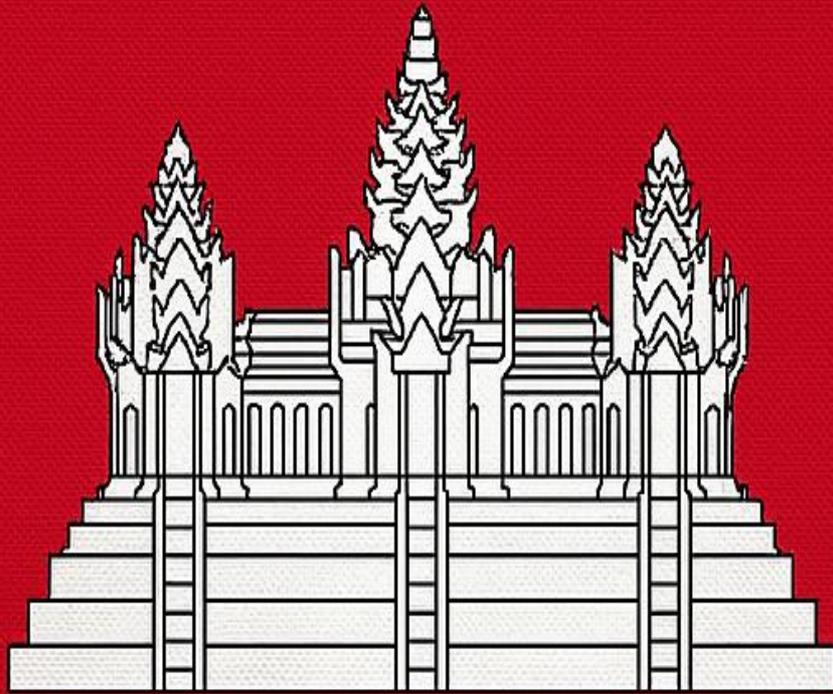




DISEC

The Question of conflict in Thailand and Cambodia





Committee: DISEC

Topic: The Question of the conflict in Thailand and Cambodia

Chair: Hamish Donaldson-Sinclair and Grace Gerrish

Summary

Thailand and Cambodia are involved in an armed border conflict along parts of their shared land frontier, especially around villages and historic Khmer temples. The clashes include artillery fire, small-arms fighting and landmines, and although a ceasefire was agreed in late 2025 it is fragile, with occasional violations and mutual accusations but no real troubles regarding this.

The dispute comes from old colonial-era maps and treaties (1904, 1907) that left some sections of the border poorly demarcated. Both countries claim certain areas, and nationalist politicians on each side used the dispute to build domestic support, leading to military buildups, and, in 2025, large-scale skirmishes that escalated into a serious conflict. The lack of clarity around the markings of the map led to cultural heritage disputes, notably in 2008-2011.

The fighting has displaced thousands of civilians on both sides of the border, destroyed homes and farmland, and left unexploded ordnance and new landmines in already poor rural provinces. It is also important for regional peace and security in Southeast Asia, because continued clashes could undermine ASEAN's aim of a peaceful, integrated region and draw in outside powers as mediators or supporters.

Who the issue affects

- Border communities in Thailand and Cambodia (farmers, villagers, local traders) who face shelling, evacuation and loss of livelihoods.
- The governments and armed forces of both countries, which must manage military operations, refugees and political pressure.
- Neighboring ASEAN states, which are concerned about instability and refugee flows, and about the precedent for resolving border disputes by force rather than negotiation.

Conclusion

Thailand and Cambodia have used ceasefire agreements, joint border committees and talks under ASEAN's umbrella to try to calm the situation. Observers from ASEAN have been deployed to monitor truces, and both sides have discussed using legal and technical processes to clarify and mark the border, but so far these measures have only paused, not fully ended, the conflict. The most recent one of these being August 2025 with the ceasefire.