

УДК 327(438:597)(091) + 94(597)«1963–1973»

## УЧАСТИЕ СОЦИАЛИСТИЧЕСКИХ СТРАН ВО ВЬЕТНАМСКОЙ ВОЙНЕ: ИССЛЕДОВАНИЕ УСИЛИЙ ПОЛЬШИ ПО ПОДДЕРЖАНИЮ МИРА (1963–1973)

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**Аннотация.** Изучается вклад Польши в поддержание мира во Вьетнаме в 1963–1973 гг. Исследование основано на источниках из Архива Министерства иностранных дел Республики Польша, Национального архива Республики Польша, Государственного департамента США и цифрового архива Международного научного центра имени Вудро Вильсона. Основными методами исследования являются исторический и логический методы. Исторический метод используется для определения усилий Польши по поддержанию мира во Вьетнаме. Логический метод помогает делать объективные выводы и давать справедливые оценки рассматриваемым вопросам. Кроме того, в исследовании используются такие методы, как синтез и анализ материалов. Данная работа расширяет существующий объем знаний по истории вьетнамской войны (1954–1975).

**Ключевые слова:** Польша; Вьетнам; США; дипломатические усилия; миротворчество; период 1963–1973 гг.

## УДЗЕЛ САЦЫЯЛІСТЫЧНЫХ КРАІН У В'ЕТНАМСКОЙ ВАЙНЕ: ДАСЛЕДАВАННЕ НАМАГАННЯЎ ПОЛЬШЧЫ ПА ПАДТРЫМАННІ МІРУ (1963–1973)

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**Анатацыя.** Вывучаецца ўнёсак Польшчы ў падтрыманне міру ў В'етнаме ў 1963–1973 гг. Даследаванне заснавана на крыніцах з Архіва Міністэрства замежных спраў Рэспублікі Польшча, Нацыянальнага архіва Рэспублікі Польшча, Дзяржаўнага дэпартаменту ЗША і лічбавага архіва Міжнароднага навуковага цэнтра імя Вудра Вільсана. Асноўнымі метадамі даследавання з'яўляюцца гістарычны і лагічны метады. Гістарычны метады прымяняюцца для вызначэння

### Образец цитирования:

Нгуен Тхе Ха, Динь Ван Чонг, Фам Дык Тхоц. Участие социалистических стран во вьетнамской войне: исследование усилий Польши по поддержанию мира (1963–1973). *Журнал Белорусского государственного университета. История*. 2026;1:35–46 (на англ.).  
EDN: OIRFNG

### For citation:

Nguyen The Ha, Dinh Van Trong, Pham Duc Tho. The involvement of socialist countries in the Vietnam War: a case study of Poland's efforts in peacekeeping (1963–1973). *Journal of the Belarusian State University. History*. 2026; 1:35–46.  
EDN: OIRFNG

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намаганняў Польшчы па падтрыманні міру ў В'етнаме. Лагічны метада дапамагае рабіць аб'ектыўныя высновы і справядліва ацэньваць пытанні, якія разглядаюцца ў працы. Акрамя таго, у даследаванні прымяняюцца такія метады, як сінтэз і аналіз матэрыялаў. Дадзеная праца пашырае наяўны аб'ём ведаў па гісторыі в'етнамскай вайны (1954–1975).

**Ключавыя словы:** Польшча; В'етнам; ЗША; дыпламатычныя намаганні; міратворчасць; перыяд 1963–1973 гг.

## THE INVOLVEMENT OF SOCIALIST COUNTRIES IN THE VIETNAM WAR: A CASE STUDY OF POLAND'S EFFORTS IN PEACEKEEPING (1963–1973)

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**Abstract.** This article focuses on Poland's efforts to maintain peace in Vietnam during 1963–1973. The research is based on secondary sources accessed from the Archive of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland, the National Archive of the Republic of Poland, the US Department of State, and publications on the Wilson Center digital archive. The study employs a historical and logical approach. The historical method is used to reconstruct a truthful historical picture of Poland's efforts to engage with various parties to maintain peace in Vietnam. Meanwhile, the logical method helps to draw conclusions and assessments that align with objective laws. Additionally, the author employs other methods such as synthesis and analysis of materials. The article focuses on questions of the reasons behind Poland's diplomatic efforts regarding peace in Vietnam, Poland's efforts to maintain peace in Vietnam, an assessment of Poland's diplomatic efforts for peace in Vietnam (1963–1973). The findings of this research contribute to the existing body of knowledge on the history of the Vietnam War (1954–1975).

**Keywords:** Poland; Vietnam; USA; diplomatic efforts; peacekeeping; 1963–1973 period.

### Introduction

The US war against Vietnam, which lasted from 1954 to 1975, concluded on 30 April 1975, marked by the liberation of Saigon by the Vietnamese People's Army and the capture of the entire South Vietnamese government<sup>1</sup>. This war involved numerous parties with diverse roles. Set against the backdrop of the Cold War and the US-Soviet rivalry, the Vietnamese struggle against US aggression became a global focal point. Poland, as a socialist ally of Vietnam, provided various forms of sup-

port, including economic, military, and diplomatic assistance, with specific efforts aimed at maintaining peace in Vietnam. Poland's actions during this period reflected the country's commitment to peace and international responsibility. The Polish government seized every opportunity to encourage dialogue among the warring parties, preventing actions that could escalate the conflict and harm the Vietnamese people. Polish delegations played a mediating role, monitoring viola-

<sup>1</sup>US involvement in the Vietnam War effectively began prior to 1950, during the French-led war in the region. Following the Chinese Communist party's rise to power in October 1949, US apprehension intensified, prompting an increase in its intervention in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. In 1950, President H. S. Truman established the Military assistance advisory group, tasked with both overseeing the utilisation of the initial 10 mln US dollars in US aid to Indochina and providing direct strategic and tactical advice to French forces. By the end of 1952, the US was covering approximately 42 % of the war costs in Indochina. By early 1954, this figure had reached 72 %. Despite this, the French, with the strong support of the US, suffered a crushing defeat at Dien Bien Phu and were forced to withdraw from Vietnam. As the leader of the capitalist bloc facing the socialist opposition, the US declared itself exempt from responsibility for the Geneva accords and immediately replaced France, establishing a government in South Vietnam with its capital in Saigon. Among many candidates, the US chose Ngo Dinh Diem as Prime Minister to represent them in preventing the spread of communism in Indochina. Therefore, Vietnamese historians agree that the resistance war against American imperialist aggression is counted from 1954, when France was defeated and the US took over, and ended on 30 April 1975, when the liberation army defeated the Republic of Vietnam government and captured President Duong Van Minh and the entire cabinet. See: *Pham Hong Tung*. The struggle for the unification of Vietnam (1954–1975) approached from several international perspectives // *Journal of Party History* : website. URL: <https://tapchilichsudang.vn/cuoc-dau-tranh-thong-nhat-dat-nuoc-viet-nam-1954-1975-tiep-can-tu-mot-so-phuong-dien-quoc-te.html> (date of access: 21.05.2025) (in Vietnam.); *Nguyen Van Tiep*. Some comments on the national policy toward the Central Highlands ethnic minorities of the Republic of Vietnam government under President Ngo Dinh Diem (1954–1963) // *Sci. & Technol. Dev.* 2013. Vol. 16, No. 11. P. 34–35 (in Vietnam.).

tions and reporting to international organisations to draw global attention to the situation in Vietnam. In negotiations, Poland proposed numerous solutions to promote peace and persuaded the parties involved of the need for a comprehensive ceasefire. However, existing studies on Poland's involvement in the Vietnam War remain limited. This indicates a need for further research to clarify this issue. This paper analyses Poland's efforts to maintain peace in Vietnam from 1963 to 1973, focusing on its role as an International commission for

control and supervision envoy. By utilising a variety of sources and research methods, this study aims to provide a comprehensive and objective assessment of Poland's involvement. Based on available sources, this paper seeks to reconstruct a detailed account of Poland's efforts to maintain peace in Vietnam, grounded in the provisions of the Geneva accords. The findings of this study will contribute significantly to the existing body of knowledge on this topic and serve as a valuable resource for further research on the Vietnam War.

### Reasons for Poland's diplomatic efforts for peace in Vietnam

First and foremost, it can be affirmed that Poland's initial motivation for participating in peacekeeping activities in Vietnam stemmed from its responsibility as a member of an international supervisory commission. On 25 January 1954, representatives from major powers including the US, the Soviet Union, Britain, and France reached a consensus to convene the Geneva conference to discuss the Korean War and restore peace in Indochina [1, p. 4]. During the conference, Vietnam's viewpoints were supported by China and the Soviet Union<sup>2</sup>. In the final stages, the involved parties (Britain, France, the Soviet Union, China, and Vietnam) reached a last-minute agreement to use the 17<sup>th</sup> parallel as a demarcation line and to hold general elections for a unified Vietnam after two years [1, p. 6]. During this period, the parties adhered to the ceasefire agreement and maintained peace. To uphold peace and monitor compliance with the conference's decisions regarding the Indochina War, an International commission for control and supervision was established. Commission members include diplomats from Poland, Canada, and India. Poland was a prominent member of this supervisory commission. Therefore, participating in peacekeeping efforts in Vietnam was a responsibility of Poland. According to the Polish delegation within the International commission for supervision and control in Vietnam, they affirmed that the commission had assigned Poland specific tasks arising from proletarian internationalism<sup>3</sup>, meaning Poland's participation in this commission aimed to safeguard the interests of the communist bloc. The endeavour to maintain peace in Vietnam was both a responsibility within the commission and a means to protect the interests of Vietnam, a young communist nation in Asia at that time.

Poland's diplomatic efforts to promote peace in Vietnam were primarily driven by its role as a member of the

International commission for control and supervision. The decision to establish the commission was a result of the 1954 Geneva conference, which sought to resolve the Korean War and restore peace in Indochina. As a member of that international body, Poland was entrusted with the responsibility of monitoring compliance with the Geneva accords. This duty was seen as a manifestation of Poland's internationalist commitments, particularly given its alignment with the communist bloc. Supporting a newly established communist state like Vietnam aligned with Poland's ideological stance. Therefore, participating in peacekeeping efforts in Vietnam was Poland's responsibility. According to the Polish delegation in the International commission for control and supervision in Vietnam, they affirmed that the commission had assigned specific tasks to Poland, arising from proletarian internationalism. Another crucial factor driving Poland's diplomatic efforts in Vietnam was its commitment to the international communist movement and its opposition to imperialism. This was a shared responsibility among socialist countries. After the World War II, the world was divided into two opposing blocs. On one side were capitalist nations influenced by the US, aiming to contain the Soviet Union, China, and other socialist countries. On the other side were socialist nations influenced by the Soviet Union, united under the banner of socialism to counter the US and the capitalist world. The Cold War arms race was the most evident manifestation of this US-Soviet rivalry and the broader conflict between socialism and capitalism. The foreign policies of socialist countries were significantly influenced by the Soviet Union. Consequently, most socialist nations adopted anti-imperialist foreign policies. At the same time, these countries took advantage of this competition to demonstrate their independent foreign policy stances. This could be seen

<sup>2</sup>The delegation of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam led by Pham Van Dong requested the participation of representatives of the Laotian and Cambodian resistance forces. On 10 May 1954, Pham Van Dong delivered a speech outlining the Democratic Republic of Vietnam's stance: 1) to simultaneously resolve both military and political issues; 2) to simultaneously resolve the issues of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. He emphasised that the French government must recognise the basic national rights of the Vietnamese, Cambodian, and Laotian people. See [1, p. 5].

<sup>3</sup>The second meeting of the Polish delegation with the Chinese delegation // Wilson Center digital archive : website. URL: <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/record-conversation-between-polish-leader-wladyslaw-gomulka-and-chinese-premier-zhou-0> (date of access: 08.10.2024).

as a form of flexibility in the foreign strategies of socialist countries, allowing them to assert their roles on the international stage. Poland's anti-imperialist stance was evident in its interactions with the Soviet Union and China. In a meeting on 16 June 1967, between Liu Ningyi (China) and Z. Kliszko (Poland), the Polish representative emphasised the need for a conference among socialist countries to discuss aid strategies for Vietnam. Z. Kliszko argued that, given the escalating US aggression in Vietnam, providing aid to end the war was an urgent necessity. He expressed hope that Chinese leaders would consider this initiative<sup>4</sup>. Poland also actively encouraged socialist countries to overcome their differences and stand united with Vietnam against the US and capitalism. Z. Kliszko emphasised: «History will never forgive us if we cannot overcome our divisive differences in order to protect what we share and what is most important to us». He pointed out the global nature of the US imperialist attack<sup>5</sup>. Therefore, it is evident that Poland held a clear anti-capitalist stance, and Vietnam was considered a crucial front in this struggle. By assisting Vietnam, Poland aimed to help Vietnam both to end the war and to contain the US in the global competition between capitalism and socialism.

The socialist relationship between Vietnam and Poland was another crucial factor driving Poland's efforts to maintain peace in Vietnam. Poland established diplomatic relations with Vietnam on 4 February 1950, becoming one of the first countries to recognise Vietnam's independence in 1950. After the successful August Revolution of 1945, President Ho Chi Minh declared Vietnam's independence in Hanoi on 2 September 1945. However, Vietnam's independence was not recognised by any other country at that time. Therefore, seeking recognition from other nations was «crucially related to the overall development of the country» [2, p. 23]. Faced with this demand, President Ho Chi Minh actively worked to promote international recognition of Vietnam's independence. He sent a letter to the United Nations expressing the viewpoint of the new Vietnam. He declared: «The UN Charter must respect the independence of other nations. The United Nations has a responsibility to implement this charter. We want the United Nations to fulfill its mission» [3, p. 1356].

Starting from 1950, right after China declared its independence, President Ho Chi Minh began diplomatic activities in Eastern European countries. On 14 January 1950, he declared: «The Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam is the sole legal government of the entire Vietnamese people. The Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam is ready to establish diplomatic relations with any government that respects the equality, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of Vietnam, for peace and for the joint construction of world

democracy» [3, p. 1397–1398]. The purpose of all diplomatic activities initiated by Ho Chi Minh was to gain recognition as a legitimate government and to inform the world about the genuine struggle waged by the Vietnamese party, Government, and people to defend their country. Therefore, Ho Chi Minh employed diplomatic measures to maintain the independence of the state. The Democratic Republic of Vietnam proactively recognised the revolutionary government of China, a move that not only demonstrated support but also asserted the self-determination of its government. In response, on 18 January 1950, China recognised the legitimate government of Vietnam. This was a necessary and sufficient condition for the Democratic Republic of Vietnam to continue its long-standing diplomatic activities and establish relations with socialist countries in Eastern Europe. This demonstrated the successful outcome of Ho Chi Minh's efforts. Poland recognised the Vietnamese government on 4 February 1950, and diplomatic relations between the two countries were officially established. From then on, Vietnam and Poland became two countries with a close diplomatic relationship as socialist states sharing a common goal of building socialism and confronting imperialism led by the US. This was a significant factor driving Poland's efforts for peace in Vietnam. A significant goal that Poland aimed for when actively working to maintain peace in Vietnam was to elevate its international standing. Historically, the Vietnam War against US aggression had drawn in many socialist countries. Beyond the spirit of helping Vietnam, each participating country had its own calculations and ambitions for its own interests. Poland was no exception. In addition to participating in the International commission for control and supervision, Poland was also actively involved in providing aid to Vietnam. All these activities were aimed at enhancing Poland's international prestige. The strong influence of the Soviet Union over Eastern European socialist countries after the World War II cannot be denied. This influence waned after J. Stalin's death, and socialist countries began to gradually seek to break free from Soviet control [4, p. 61], especially in foreign policy.

As a socialist state, Poland naturally aspired to establish a more prominent position within the socialist bloc. Therefore, participating in the resolution of international issues was an opportunity for any country seeking to demonstrate its diplomatic standing. Consequently, involvement in the Vietnam War, particularly in maintaining peace in Vietnam, presented a favourable opportunity. In Warsaw, it was believed that participation in the work of the commission would enhance Poland's standing within the Eastern bloc (Eastern European socialist countries), as it involved defending Vietnam, a young socialist ally, and containing US power

<sup>4</sup>Note from the conversation between comrade Zenon Kliszko and Central Committee of the Communist party of China Secretary Liu Ningyi // Wilson Center digital archive : website. URL: <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/note-conversation-between-comrade-zenon-kliszko-and-cc-cp-secretary-liu-ningyi> (date of access: 08.10.2024).

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

in Asia – Pacific while protecting the interests of socialist countries [4, p. 61]. Participation in the International commission for supervision and control in Indochina and Korea, with a particular focus on Vietnam, demonstrated that Poland had established significant prestige. This presented a valuable opportunity for Poland to break free from the stagnation created during J. Stalin's rule<sup>6</sup> and return to the international political arena with a re-

newed image. Thus, the evidence supports the assertion of Poland's ambition in participating in peacekeeping activities for Vietnam. Beyond the responsibility to protect the socialist foundation in Vietnam and contain US influence, this was also an opportunity in Poland's diplomatic calculations. Warsaw saw it as an opportunity for Poland to return to the international political scene with a higher status than before.

### Poland's efforts to maintain peace in Vietnam (1963–1973)

Poland's first diplomatic efforts to restore peace in Vietnam were officially launched in January 1963, during the official visit of Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs A. Rapacki to New Delhi [5, p. 1]. As a member of the International control commission (ICC), he expressed his views on the possibility of implementing the provisions stipulated in the Geneva accords signed in 1954. That is, according to the Polish representative, the situation in Vietnam could be completely resolved through «organising general elections and unifying the country»<sup>7</sup> [5, p. 1]. Also during this trip to India, in a meeting with US politicians, A. Rapacki continued to uphold his views on the Vietnam peace issue. He affirmed to US Ambassador J. K. Galbraith, President John F. Kennedy, and assistant secretary A. Harriman that, given Poland's stance, the US side also showed goodwill and a desire to resolve the Vietnam issue peacefully. However, Poland also suggested to US leaders that an immediate solution was to temporarily cease fire for six months to ease the conflict. As a supervisory envoy for maintaining the Geneva accords, Poland endeavoured to make efforts at a time when the political situation of the Saigon government was experiencing many upheavals, and a scenario for replacing President Ngo Dinh Diem was entirely possible. Especially in the context where the Americans felt that the Vietnam issue needed to be resolved to ease the burden on the US. Moreover, the Soviet Union also needed a smoother solution rather than a tense military conflict. The Soviet Union believed that «solving the Vietnam deadlock would contribute to reducing international tension, which is in line with our interests [socialist countries]» [5, p. 2]. However, the initial assessments by Poland regarding the Vietnam issue were not easy to resolve. Both the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the Ngo Dinh Diem regime seemed to show little interest in that issue [5, p. 2]. It meant that a ceasefire and the withdrawal of foreign troops from Vietnam would face many obstacles. With the initial activities in January 1963 and contacts with relevant parties such as India, the US, and the Soviet Union, the Polish representative received positive signals. However, the issues raised between the parties had yet to yield any concrete results.

In a meeting on 22 January 1963, between A. Rapacki and J. Michalowski (a US representative), the US attitude towards a series of assessments of the situation in Vietnam was revealed. With the confidence that J. Michalowski presented to the Polish side, the US claimed that they were not losing in Vietnam, and they were specifically pushing Vietnam to become dependent on China. However, they also expressed that the US could not win [6, p. 466]. This allows us to conclude that the US was still waiting for a more decisive move from a third party like Poland towards the leaders of North Vietnam for a ceasefire to take place. Despite the lack of clear outcomes, the actions were sufficient to demonstrate Poland's determination to maintain peace in Vietnam beginning with the first moves in January 1963.

Poland continued to push for further peace initiatives. A document found in the Central Archive of Modern Records (Archirytm Akt Nawykowych) in Warsaw, revealed a peace initiative in Vietnam that had been noted by the Soviet Union. It stated that Poland wanted the US to withdraw foreign troops (referring to US military forces and their allies) from Vietnam so that the Vietnamese people could determine their own destiny. Polish representatives also proposed the idea of a neutral Vietnam, meaning they wanted to neutralise Vietnam following the Laotian model. To achieve this, the US also proposed a ceasefire, but they also raised their difficulties with the current situation. According to US Ambassador in India J. K. Galbraith, they were facing obstacles from Ngo Dinh Diem himself, whose regime disagreed with the idea of negotiating with the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and opposed the idea of a neutral Vietnam as proposed by Poland and the US<sup>8</sup>. However, in the current situation, the US could not give up and stop aiding to maintain the Saigon regime in Vietnam. In response to Poland's moves, J. K. Galbraith sent a call to the Polish representatives, but in reality, it was aimed at probing the attitude of Poland and other members of the socialist bloc regarding the issue that Poland was pursuing<sup>9</sup>. Perhaps in this matter, the US government itself was not truly willing to build a Vietnam situation following the Laotian model.

<sup>6</sup>Historia dyplomacji polskiej: połowa X–XX w. / red.: W. Materski, W. Michowicz ; oprac. W. Jarząbek. Warszawa : Pol. Inst. Spraw Międzynarodowych, 2010. T. 6 : 1944/1945–1989 r. S. 284.

<sup>7</sup>Here and further translated by us. – N. T. H., D. V. T., P. D. T.

<sup>8</sup>Telegram from the Central Intelligence Agency Station in Saigon to the Agency. 6 September 1963 // Foreign relations of the United States, 1961–1963 / ed. E. C. Keefer. Washington : Gov. Print. Office, 1991. Vol. 4 : Vietnam, August – December 1963. P. 125–126.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

On 29 May 1963, ciphergram No. 7237 provided us with more information about Poland's efforts. The telegram contained a summary report of a conversation between the Polish (M. Maneli) and Vietnamese (Minister of Foreign Affairs Xuan Thuy and Prime Minister Pham Van Dong) and the Soviet Union (Ambassador S. Tovmassian) representatives, indicating that all parties supported Poland conducting political investigations into all Vietnamese issues as a member of the ICC in Vietnam. The telegram also expressed the hope to the Polish leaders that, «we [Poland] need to try and actively provide information to the parties»<sup>10</sup>. At the same time, it was hoped that in the new context, with the US facing internal political turmoil, it would be an opportunity for Poland to push the parties towards peace negotiations. In particular, the US and Saigon would proactively contact the Polish side<sup>11</sup>.

On 31 May 1963, a confidential telegram sent from M. Maneli (Saigon) to F. R. Spasowski (Warsaw) reported that the Polish side had consulted Hanoi regarding the idea of maintaining peace and neutrality in Vietnam<sup>12</sup>. During this discussion, the representative of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the Prime Minister Pham Van Dong, engaged in a detailed exchange on the conflicts involving the US and the Saigon government. The Polish side expressed confidence that a political transformation in the South Vietnam was inevitable, and that the US and Ngo Dinh Diem would eventually be compelled to negotiate peace in accordance with the Geneva accords<sup>13</sup>.

A telegram dated 6 September 1963, conveyed M. Maneli's report to Warsaw about the subsequent political situation in Vietnam. In this document, Polish representative communicated the US proposal, as conveyed to the representative of the South Vietnamese government, Ngo Dinh Nhu, regarding the neutralisation of Vietnam following the Cambodian model. However, the later vehemently opposed this viewpoint. He told M. Maneli that if the US unilaterally negotiated with North Vietnam, it would be an «immoral» act as they were the US allies. Ngo Dinh Nhu further asserted that «neither the Saigon government nor any other government could negotiate with Hanoi, either openly or secretly»<sup>14</sup>. He ad-

ded that, in the South, Ngo Dinh Nhu had also contacted North Vietnamese communists, but with the aim of opposing the Democratic Republic of Vietnam<sup>15</sup>. Neither Ngo Dinh Nhu nor Ngo Dinh Diem wanted to turn South Vietnam into a US foothold against communism<sup>16</sup>. This suggests that the implementation of Poland's ideas in Vietnam was facing significant challenges, as the views of the US and South Vietnamese leaders did not align. Another document revealed that the Americans were genuinely disappointed with Ngo Dinh Diem and would replace him if they could find a suitable successor<sup>17</sup>. Despite this, the Polish side persisted in analysing the pros and cons of their proposal. They pointed out that if the Ngo Dinh Nhu regime continued to pursue a military solution, it would be detrimental to their own interests, as they would be going against the US' wishes. This would lead to a situation where «the Saigon government would soon have four enemies against it, possibly including the US»<sup>18</sup>. It was like a warning, hoping that the US, together with Poland, would address the obstacles to maintaining peace in Vietnam based on respect for the Geneva accords. In an urgent telegram sent from A. Rapacki (Warsaw) to B. Jaszczuk (Moscow) on 31 January 1963, the Polish side continued to mention «solving the South Vietnam issue»<sup>19</sup>. However, in this matter, the Polish side understood and warned the involved parties to respect Vietnam. Polish representatives affirmed that «they should not be tied down»<sup>20</sup>. Meaning, Vietnam should be respected and not imposed upon. Because Vietnam itself had overcome difficulties to achieve victory in recent years. Precisely because of this, as clearly expressed in a conversation between Yu. Andropov and Ho Chi Minh, both sides did not impose the Vietnam situation within the framework of Marxism-Leninism. Both sides affirmed that the Democratic Republic of Vietnam would act within the framework of Vietnam<sup>21</sup>.

Despite the difficulties in maintaining peace in Vietnam, Poland persisted in dialogue with North Vietnamese leaders to explain to them the importance of the matter. In the document we found it is clearly stated: «We did not insinuate anything to the [North] Vietnamese, except only to make them aware that the matter [was] important»<sup>22</sup>. The issue that the Polish side mentioned

<sup>10</sup>Secret telegram from Maneli (Saigon) to Spasowski (Warsaw). 29 May 1963. Ciphergram No. 7237 // Arch. Min. Spraw Zagranicznych (AMSZ). Z. 6/77. W. 102. T. 625.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>Secret telegram from Maneli (Saigon) to Spasowski (Warsaw). 31 May 1963. Ciphergram No. 7353 // AMSZ. Z. 6/77. W. 102. T. 625.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>Telegram from the Central Intelligence Agency Station in Saigon to the Agency. 6 September 1963 // Foreign relations of the United States, 1961–1963 / ed. E. C. Keefer. Washington : Gov. Print. Office, 1991. Vol. 4 : Vietnam, August – December 1963. P. 125–126.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>Secret telegram from Maneli (Saigon) to Spasowski (Warsaw). 24 April 1963. Ciphergram No. 5295 // AMSZ. Z. 6/77. W. 102. T. 625.

<sup>17</sup>Secret telegram from Ogrodziński (New Delhi) to Wierna (Warsaw). 15 March 1963. Ciphergram No. 3359 // Ibid. T. 608.

<sup>18</sup>Telegram from the Central Intelligence Agency Station in Saigon to the Agency. 6 September 1963 // Foreign relations of the United States, 1961–1963 / ed. E. C. Keefer. Washington : Gov. Print. Office, 1991. Vol. 4 : Vietnam, August – December 1963. P. 125–126.

<sup>19</sup>Secret telegram from Rapacki (Warsaw) to Jaszczuk (Moscow). 31 January 1963 // AMSZ. Z. 6/77. W. 100. T. 603.

<sup>20</sup>Secret telegram from Jaszczuk (Moscow) to Rapacki (Warsaw). 13 February 1963. Ciphergram No. 2019 // Ibid. T. 604.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

<sup>22</sup>Secret telegram from Rapacki (Warsaw) to Jaszczuk (Moscow). 15 February 1963 // AMSZ. Z. 6/77. W. 100. T. 603.

in that document was precisely the issue of maintaining peace in Vietnam. And they always raised the Vietnam issue with relevant parties whenever possible<sup>23</sup>.

On 11 March 1963, a secret document was sent from Hanoi to Warsaw, stating that the Polish representative had tried to contact representative both of North Vietnam, Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam Pham Van Dong, and the Soviet Union Ambassador in Hanoi S. Tovmassian. The parties had discussed the issue of peace in Vietnam. In that meeting, the Vietnamese side affirmed that Vietnam's policy was fully in line with the Geneva accords, which was also consistent with Poland and the Soviet Union<sup>24</sup>, and they hoped that all parties would implement the signed agreement. Thus, the Vietnamese side showed goodwill in respecting the Geneva accords. According to Pham Van Dong, the implementation of the Geneva accords in Vietnam was beneficial to Vietnam. Accordingly, Pham Van Dong affirmed that «they did not want any foreign military bases or allied military forces anywhere in Vietnam»<sup>25</sup>. And Vietnam fully desired to pursue the goal of peace. Pham Van Dong expressed that the purpose of Vietnam's struggle was to build a broad democratic country like Laos. This means that the Vietnamese side was open to Poland's peace proposal. However, the problem became difficult when the Americans stubbornly increased their military activities in Vietnam. The US attitude was to withdraw troops only when «saving face». However, the Polish side still insisted that honour was also very important to Poland, and therefore, they would do everything possible to find a solution<sup>26</sup>.

The secret telegram dated 4 April 1963, from J. Michalowski (Warsaw) to B. Jaszczuk (Moscow), reported that the Polish side had informed Soviet leaders about Vietnam's stance on the issue of peace. Vietnam believed that their struggles would soon lead to an international resolution based on the foundations of the 1954 and 1962 conferences. This, they argued, would not only secure their victory but also allow the US to preserve its dignity. In response to this position, Polish leaders assessed that the situation in Vietnam was not yet ripe for such a conference and emphasised the necessity of gauging the opinions of the Americans. Vietnamese representatives agreed with this approach<sup>27</sup>.

In addition to diplomatic interactions with various parties to promote the implementation of the provisions stipulated in the Geneva accords, Poland also condemned the US' military aggression regarding the presence and expansion of foreign military forces in South Vietnam<sup>28</sup>, which, according to the Poles, was a violation of Art. 16–19 of the Geneva accords in maintaining peace in Vietnam [4, p. 180]. Subsequently, on 12 February 1963, a document currently stored at AMSZ reported that Poland had worked with the Vietnamese Ambassador in Poland, Tran Chi Hien, and the two sides had discussed maintaining peace in Vietnam. Accordingly, the Vietnamese side provided information that an economic advisor of Vietnam in Paris had stated that the US wanted to neutralise Vietnam, which became an interesting piece of information that Poland wanted to access<sup>29</sup>.

In a report on negotiations with Vietnamese leaders and the Soviet Union<sup>30</sup>, the Polish delegation was given a special welcome<sup>31</sup>. During the discussions, the parties discussed the role of the ICC, and the Polish representative of the international supervisory commission in Vietnam proposed tactical measures to achieve peace in Vietnam. The role of the Poles was highlighted when «everyone considers our task of conducting political probes regarding all Vietnamese matters as particularly important and perhaps most urgent [at this time]»<sup>32</sup>. On the other hand, Poland expected new developments in the US political arena to be beneficial for promoting peace in Vietnam. Here, in a secret telegram dated 29 May 1963, it was stated that they expected to receive more contacts from South Vietnamese diplomats. For the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, its leaders always hoped that Poland, as well as the international commission, would expand investigations into violations of the Geneva accords, including China and the Soviet Union<sup>33</sup>.

A colloquy between a Polish representative and Prime Minister Pham Van Dong is mentioned in a secret telegram from M. Maneli to F. R. Spasowski dated 31 May 1963. The meeting lasted for over an hour, during which both sides discussed in detail the heated debates between the US and the Saigon government. At the same time, Pham Van Dong expressed his desire to «abide by the Geneva accords»<sup>34</sup>. This shows that the biggest obstacle to the Polish delegation's efforts to maintain

<sup>23</sup>Secret telegram from Ogrodziński (New Delhi) to Michałowski (Warsaw). 4 March 1963. Ciphergram No. 2793 // AMSZ. Z. 6/77. W. 102. T. 608.

<sup>24</sup>Secret telegram from Maneli (Hanoi) to Spasowski-Morski (Warsaw). 11 March 1963. Ciphergram No. 3175 // Ibid. W. 96. T. 1368. K. 3.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid.

<sup>27</sup>Secret telegram from Michałowski (Warsaw) to Jaszczuk (Moscow). 4 April 1963 // AMSZ. Z. 6/77. W. 100. T. 603.

<sup>28</sup>Raport z działalności Delegacji Polskiej w MKNiK za okres 1. I. 30.VI.1965, 30.VI.1965 // Arch. Inst. Pamięci Narodowej. IPN BU 2602/5837. K. 319–356.

<sup>29</sup>Secret telegram from Jaszczuk (Moscow) to Rapacki (Warsaw). 13 February 1963. Ciphergram No. 2019 // AMSZ. Z. 6/77. W. 100. T. 604.

<sup>30</sup>Secret telegram from Maneli (Saigon) to Spasowski (Warsaw). 31 May 1963. Ciphergram No. 7353 // Ibid. W. 102. T. 625.

<sup>31</sup>Secret telegram from Maneli (Saigon) to Spasowski (Warsaw). 29 May 1963. Ciphergram No. 7237 // Ibid.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid.

peace was the Ngo Dinh Diem government. Developments from early 1963 showed that among the involved parties, especially the US, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, and the Republic of Vietnam, the US still had the goodwill to neutralise Vietnam. Of course, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam always wanted to build a broad democratic country without foreign intervention. In some meetings, Pham Van Dong even referred to the Poles as the «socialist camp»<sup>35</sup>. This proves that Vietnam trusted the Poles in their efforts to maintain peace in Vietnam.

A secret telegram from M. Maneli to F. R. Spasowski dated 4 October 1963, provides further insights into Poland's efforts in 1963 to guide the implementation of peace in Vietnam according to the Geneva accords. In this document, the Polish delegation asserted that they were «striving to implement the guidelines to the best of their ability»<sup>36</sup>, although no concrete results had been achieved by October 1963. This stagnation stemmed from the complexity of the issue, namely the differing viewpoints between the US and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. Furthermore, there were even contradictions within the Saigon government itself and the US. As for the Polish delegation in Vietnam, M. Maneli affirmed: «I have not encountered any incidents arising from Poland's intermediary role, all requests from [our Vietnamese comrades] have been considered by the Polish delegation as members of the International commission for control and supervision. Important information related to Vietnam's peace issue has been communicated promptly»<sup>37</sup>. However, in this matter, Vietnam's stance was very clear: they declared that they would continue to fight until the balance of forces changed, until the US was forced to concede and establish a democratic coalition government. Afterward, that government would gradually transform itself into a socialist government through peaceful means<sup>38</sup>. Therefore, Vietnamese leaders such as Pham Van Dong and Xuan Thuy emphasised the need to maintain cooperation with the ICC, not only with the Vietnamese workers' party but also with other Vietnamese who wanted to establish contact between the commission and the National liberation front. Thus, the Vietnamese side expressed a clear viewpoint to the Polish representatives on the commission: they agreed to resolve the ongoing conflict, but through peaceful means rather than military ones. However, the attitude of the South Vietnamese

government leaders was the opposite. The representative of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, Ha Van Lau, discussed with M. Maneli the need to limit the role of the commission to a certain extent<sup>39</sup> and they strongly opposed neutrality<sup>40</sup>.

On 9 November 1964, a meeting took place between Polish leaders, including A. Rapacki, and the Chinese representative, Zhou Enlai, in Moscow at the invitation of the Chinese Embassy. During this meeting, the parties had heated discussions on issues related to socialist countries. Among them, the Vietnam issue was considered an urgent matter to be discussed. According to the Polish representative A. Rapacki Vietnamese leaders had contacted Poland as a member of the ICC and requested that Polish leaders contribute within their capabilities to a political solution to the Vietnam issue, although in their contacts, the Vietnamese side did not make any specific proposals, but they noted that Poland should prepare for a political solution. At the same time, Poland also emphasised that Vietnam wanted Poland to continue to maintain its role in the commission and not withdraw from the commission. In this discussion, Poland emphasised to the Chinese leaders that creating a cooperative atmosphere within the proletarian movement would create effectiveness in the political issue of Vietnam. Poland assessed that the US had exploited the contradictions of the workers' movement to create stronger moves in the issue of invading Vietnam. Thus, regarding the Vietnam issue, Poland tried to mobilise the relevant parties to create effectiveness for the issue. Even if this could create unfavourable factors for Poland in terms of trade relations with the US, Poland still affirmed that it was only a secondary issue<sup>41</sup>. This means that Poland considered the political issue of the Vietnam War more important.

Beginning in the mid-1960s, the Vietnam War became more complex as the US directly deployed expeditionary forces to South Vietnam. Poland continued its efforts as a mediator, playing the role of a liaison between the parties. Although, in the early stage of the Sino-Soviet conflict, Poland leaned towards Beijing, on the Vietnam issue, Poland expressed opposition to China's support for Vietnam's protracted war against the US. According to Polish leaders (and leaders of other socialist countries), Beijing's action was a major obstacle to persuading Hanoi to negotiate a political solution [7, p. 54].

<sup>35</sup>Secret telegram from Maneli (Saigon) to Spasowski (Warsaw). 29 May 1963. Ciphergram No. 7237 // AMSZ. Z. 6/77. W. 102. T. 625.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid.

<sup>38</sup>Secret telegram from Maneli (Saigon) to Spasowski (Warsaw). 3 October 1963. Ciphergram No. 12768 // AMSZ. Z. 6/77. W. 102. T. 625.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid.

<sup>40</sup>Telegram from the Central Intelligence Agency Station in Saigon to the Agency // Wilson Center digital archive : website. URL: <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/telegram-central-intelligence-agency-station-saigon-agency> (date of access: 08.10.2024).

<sup>41</sup>The second meeting of the Polish delegation with the Chinese delegation // Wilson Center digital archive : website. URL: <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/record-conversation-between-polish-leader-wladyslaw-gomulka-and-chinese-premier-zhou-0> (date of access: 08.10.2024).

On 29 December 1965, A. Harriman, representing the US government, visited Poland. Amidst the complex situation in Vietnam, with various differing viewpoints<sup>42</sup>, Poland expressed keen interest and cooperation in A. Harriman's visit, despite consistently criticising US actions in Vietnam. Poland hoped that this visit would provide a favourable direction for a peaceful solution in Vietnam, particularly regarding the bombing of North Vietnam. Poland viewed the US actions as «banditry». During the two-day meeting on 29–30 December 1965, in Warsaw, the US persuaded Poland to mediate between the US and Hanoi. In fact, Poland had secretly sent J. Michalowski, an expert on Southeast Asia, including the Vietnam War, as an envoy whose mission was to mediate between the parties to find common ground for a peaceful solution in Vietnam. He was scheduled to visit Hanoi in early January 1966, where he would convey A. Harriman's proposals to North Vietnamese leaders, urging them to enter negotiations [7, p. 51]. Reports from J. Michalowski after his meetings with Vietnamese leaders such as Nguyen Duy Trinh, Pham Van Dong, and Vo Nguyen Giap revealed some obstacles to a peaceful solution in Vietnam. Initially, China attempted to hinder negotiations between the parties. However, the situation was not entirely bleak as North Vietnamese leaders were not entirely dependent on China's script, and they accepted J. Michalowski's mission. Moreover, he argued with Vietnamese leaders that only the Vietnamese themselves had the right to decide how to respond to US proposals [7, p. 54].

In his detailed report, Polish envoy J. Michalowski further elaborated on the attitudes of Vietnamese leaders. His interactions had influenced the perceptions of Vietnamese leaders. Pham Van Dong himself expressed this sentiment during J. Michalowski's farewell, while deputy Prime Minister of Vietnam Nguyen Duy Trinh noted that the visit had «improved the ratio between military struggle and political struggle» and promised to «plan a shift toward peace initiatives» [7, p. 55]. Thus, the analysis presented by the Polish envoy to North Vietnamese leaders had a positive impact. However, Vietnam remained steadfast in its pursuit of national independence, and as long as this goal was unmet, they would continue to fight [7, p. 55] until the US conceded and agreed to negotiate.

Faced with the North Vietnamese leaders' firm stance, J. Michalowski tried various arguments to dissuade them from engaging in hostilities with the US. Specifically, he persuaded North Vietnam to test the US' sincerity, as this would at least help them expose the US' true na-

ture if the facts proved so. This demonstrates J. Michalowski's tireless efforts to facilitate dialogue and find a common ground between the two sides through political means, avoiding a military confrontation in Vietnam. J. Michalowski persistently pursued every opportunity to persuade North Vietnamese leaders [8, p. 56]. However, Vietnam's firm attitude was justified and did not stem from a desire for conflict as he seemed to suggest [7, p. 55]. It was precisely the US' own actions that sowed doubt in the minds of Vietnamese leaders. On the one hand, the US proposed and expressed a desire to resolve the war of aggression it had initiated through a political solution. Yet, concurrently, starting in 1965, the intensity of the war escalated. The US increased its military presence in the South and expanded the war into North Vietnam. This reality revealed that the US did not genuinely seek a true peace, its actions were about talking peace while «constantly sending in reinforcements» [7, p. 57].

On 16 June 1967, a meeting took place between Polish representatives Z. Kliszko (member of the Bureau of the Polish united worker's party) and I. Rodzinski (Ambassador in Beijing), and Chinese leaders Liu Ningyi (Secretary General of Chinese Communist party Central Committee) and Qiao Guanhua (deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs) in Beijing. In addition to discussing ways to support Vietnam in its struggle against the US, the Polish side expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of unity among socialist countries regarding the Vietnam issue, arguing that history will never forgive us if we cannot overcome our divisive differences<sup>43</sup>. Moreover, China even equated the Soviet Union with the US as its enemy, and tensions had arisen between Poland and China since the 1960s<sup>44</sup>. According to Polish leaders, the US had exploited these divisions to intensify its war efforts in Vietnam, which also hindered efforts to end the war through a political solution.

Also during the period from 1965 to 1967, a notable Polish effort was recorded, namely operation «Mari-gold». Poland, through this initiative, demonstrated its role as a potential intermediary between the US and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

As early as December 1965, Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs A. Rapacki affirmed that he would do everything possible to present the US' views to the Vietnamese leadership, and stressed that ending the ongoing war in Vietnam was essential for world stability [8, p. 36].

Immediately thereafter, the political bureau of the Polish united workers' party sent a message to Hanoi, accompanied by a verbal message conveyed to the Vietnamese leaders [8, p. 36]. W. Gomulka emphasised that

<sup>42</sup>The Chinese government adopted a resolute stance in opposing peace negotiations, whereas Vietnam appeared ambiguous, as it remained willing to listen to advice from the Soviet Union and several allied countries in Central Europe. See [8, p. 54].

<sup>43</sup>Note from the conversation between comrade Zenon Kliszko and CC CCP Secretary Liu Ningyi // Wilson Center digital archive : website. URL: <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/note-conversation-between-comrade-zenon-kliszko-and-cc-ccp-secretary-liu-ningyi> (date of access: 08.10.2024).

<sup>44</sup>Note on exchanges of opinions by the ambassadors and acting ambassadors of Hungary, the GDR, Czechoslovakia, the USSR, Bulgaria, Poland, and Mongolia on the subject of the PRC position vis-a-vis the socialist countries' on 21 November and 3 December // Wilson Center digital archive : website. URL: <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/note-exchanges-opinions-ambassadors-and-acting-ambassadors-hungary-gdr-czechoslovakia-ussr> (date of access: 02.10.2024).

even though the American proposals might be manufactured «to create a pretext for escalating the war», Hanoi should still «kick back the peace ball that the Americans had thrown over» to create a positive impression on global public opinion [8, p. 36]. A. Rapacki dispatched J. Michalowski to deliver the message to Hanoi [8, p. 40], while M. Lewandowski, the Polish commissioner on the ICC in Saigon, was authorised to «continue exchanges and soundings to see whether conditions for a formal meeting existed» [8, p. 95]. Based on these exchanges, Warsaw drafted «a ten-point outline for a peace conference which could take place in Warsaw» [8, p. 183], demonstrating a genuine effort towards facilitating negotiations.

However, A. Rapacki asserted that «Poland was not authorised to negotiate on Hanoi's behalf» and could not help open talks as long as the bombing continued [8, p. 195]. Thus, it can be concluded that Poland failed in this objective due to the US' renewed expansion of the war into North Vietnam.

Despite the failure of operation «Marigold» due to Washington renewing its air strikes, Warsaw still «continued to relay messages between Washington and Hanoi» [8, p. 630] and asserted that it had acted «in good faith... and fully independently, not under the guidance of the Soviet Union» [8, p. 640]. As J. G. Hershberg concluded: «“Marigold” was a bridge that collapsed, but it still mattered» [8, p. 645] a failure that nonetheless carried profound historical and humanitarian value, demonstrating the goodwill, courage, and moral legacy in Polish diplomacy.

The year 1968 marked a significant turning point. Although the Tet Offensive launched by North Vietnamese forces against the US and allied troops failed, according to J. Slowiak, Vietnamese leaders had achieved

a victory outside their territory. It had generated a wave of anti-war sentiment in the US, severely undermining public confidence in President L. B. Johnson [4, p. 271]. This presented a favourable opportunity for the Polish to persuade both sides to engage in peace negotiations. As the ICC's supervisory mission lost credibility with both sides, the Polish representatives in Saigon became increasingly valuable to the defense departments [4, p. 288]. After the Tet Offensive, the US government adopted a more conciliatory stance. However, they also demanded that North Vietnam simultaneously withdraw its forces from the South. This was an unacceptable condition for North Vietnamese leaders and became a new obstacle and challenge for the peace-monitoring delegation, including Poland. Despite this, «every effort was made to prevent anything from happening that would undermine the credibility of the Polish delegation» [4, p. 302]. The debates finally concluded with the signing of the Paris peace accords on 27 January 1973, forcing the US to withdraw from Vietnam. In his dissertation, J. Slowiak assessed that «...ultimately, the war in Vietnam was won by the communists, who had achieved their goal of unifying the country. This was also a victory for Poland and its delegation... and was particularly valuable in terms of accumulating experience for future foreign missions» [4, p. 302].

In terms of concrete results, it is clear that the efforts of the Polish to maintain peace in Vietnam were unsuccessful. Peace was only established there after the signing of the Paris peace accords, which were based on the military victories of Vietnam and culminated in the final victory on 30 April 1975. However, the efforts of the Polish cannot be denied. They were recognised as a serious and responsible endeavour by Poland and its delegation [4, p. 319].

### **Evaluation of Poland's diplomatic efforts for peace in Vietnam (1963–1973)**

Initially, it must be noted that Poland participated with a sense of responsibility towards Vietnam and the international communist movement. Poland engaged in peace-keeping efforts in Vietnam as an envoy representing socialist countries, as they participated in the ICC delegation to protect the interests of the socialist bloc [4, p. 315]. Their involvement was based on the foundation of safeguarding the rights of the socialist camp. Naturally, the Soviet Union, China, and other socialist nations viewed the Vietnam War as a crucial point in the competition between the socialist and capitalist blocs. Simultaneously, based on the friendly relations that Vietnam and Poland had established since 4 February 1950, as socialist countries, Poland made peace

efforts with the desire to bring all parties to the negotiating table to maintain peace and limit armed conflict. Poland's consistent expression of support for Vietnam is a clear testament to this. Regarding Vietnam, the Polish delegation believed that the Vietnam issue was an urgent matter that socialist bloc countries needed to discuss. This is evidenced by an assertion in a memorandum of a discussion between a Chinese representative and Poland. Poland emphasised: «The most important and urgent issue at present is the struggle for national liberation in Vietnam»<sup>45</sup>. This shows that Poland stood on the standpoint of a socialist country to support Vietnam. As Pham Van Dong stated when referring to Poland's role, he used the term «socialist camp»<sup>46</sup>. This

<sup>45</sup>The second meeting of the Polish delegation with the Chinese delegation // Wilson Center digital archive : website. URL: <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/record-conversation-between-polish-leader-wladyslaw-gomulka-and-chinese-premier-zhou-0,truycââp%ngây> (date of access: 08.10.2024).

<sup>46</sup>Secret telegram from Maneli (Saigon) to Spasowski (Warsaw). 31 May 1963. Ciphergram No. 7353 // AMSZ. Z. 6/77. W. 102. T. 625.

means that Pham Van Dong was not only referring to the Soviet Union or China but also, of course, to the international communist movement, which included Poland.

In addition, Poland participated in maintaining peace in Vietnam with a high sense of responsibility and a commitment to the issue of peace in Vietnam. While the role of some other members gradually faded, Poland's activities remained actively maintained. Diplomatic activities to maintain peace in Vietnam can be considered to have begun in 1963. Poland's role in maintaining peace in Vietnam was significant, as evidenced by a secret telegram from M. Maneli to F. R. Spasowski on 30 August 1963, which mentioned a contact between the Polish delegation and the French Minister of Foreign Affairs. The latter emphasised that Poland was the second most famous and respected country in Vietnam<sup>47</sup>. This demonstrates the great efforts of the Polish envoys in the issue of peace in Vietnam as a third party to connect the parties and consider a political solution. Especially under more difficult conditions when the US talked about peace on the one hand, but on the other hand, they intensified and expanded the war. Therefore, Vietnamese leaders believed that the conditions were not yet ripe for peace negotiations. According to their analysis, there needed to be significant victories over the US on the military front, like Dien Bien Phu with the French before [7, p. 56]. This means that the North Vietnamese leaders did not believe in the peace statements of the US leaders, they believed that negotiations could only take place when the Americans accepted defeat on the military front.

Simultaneously, Poland's actions did not resolve the war through peaceful means. The historical reality of the Vietnamese resistance shows that Poland's efforts to maintain peace in Vietnam did not yield any concrete results. In other words, the Vietnam War only ended when the US suffered a military defeat at the hands of Vietnam. It was not until the Tet Offensive ended that US leaders agreed to sit down at the Paris peace talks to discuss restoring peace in Indochina. Although the Tet Offensive did not result in a military victory for the Democratic Republic of Vietnam on Vietnamese territory, they had achieved a victory outside their territory, and especially, the North Vietnamese had won a victory right on US soil. This created a strong anti-war sentiment, and L. B. Johnson's credibility was no longer maintained. The US ruling class needed a move to appease public anger. Negotiations were their only safe way out. This was the main reason for the establishment of the Paris peace conference. Saying this is to affirm that Poland's efforts to maintain peace among the parties failed. This was not only a failure of Poland but a general failure of the ICC. It can be said that the ICC not only failed to prevent the US from invading Vietnam and violating the

Geneva accords but also increasingly deviated from the goals of the Geneva accords. Here, in part, because India had sided with the West and the US, in conjunction with Canada, acted as «spies» accusing the Democratic Republic of Vietnam<sup>48</sup>. This was also a factor that made Poland's efforts yield no clear results. In terms of concrete results, it is clear that the efforts of the Polish to maintain peace in Vietnam were unsuccessful. Peace was only established there after the signing of the Paris peace accords, which were based on the military victories of Vietnam and culminated in the final victory on 30 April 1975. However, the efforts of the Polish cannot be denied. They were recognised as a serious and responsible endeavour by Poland and its delegation.

Despite this, the Polish activities had a certain impact on the attitudes of the involved parties. If we consider the concrete results in terms of achieving peace through Polish activities, it can be affirmed that Poland did not bring about any results. However, to a certain extent, Polish efforts influenced the attitudes of both sides. For the US, they had previously proposed to Poland the idea of moving towards negotiations to end the war. At the very least, the US saw the need to end the war and had expressed this view after a conversation with J. Michalowski, which A. Gromyko had presented to the Central Committee leadership. And they assessed that the US wanted to extricate itself from the Vietnam situation. Only in Vienna in 1961 when J. F. Kennedy told N. Khrushchev that their presence and entanglements in the Vietnam War were the result of D. D. Eisenhower's policies<sup>49</sup>. Of course, the developments after the coup against Ngo Dinh Diem, followed by L. B. Johnson's assumption of power, led to a contradiction between words and deeds. This means that although they expressed a desire to resolve the war peacefully, they actually escalated and intensified the war. This eroded the trust of Vietnamese leaders. As for the Vietnamese leaders, they always maintained a clear stance, desiring peace but a genuine peace [9, p. 23]. When Pham Van Dong declared that they had improved «the ratio between military struggle and political struggle» and promised to «plan a shift toward peace initiatives» [7, p. 55], it meant that they were ready to implement the so-called Vietnamese neutrality, but on the condition that the US showed goodwill in its military activities. Otherwise, Vietnam would fight until final victory [7, p. 56].

Furthermore, this activity presented a prime opportunity for Poland to enhance its international standing. Firstly, it affirmed Poland's capacity to play a more significant role in the political arena of socialist countries, and particularly in relation to the Soviet Union, as it gained independence in addressing international issues. This was one of the opportunities for Poland to break free from its Soviet-dominated foreign policy.

<sup>47</sup>Secret telegram from Maneli (Saigon) to Spasowski (Warsaw). 30 August 1963. Ciphergram No. 11266 // AMSZ. Z. 6/77. W. 102. T. 625.

<sup>48</sup>Secret telegram from Chodorek (Hanoi) to Morski (Warsaw). 25 November 1963. Ciphergram No. 15053 // Ibid. W. 96. T. 1368.

<sup>49</sup>Secret telegram from Jaszczuk (Moscow) to Rapacki (Warsaw). 13 February 1963. Ciphergram No. 2019 // Ibid. W. 100. T. 604.

The ambitions that the Poles harboured for this endeavour were vast; hence, preparations were initiated much earlier than those of other countries like India and Canada<sup>50</sup>.

Beyond the desire to achieve independence from the Soviet Union's strong influence, when invited to participate in matters concerning Korea and Indochina, the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs eagerly accepted. For them, this was an opportunity to be recognised

and to restore the position lost due to J. Stalin's policies [4, p. 60].

Through this engagement, Polish leaders could establish contacts and build relationships with Western countries, improving the diplomatic relations that already existed but were operating at a minimal level between Poland and the West, including the US [4, p. 60]. That objective was not pursued solely by Poland but also by many other socialist countries from the 1960s.

## Conclusions

Between 1963 and 1973, Poland played a significant role in efforts to maintain peace in Vietnam through diplomatic activities and international cooperation. As a member of the International commission for control and supervision of the Geneva accords on Indochina, Poland actively promoted dialogue and peaceful solutions to the escalating conflict in Vietnam. As a member of the commission, Poland, along with other members, oversaw compliance with the Geneva accords, including respect Poland's efforts during this period for borders and prevention of military escalation in the Indochina region clearly demonstrated its commitment to peaceful diplomacy and international responsibility. The Polish government seized every opportunity to call on the warring parties to engage in dialogue, avoid actions that escalated conflict, and minimise harm to the Vietnamese people. Furthermore, Polish delegations acted as intermediaries, not only monitoring violations but also consistently reporting to international organisations to draw global attention to the situation in Vietnam. In negotiations, Poland proposed numerous solutions to promote the peace process and endeavoured to persuade all parties of the necessity of a comprehensive ceasefire.

However, Poland's efforts also faced numerous challenges. In the context of the increasingly intense the

Vietnam War, the warring parties had different political objectives, creating many obstacles to the peace process. Although Poland's peace proposals were welcomed by some countries in the international community, the complex political situation in Indochina, coupled with the intervention of major powers, made peace difficult to achieve. Poland faced pressure from many sides but remained steadfast in its pursuit of stability and peace in the region. Through its persistent contributions to the commission and other reconciliation efforts, Poland left a significant mark on the peace process in Vietnam. While unable to completely prevent the escalation of the war, Poland's efforts helped to maintain an important channel of dialogue, laying the groundwork for future negotiations. Poland's active role in maintaining peace not only demonstrated the country's commitment to international issues but also reflected a deep-rooted vision of peace, contributing to regional stability and the building of a lasting peace. It can be assessed that Poland's efforts from 1963 to 1973 to maintain peace in Vietnam are a testament to the country's spirit of international cooperation and commitment to peace. Poland's contributions are not only of historical significance but also valuable lessons about the responsibility and role of nations in safeguarding global peace.

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Received 12.04.2025 / revised 07.11.2025 / accepted 30.12.2025.

<sup>50</sup>Pismo do ministra Mariana Naszkowskiego od dyrektora Departamentu V [tytuł aut.]. 20.VII.1954 // AMSZ. Z. 12. W. 62. T. 1226. K. 6.