

# History 1

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The Vietnam War Geneva accord of 1954 The Geneva accord of 1954 was purposed to secure peace in the war-torn Vietnam but eventually failed. The Geneva conference of 1954 was mainly convened to discuss the situation of cold war in Korea and Berlin. Nevertheless, the Vietnam crisis had escalated to a level that forced the French (colonizers of the Indochina) to request for an agenda on Vietnam. During the Vietnam war, the country was divided into two factions, the North Vietnam being supported by the communist China and Russia and the South Vietnam supported by the United States and its Western allies. The discussion on Vietnam became tense, as some nations were unwilling to negotiate directly. Nevertheless, the Geneva accord determined that Vietnam would be temporarily divided at the 17th parallel, with the election scheduled two years later that would decide the government of a reunified Vietnam. Nevertheless, the United States and South Vietnam refused to sign the accord thus the planned elections were destined to failure (Asselin, 155-195).

#### Gulf of Tonkin Resolution

Gulf of Tonkin resolution was United States Congress response to the Gulf of Tonkin resolution incident where US ships in the Gulf of Tonkin had been attacked by North Vietnamese. The resolution was a significant turning point for Vietnam as it gave the president of the United States authority for use of a "conventional" military in South East Asia without the official declaration of war by the Congress. The resolution specifically authorized the president to assist any member of the South Asia collective defense treaty militarily. This led to an escalation of the United States military involvement in southern Vietnam and beginning of between the United States and North Vietnam (Schuster, 28-33).

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### Tet offensive

The Tet offensive was a military operation by the North Vietnamese people's army and the Viet Cong Company against the forces of South Vietnam and the United States. The communists began a wave of attacks in the late hours of 30th January with the main communist forces beginning major offensives the next morning. The Tet offensive was a countrywide campaign that was well coordinated and involved more than 80, 000 communist troops. The offensive led to striking of more than 100 towns, including provincial capitals and autonomous cities. The offensive was the largest military operation in the Vietnam War that marked a turning point for the full entry and participation of the United States troops in the Vietnam War (Rehfeld, 465-486).

### Legacy of the Vietnam War

Of all cold war confrontations that resulted in actual combat war, Vietnam War has a legacy of being one of the bloodiest wars resulting in massive loss of lives and destruction of property. Official statistical figures of the United States department of defense indicates that the total casualties of the Vietnam war to be between 1. 5 and 3. 6 million. The Vietnam war was equally one of the post second world war conflicts that saw a massive Arial bombing attack on the civilian population.

### Work cited

Asselin, Pierre. " The Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the 1954 Geneva Conference: A Revisionist Critique." Cold War History 2011: 155-195.

Rehfeld, Andrew. " Offensive Political Theory." Perspectives on Politics 2010: 465-486.

Schuster, Carl O. "Case Closed: The Gulf of Tonkin Incident." *Vietnam* 21 (2008): 28-33.