–  
 Anand Panyarachun  
 Ananda Mahido, King  
 Anupong Paochinda, General  
 APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation)  
 1989–  
 ASA (Association of Southeast Asia) 1961–7  
 ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian  
 Nations) 1967–  
 ASEAN Charter (Charter of the Association of  
 Southeast Asian Nations)  
 ASEAN Community  
 ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) 1994–  
 ASEM (Asia–Europe Meeting) 1996–  
 Asian Financial Crisis 1997–8  
 Bali Summit (ASEAN) 1976  
 Bali Summit (ASEAN) 2003  
 Bali Summit (ASEAN) 2011  
 Bandar Seri Begawan Summit (ASEAN) April  
 2013  
 Bandar Seri Begawan Summit (ASEAN)  
 October 2013  
 Bandung Conference 1955  
 Bangkok Declaration (ASEAN) 1967  
 Bangkok Summit (ASEAN) 1995  
 Bangkok Summit (ASEAN) June 2019  
 Bangkok Summit (ASEAN) November 2019  
 Banharn Silpa-archa  
*Barisan Revolusi Nasional*  
*Barisan Revolusi Nasional-Coordinate*  
 Bhumibol Adulyadej, King

- Bhumjaithai* Party  
 Buddhism  
 Cebu Summit (ASEAN) 2006  
 Chamlong Srimuang, General  
*Chart Pattana* Party  
*Chart Thai* Party  
 Chatichai Choonhavan, General  
 Chavalit Yongchaiyuth, General  
 Chiang Mai Initiative  
 Chuan Leekpai  
 Cobra Gold Military Exercises  
 Covid-19  
 Declaration of ASEAN Concord 1976  
 Declaration of ASEAN Concord II 2003  
 Declaration of ASEAN Concord III 2011  
 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the  
     South China Sea (ASEAN) 2002  
 Declaration on the South China Sea (ASEAN)  
     1992  
 Democrat Party  
 Democratic Soldiers  
 East Asia Summit 2005–  
 Friendship Bridge  
 Future Forward Party  
 Hanoi Summit (ASEAN) 1998  
 Hanoi Summit (ASEAN) April 2010  
 Hanoi Summit (ASEAN) October 2010  
 Hanoi Summit (ASEAN) June 2020  
 Hanoi Summit (ASEAN) November 2020  
 Hua Hin Summit (ASEAN) February 2009  
 Hua Hin Summit (ASEAN) October 2009  
 Insurgency, Southern Provinces  
 Iskandar Development Region  
 Islam  
 Jakarta Summit (ASEAN) 2011  
 Jatuporn Prompan  
 Kriangsak Chomanan, General  
 Kuala Lumpur Declaration 1971  
 Kuala Lumpur Summit (ASEAN) 1977  
 Kuala Lumpur Summit (ASEAN) 2005  
 Kuala Lumpur and Langkawi Summit  
     (ASEAN) April 2015  
 Kuala Lumpur Summit (ASEAN) November  
     2015  
 Kukrit Pramoj  
*Kwam Wang Mai*  
 Lancang-Mekong Cooperation  
 Maha Vajiralongkorn, King  
 Malacca Strait Patrol  
 Manila Pact 1954  
 Manila Summit (ASEAN) 1987  
 Manila Summit (ASEAN) April 2017  
 Manila Summit (ASEAN) November 2017  
 Mekong River Commission  
 Mekong River Project  
 Move Forward Party  
 National Council for Peace and Order  
 Naypyidaw Summit (ASEAN) May 2014  
 Naypyidaw Summit (ASEAN) November 2014  
 New Aspiration Party  
*Palang Pracharat* Party  
 Patani United Liberation Organization  
 People's Alliance for Democracy  
 People's Constitution 1997  
 People's Power Party  
*Pheu Thai* Party  
 Phibul Songkram, Field Marshal  
 Phnom Penh Summit (ASEAN) 2002  
 Phnom Penh Summit (ASEAN) April 2012  
 Phnom Penh Summit (ASEAN) November  
     2012  
 Praphas Charusathien, Field Marshal  
 Prawit Wongsuwan, General  
 Prayuth Chan-ocha, General  
 Preah Vihear Temple Dispute  
 Prem Tinsulanonda, General  
 Pridi Phanomyong  
 Regional Comprehensive Economic  
     Partnership  
 Samak Sundaravej  
 Sanoh Thienthong  
 Sarit Thanarat, Field Marshal  
 SEATO (Southeast Asia Treaty Organization)  
     1955–77  
 Seni Pramoj  
 Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)  
 Singapore Summit (ASEAN) 1992  
 Singapore Summit (ASEAN) 2007  
 Singapore Summit (ASEAN) April 2018  
 Singapore Summit (ASEAN) November 2018  
 Somchai Wongsawat  
 Sondhi Limthongkul  
 Sonthi Boonyaratglin, General  
 Suchinda Kraprayoon, General  
 Surayud Chulanont, General  
 Surin Pitsuwan  
 Thai–Lao Border War 1987–8  
*Thai Rak Thai* Party  
 Thaksin Shinawatra  
 Thammasat University Massacre 1976

Thanat Khoman  
 Thanathorn Juangroongruangkit  
 Thanin Kraivichian  
 Thanom Kittikachorn, Field Marshal  
 Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (ASEAN)  
 1976  
 Tsunami 2004  
 United Front for Democracy Against  
 Dictatorship  
 Vientiane Action Plan (ASEAN) 2004  
 Vientiane Summit (ASEAN) 2004  
 Vientiane Summits (ASEAN) September 2016  
 Yayaburi Dam  
 Yingluck Shinawatra  
 Young Turks  
 ZOPFAN (Zone of Peace, Freedom and  
 Neutrality) 1971

### **Timor-Leste, Democratic Republic of**

Alkatiri, Mari  
 ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) 1994–  
*Fretilin*  
 Gusmão, José ‘Xanana’  
 Guterres, Francisco ‘Lu’Olo’  
 Habibie, B. J.  
 Mauk Moruk  
 National Congress for Timorese Reconstruction  
 Ramos-Horta, José  
 Rauk, Taur Matan  
 Timor Gap  
 Timor Gap Cooperation Treaty  
 Timor-Leste Crisis 2006  
 Timor Sea Treaty 2002  
 Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (ASEAN)  
 1976  
 United Nations: East Timor 1999–2002

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ADMM (ASEAN Defence Ministers’ Meeting)  
 2006  
 ADMM-Plus  
 AFTA (Association of Southeast Asian Nations  
 Free Trade Area) 1993–  
 APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation)  
 1989–  
 ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian  
 Nations) 1967–  
 ASEAN Charter (Charter of the Association of  
 Southeast Asian Nations)

ASEAN Community  
 ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) 1994–  
 ASEM (Asia–Europe Meeting) 1996–  
 August Revolution 1945  
 Bali Summit (ASEAN) 2003  
 Bali Summit (ASEAN) 2011  
 Bandar Seri Begawan Summit (ASEAN) April  
 2013  
 Bandar Seri Begawan Summit (ASEAN)  
 October 2013  
 Bangkok Summit (ASEAN) 1995  
 Bangkok Summit (ASEAN) June 2019  
 Bangkok Summit (ASEAN) November 2019  
 Bao Dai, Emperor  
 Boat People  
 Brevié Line  
 Buddhism  
 Cam Ranh Bay  
 Cebu Summit (ASEAN) 2006  
 Chiang Mai Initiative  
 Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement  
 for Trans-Pacific Partnership  
 Covid-19  
 Declaration of ASEAN Concord II 2003  
 Declaration of ASEAN Concord III 2011  
 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the  
 South China Sea (ASEAN) 2002  
 Declaration on the South China Sea (ASEAN)  
 1992  
 Diem, Ngo Dinh  
 Dien Bien Phu, Battle of, 1954  
 Do Muoi  
*Doi Moi*  
 Domino Theory  
 Dong, Pham Van  
 Dong Tam Incident 2020  
 Duan, Le  
 Dung, Nguyen Tan  
 East Asia Summit 2005–  
 Elysée Agreement 1949  
 Geneva Agreements on Indochina 1954  
 Giap, General Vo Nguyen  
 Gulf of Tonkin Incident 1964  
 Ha Tinh Fish Kill Incident 2016  
 Hanoi Summit (ASEAN) 1998  
 Hanoi Summit (ASEAN) April 2010  
 Hanoi Summit (ASEAN) October 2010  
 Hanoi Summit (ASEAN) June 2020  
 Hanoi Summit (ASEAN) November 2020  
 Ho Chi Minh

- Ho Chi Minh Trail  
 Hua Hin Summit (ASEAN) February 2009  
 Hua Hin Summit (ASEAN) October 2009  
 Indochina Wars  
 Jakarta Summit (ASEAN) 2011  
 Kiet, Vo Van  
 Kuala Lumpur Summit (ASEAN) 2005  
 Kuala Lumpur and Langkawi Summit (ASEAN) April 2015  
 Kuala Lumpur Summit (ASEAN) November 2015  
 Lancang-Mekong Cooperation  
*Lao Dong*  
 Le Duan  
 Le Duc Anh, General  
 Le Duc Tho  
 Le Kha Phieu, General  
 Linh, Nguyen Van  
 Luong, Tran Duc  
 Manila Pact 1954  
 Manila Summit (ASEAN) April 2017  
 Manila Summit (ASEAN) November 2017  
 Mekong River Commission  
 Mekong River Project  
 Muoi, Do  
 National Liberation Front of South Vietnam  
 Naypyidaw Summit (ASEAN) May 2014  
 Naypyidaw Summit (ASEAN) November 2014  
 Ngo Dinh Diem  
 Nguyen Ai Quoc  
 Nguyen Co Thach  
 Nguyen Manh Cam  
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