

## 2. Korea, the US, the USSR and China: Superpower Relations (1947–1949), Containment, Peaceful Co-Existence, Sino-Soviet and Sino-US Relations, Détente

The Truman Doctrine in 1947 and the Berlin crisis in 1948 had a major impact on the continuation of the Cold War. We shall now study how Cold War tension spread to Asia.

### 1950: The Cold War Ignites the Korean War



Figure 2.1: Map of Korea

In early 1950, The National Security Council (NSC) delivered a classified report to the Truman administration known as the **NSC-68** report. It stated, “Soviet efforts are now directed towards the domination of the Eurasian land mass”<sup>27</sup> and recommended a massive US build-up of both conventional and nuclear arms. It can be seen as a response to an expected increase in Russian aggression as a nuclear power and to the ‘loss’ of China. It was not enough to have a dominant economy. The US needed to be militarily superior to meet the challenge of communism. The US should develop a hydrogen bomb. The problem was that this policy would require **higher taxes**, i.e., it would cause domestic problems for Truman. In June, North Korea suddenly attacked South Korea and this is considered as a turning point in

<sup>27</sup> See <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v01/d85> <Accessed 4 January 2016>

the Cold War. It was assumed that Stalin had ordered Kim to attack and Soviet aggression would follow in other countries, the Domino Theory. The recommendations of NSC-68 were now implemented and US defence spending went from \$13 billion in 1950 to \$50 billion within a few years. The Russian A-bomb, the ‘loss’ of China and the Korean War provided senator Joseph McCarthy with ammunition for his witch-hunt in the US in the early 1950s.

Why is this ‘crisis’ confined to only 1950? And if we write about the impact and consequences of the attack in 1950, should we describe events, which happened years later, as an ‘impact’ of the crisis in 1950?

**Some advice from the IB Curriculum manager:** “A Cold War crisis should be a flashpoint that involves a clear escalation in Cold War tension.” It is not necessary that the superpowers were directly involved but there needs to be involvement “of some kind.” Focus should be more on how the crisis involved superpower relations than the events that took place. It is also stated that “...it is better if it’s more sharply focused on a shorter time period. So for example, rather than using ‘the Korean War’, it would be better to use ‘The North Korean invasion of South Korea’ (1950) as the crisis. Then the focus can be on the invasion and the US/USSR reaction, rather than just treating it in exactly the same way as you would if you were doing the whole Korean War as an example of a 20th century war.” This leads us to describe ‘impact and consequences’ with a narrower time frame. So the Korean War will be described as:

1. Firstly, there will be writing about the causes, impact and consequences of only the invasion and the events in 1950, with the focus mentioned above. This to be used as an **example of a ‘crisis’ in Topic 12 Paper 2: The Cold War.**
2. Secondly, the text will continue with the whole war and its impact and consequences, so the Korean war can be used as an **example of a ‘war’ in Topic 11 Paper 2: ‘Causes and effects of 20th century wars’.**

So the Korean War can be used in two topics in Paper 2.

### Cold War Crisis 2: North Korean Invasion of South Korea 1950

Japan had annexed Korea in 1910. At the Cairo Conference in 1943, it had been decided that the country should be independent when the war was over. This decision was confirmed at the Potsdam Conference and that the US should control territories south of the 38th Parallel and the USSR north of the Parallel—in order to promote a development where Korea would be able handle its own affairs. The idea of unification never materialised. In the North the Soviets installed a communist regime under the leadership of Kim Il-sung. In the South, the Americans installed Syngman Rhee, an anti-communist and authoritarian leader. Both were very nationalistic and wanted to unite the country under their rule. In 1948, there were elections for a National Assembly but only in the South, where Syngman Rhee was elected President. The same year two separate Korean states were established. The division was deeply resented by both sides and the population wanted a unified Korea. In late 1948, Soviet troops left the North and in early 1949, American troops left the South. This development reminds us of the development in Germany—no co-operation was possible.

Kim Il-sung met Stalin in May 1949 and again in April 1950, in both occasions suggested that the North should invade the South. While Stalin had rejected the idea in 1949, he was more positive at the meeting in 1950. There were a number of reasons why this decision was made:

#### A. Why did Kim want to attack the South?

1. Kim can be seen as a Korean nationalist who wanted to unite his country, which had been **controlled by the Japanese between 1910 and 1945**, and then divided after the war. The Korean War can also be seen as a **civil war** where Kim Il-sung and Syngman Rhee wanted to **unite** their country. There had been constant border disputes between the two countries before the attack.
2. **Ideologically** he had reasons for ‘liberating’ the South from capitalism.



3. It can be argued that he **didn't expect the US** to support the South. The US Secretary of State, Dean Acheson held a speech in January that defined what should be considered as being within the US '**defence perimeter**'. Neither Korea nor Taiwan were included.
4. **Both US and Russian troops had left** Korea but Stalin had provided Kim with arms. In June 1950 alone, the USSR provided the North with 258 tanks, 178 warplanes and 1,600 artillery pieces.<sup>27</sup> Kim had strong reasons to believe in a brief conflict.
5. The CIA estimated that there were 600,000 active members in the Communist Party in the South, or 10% of the population. They would support the forces from the North.

### B. Why did Stalin accept the attack?

1. Both Kim and perhaps Mao would become **dependent on the USSR**.
2. It would expand and strengthen **communism in Asia**. A united communist Korea would also make Russia's border more secure.
3. If Stalin had rejected it, **Kim might turn to Mao**.
4. Some have argued that it was a way to divert attention from Europe.
5. It was not expected that the US would defend the South. But if they did, it was not only negative. The attack would entice the US into a war.

On 25th June 1950, troops from the North crossed the 38th Parallel. On the same day the Americans brought the issue to the Security Council in the UN. The USSR did not attend the meeting. They were able to get support for a resolution of withdrawal. The Soviet boycott was due to the fact that communist China was not allowed to represent China in the UN—Taiwan was. The Korean War was technically a UN operation and 16 countries participated but it was mainly an American operation with 260,000 American troops compared to 35,000 men from other nations. These troops and the South Korean army were placed under US General Douglas MacArthur who was accountable to President Truman.

- In September the North had conquered the whole of South Korea except for the Southeast corner.
- In the same month, MacArthur launched a daring counter-attack from the sea just south of the 38th Parallel at **Inchon**—behind the enemy lines—in an attempt to cut off troops from the north.
- Soon the South was recaptured and Truman decided to cross the 38th Parallel to capture the North, to roll back the Communists. If this had succeeded it would be the first area to be 'liberated' from communist control.
- On 19 October, 300,000 **Chinese 'volunteers' crossed the Yalu river**, the border between Korea and China, and the Korean War had reached a critical point. In December, UN forces lost 11,000 men in two days and in one of these two days, the Americans lost 3,000 soldiers. Chinese casualties were far higher. The UN forces were pushed back across the 38th Parallel.

### C. Why did the US support the South?

1. **The Truman Doctrine, the policy of containment, the NSC-68 report and the Domino Theory**, all indicated that the US must take action. We can also add the experiences from the 1930s where appeasement had failed and encouraged Hitler to make new moves. It was a question of credibility and according to Cold War beliefs, aggression from Communists was seen as a test of US determination to defend the free world.
2. Truman was under **domestic pressure** due to Eastern Europe's loss to communism between 1945 and 1948, the 'loss' of China and the Russian A-bomb in 1949.

3. The Cold War had clearly turned more global and **Asia** was now a trouble spot with Mao in China, problems in Korea and the French being embroiled in a full scale war against communist guerrillas in **Vietnam**. Truman said: "*If we stand up to them like we did in Greece three years ago, they won't take any next steps.*"<sup>28</sup>

### D. Why did China support North Korea?

1. Mao and Kim had fought together in the Chinese civil war. It was a way of paying Kim back.
2. **Mao felt threatened** when the UN forces, dominated by Americans, were close to the Chinese border. This was 1950, only months after the Civil War had ended on the mainland. China saw it as very dangerous with US troops at Yalu river—it might spur a renewal of the Civil War with a possible US intervention.
3. Mao clearly wanted to play the role of **international communist leader**.

### Impact and Significance of the 1950 Crisis

#### A. To the South and the North

Estimates will be described later about the total victims from the two Korean states. But from the beginning this was a 'total war' to these two states.

#### B. To the US

- By taking actions in Korea, Truman had shown that he was going to live up to his **Truman Doctrine and the idea of containment**. It was a very important signal both in the US and in the outside world.
- The UN had been ignored by the US during the Berlin Crisis. On the day the North attacked, Truman decided to bring this question to the **UN**. The US thereby declared that Korea should be considered as being within the **US defence perimeter—a new policy**.
- When the conflict started the US moved the Seventh Fleet into the **Taiwan Strait** to discourage the spread of military conflict in the region, i.e., to prevent a Chinese attack.
- The US started to support the French economically in **Indochina**.
- Chinese military intervention had major consequences and would affect **Sino-American relations** for decades.
- It was considered in the US that the attack from the North was carried out on direct orders from the USSR/Stalin. This had major consequences.
- Truman had been reluctant to implement the **NSC-68 recommendations**. The attack changed this and he signed it in **September 1950** and as a result defence spending tripled as a percentage of the gross domestic product between 1950 and 1953 (from 5% to 14.2%). The NSC68 recommendations became US policy.
- But finally we must emphasise how the war was carried out. After the attempt to conquer the North in October 1950 and when the Chinese entry finally led to a stalemate around the 38th Parallel again, **the US fought a limited war**. There was no question of conquering the North, atomic weapons were not used and the USSR and China should not necessarily be provoked.

#### C. To the USSR

- With both **North Korea and China** embroiled in a war against one of the superpowers, both states were **tied to the USSR**.
- The USSR was formally **neutral** during the war. While Stalin **limited** Soviet support, he asked Mao to support the North in the event of American participation, before the conflict started. He also asked Mao for armed support to the North when UN forces headed for the Yalu river in the autumn. Stalin limited Soviet support to arms, advisors and a few pilots.
- **Relations to the US** were very strained since the US believed that Stalin had ordered the attack.

<sup>28</sup> Edwards, O., *The USA and the Cold War 1945–63*, p. 68.



- The US was involved in an armed conflict while the USSR was neutral. The former Soviet foreign minister Andre Gromyko later admitted that the Soviet boycott of the meeting in the Security Council was a deliberate move to entice the US into the war.<sup>29</sup> If so, **Soviet policies dragged America into the war.**

#### D. To China

- The US decision to protect **Taiwan** was seen as interference in Chinese **internal affairs**. With the US fleet defending Taiwan it was impossible for mainland China to conquer and finish the Civil War.
- That 300,000 Chinese ‘volunteers’ attacked the UN forces was probably the most serious crisis during the whole Cold War. It would take decades to normalise the relation to the UN.
- **China gained reputation** from many smaller states in the Third World by defending a small nation against a superpower.
- By involving herself actively in the conflict she became closely **tied to the USSR**.

#### E. To the UN

- It was good that the UN had been able to take action. One of the main reasons for the failure of the League of Nations was that no actions had been taken when Japan had invaded nearby Manchuria in 1931.
- On the other hand, the organisation was seen as a ‘tool of capitalism’ by the communist camp.

#### The continuation of the war:

1. The Chinese forces soon pushed the UN forces across the 38th Parallel again and in 1951 a stalemate was established around the 38th Parallel.
2. Truman decided **to continue to ‘limit’** his war aims, not to conquer the North. This was deeply resented by MacArthur who wanted to widen the conflict and he publicly criticised the President and called his ‘limited’ strategy a form of appeasement. MacArthur wanted to attack China and use soldiers from Taiwan against them. He also issued an unauthorised nuclear threat on China. In April 1951 Truman **dismissed MacArthur** who returned to the US, seen as a hero by many.
3. Peace talks began in July 1951 but the war dragged on for another two years around the 38th Parallel.
4. An **armistice** was not signed until **1953**, when Stalin had died and Eisenhower had succeeded Truman.

#### Impact and Significance of the Korean War

There are many different estimates in terms of the victims of the Korean War.

#### South and North Korea, 1950–1953:

1. **415,000 South Koreans** were killed and **500,000 in the North in 1950–1953** (2/3 of the population lived in the South)
2. Five million Koreans were homeless, and most of the infrastructure and industries were destroyed. To Korea it was a **‘total war’**.
3. Politically the country remained **divided** and Kim imposed a Soviet style system in the North. In the South, Syngman Rhee established a right-wing dictatorship.
4. The hostilities between the two Koreas resulted in both countries using vast resources to arm themselves in the future. Resources which could have been used for other purposes.

<sup>29</sup> Lynch, M., *The People's Republic of China 1949–76* (London: Hodder Education, 2008) p. 88.

#### China:

1. The US made a pledge to defend Taiwan. The fact that China had entered the war, fighting UN/US troops, led to hostilities between the two countries that were not resolved until the 1970s. It **isolated China diplomatically** for years. US commitments in Asia after the war also threatened the security of China (see effects to the US).
2. It tied China to the USSR. In 1950 a Sino-Soviet Friendship Treaty was signed.
3. **China lost around 360,000 soldiers.** (difficult to estimate)

#### The USSR:

1. There were now two communist states in Asia—North Korea and China—closely **tied to the USSR**.
2. The most important consequence was that the war led to a far-reaching **military build-up** from both sides. In 1953, the USSR had built their first hydrogen bomb. It has been argued by many that the Russians could not bear the cost of this in the long term. The Korean War can be seen as a major starting point of a militarisation of the Cold War, which resulted in a larger proportion of the USSR's GNP being used for military expenditure.
3. Korea affected the Cold War in Europe. The US committed itself even more to the defence of Germany and Western Europe. This would lead to further commitments by the USSR. When Germany was made a full member of NATO in 1955. The USSR formed the Warsaw Pact. It was all a greater and more costly escalation.

#### The US:

1. **33,000 men were killed.**
2. It deeply affected public opinion in the US. It is no coincidence that Senator Joseph McCarthy started his witch-hunt for Communists in the US during these years.
3. The war was an important reason for the election of a Republican as US President after some 20 years. Eisenhower and his Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, rejected containment and fighting ‘limited wars’. They introduced a policy of possible ‘massive retaliation’—the use of nuclear arms and ‘roll-back’—a policy of ‘liberating’ communist-controlled areas.
4. As mentioned before, the **NSC-68 report was implemented** and a substantial increase in military expenditure took place. US expenditure rose from \$13 billion to \$50 billion per year during the war. It never dropped below \$40 billions for the rest of the century. NATO was strengthened economically. Decisions were made to re-arm West Germany and let her contribute with troops, to become a full member. A peace treaty was concluded with Japan in 1951 and the country became the key in the US system of alliances in Asia. In 1954, the Americans created the **SEATO** (the South East Treaty Organization) made up by the US, France, Britain, Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Thailand and Pakistan, in an attempt to fight communism in Asia.
5. The US started supporting the French in their war in **Vietnam**. But it was not total support.
6. When the French withdrew from the war in 1954, the Americans were bearing 70% of the cost of the French Indochina War. But it was the Korean lesson that made Eisenhower introduce his New Look, a reluctance to fight limited wars in the Third World. Korea affected both Eisenhower and Kennedy in their Vietnam policy and their rejection of sending combat troops.
7. The US committed itself to protecting **Taiwan** from an attack by Communist-controlled China.



#### Author's Tip

Important: If we go beyond 1950, facts can be used to describe a ‘war’ in topic 11.



**The UN:**

1. The UN had shown that it could take action. One of the major reasons for the failure of the League of Nations had been the inability to take action against Japanese aggression in the same area, **Manchuria**, in 1931.
2. It was partly seen as a 'tool of capitalism' within the communist camp, which weakened its authority.

**Some Concluding Remarks about the Significance of the Korean War**

It is clear that the Korean War had a major impact on the Cold War. What had been declared or indicated in the Truman Doctrine from 1947 was now implemented. It marks a point where a major escalation took place. The Cold War had been made a 'hot war' which was fought by 'client states'. It is probably correct to conclude that the Chinese entry into the Korean War was one of the most critical moments of the Cold War. It has been argued that the Berlin Blockade 'drew the line' in Europe in that it resulted in two German states and the formation of NATO. **The Korean War had the same importance in Asia and led to major commitments from both sides, in Korea, to Japan, Taiwan, China and Vietnam.**

**Student Activities**

The Korean War can be used as an example in Topic 11 'Causes and Effects of 20th Century Wars' and in Topic 12 'The Cold War'. When studying the Cold War, the IB syllabus states that candidates shall undertake a detailed study of two Cold War crises from different regions and **examine and compare the causes, impact and significance** of the two crises. The syllabus states specifically that the attack of the North in 1950 can be used as an example of a 'crisis'—**but it should be limited to 1950.**

Let's make an attempt to answer essay questions. You will find a suggested answer plan to the question on the next page. But before reading it: try first to write your own outline and then compare the answers.

The first question relates to the syllabus asking for an analysis of two Cold War crises from two different regions. We have now outlined two such crises from two regions: The Berlin Crisis from 1948 to 1949 and the Korean War 1950. This gives us an opportunity to write an outline to a question about these two crises. **The syllabus specifically asks for a comparison of causes, impact and significance of the two crises.** A 'comparison' means that you show 'similarities' and 'differences'. A challenging question could be **'Compare and contrast the origins of two Cold War crises'**. A 'compare and contrast-question' is not easy. There are so many aspects to cover and try to do this and compare your answer with the outline, which follows.

Another question will be: **'Evaluate the impact upon the course of the Cold War of two crises, each chosen from a different region'**. In Paper 2, questions will be 'open', i.e., you choose your own examples. We now have the opportunity to choose Berlin and Korea. In this question asking for the 'course of the Cold War', we go beyond 1950.

Finally we make a comparison about the impact and significance: **'Compare and contrast the impact and significance of two Cold War crises each chosen from a different region'**. Again we have an opportunity to use Berlin and Korea, in this question limited to 1950 in Korea.

**Exercise 5:** Compare and contrast the origins of two Cold War crises.

(Structure: show the similarities and the differences between the two crises. Use Berlin and Korea as examples.)

**Similarities:**

1. It was a **typical Cold War conflict where the two superpowers took actions in two client states.**
2. In both conflicts it can be argued that the communist side or **Stalin initiated the conflict.** The currency reform was just an excuse used by Stalin to finally settle the German or Berlin problem. Kim would never attack without Stalin's approval.
3. Both states remained divided as a result of the Cold War. The division was initially a result from the conferences during the war and the aim was to administrate the occupation. Taking into account that the superpowers had totally different aims in Germany and Korea, **the divisions were a very important reason for the crises.**
4. The Berlin Crisis in 1948 and the Korean Crisis 1950 were **both conflicts where Truman's new policies were tested. The Truman Doctrine** was based on the idea of containment, i.e., not to allow a further expansion of communism. If the Americans had remained inactive during those two tests, the new policy would be considered as worthless. By opening an airlift and by sending troops to Korea, Truman showed that he was going to live up to his declarations.
5. In both conflicts there were aspects which suggested that the superpowers were not fully prepared militarily when the conflicts started. Both Soviet and US troops had left Korea in June 1950 and the US did not have full protection of the western zones in Germany in 1948.
6. It can be argued that there was a **'Stalin miscalculation'** in both conflicts. He hoped to get full control of Berlin, which he didn't. He hoped that South Korea would be conquered, which didn't happen.

**Differences:**

1. The Korean War started with an **armed conflict.** The Berlin Crisis did not. So the very nature of the start of the conflict differed fundamentally.
2. **The aims also differed.** When the North attacked the South in 1950 the aim was to conquer the South. In Germany, Stalin's primary aim was to get a solution to the Berlin problem. If that was possible, Stalin would be happy with the West calling off the currency reform, but most likely he realised that they would not.
3. Truman decided not to involve the **UN** in Germany. The Americans brought the Korean question to the Security Council the very same day as the North attacked.
4. The Korean War has, by many, been described as a Civil War which did get outside support. Both Kim Il-sung and Syngman Rhee were Nationalists who wanted to unite their countries and there had been constant **border disputes in 1948 and 1949** killing thousands of Koreans. There were no such disputes in Germany.
5. Stalin had probably other aims than just conquering the South in Korea. An armed conflict would **tie both North Korea and China closer to the USSR.**
6. **Mao's involvement** in Korea had no equivalent in Germany. To Mao, it was a question of Chinese security when the Americans reached the Yalu river. But most likely, it also had to do with Mao's ambition to be an international leader.
7. Some have argued that Stalin saw a war in Korea as a conflict which would **divert attention** from Cold War tension in Europe.
8. By boycotting the meeting in the Security Council, Stalin tricked the US into the war in Korea.

**Conclusion:** Summarise the most important similarities and differences.

**Exercise 6:** Discuss the outcomes of the Berlin Crisis in 1948 and the Korean War.

(You cannot limit this to 1950—the question asks for the 'Korean War'.)

**Impact of the Berlin Crisis 1948–1949:**

1. It is normally considered that the Berlin Crisis **'drew the line'** of the Cold War in Europe, i.e., with this conflict both sides committed themselves fully to the conflict.
2. As a result, a number of European states including the US and Canada formed **NATO** in 1949. It was a full military alliance and West Germany was under NATO protection.
3. With the crisis Stalin and the USSR had to accept that parts of **Berlin belonged to the West**, with all future implications.
4. The idea of forming a separate and independent West German state had been discussed before the crisis. However, the crisis made it fully clear

that no meaningful cooperation was possible. As a result **two German states** were formed in 1949. Both states were organised in line with the political block to which they belonged.

5. To the US the crisis was a **propaganda victory** and the president had lived up to his policy of containing communism.
6. The Berlin Crisis, together with other events during this period, convinced both sides that meaningful cooperation had been brought to an end. It led to a **major military build up.** It is interesting to study the size of the US army

1938	1945	1948	1951	1956
185,000	8,268,000	554,000	1,532,000	1,026,000

(Continued)



**Exercise 6:** Discuss the outcomes of the Berlin Crisis in 1948 and the Korean War. (Continued)

With the advent of the Cold War we can see how the size of the US army has grown. Before the war it was only 185,000. In 1948, it has been reduced considerably. In the 1950s, we can see a new peace time situation with a much larger army, which is explained by the Cold War. Both the Berlin Crisis and Korea are normally considered as the events which made this possible. **The Truman Doctrine and NSC 68 recommendations could be implemented due to these two crises. The USSR also had to devote resources to the Cold War.**

**Impact of the Korean War:**

1. To Korea, the war was a disaster. Between 1950 and 1953, **415,000 South Koreans** were killed and **500,000 in the North** (2/3 of the population that lived in the South). Five million Koreans were homeless, and most of the infrastructure and industries were destroyed. The war resulted in a divided Korea.
2. This conflict '**drew the line**' in the Cold War in Asia and had a number of consequences to other states than Korea.
3. **China** was to some extent tied to the USSR. As a result of her involvement where she was fighting UN forces, she became **diplomatically isolated**. We believe that around 300,000 Chinese soldiers were killed.
4. The US started to support the **French in Vietnam in 1950**. She gave guarantees to defend **Taiwan**.

The US also started building up Japan and making the country a key ally in Asia. In 1954 the Americans created the **SEATO** (the South East Treaty Organization) made up by the US, France, Britain, Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Thailand and Pakistan, in an attempt to fight communism in Asia.

5. It can be argued that the Korean War also had **domestic consequences in the US**. It brought a Republican to power for the first time in 20 years and containment was replaced by a declared policy of a 'rollback' of communism (never materialised). The war deeply affected the opinion in the US and senator McCarthy attacked Washington for being 'soft on communism'.
6. The USSR war was also more committed to Asia. Both the regime in **North Korea and China were now more dependent on the USSR**. In 1950, China and the USSR signed a friendship treaty.
7. The Korean War had shown that the **UN** was able to take actions. This had not been the case when Japan had invaded Manchuria in 1931. In the communist camp the UN was seen as a 'tool of capitalism'.

**Conclusion:** Even though the nature of these two conflicts was very different, one was an armed conflict, the impact and significance are very similar: it 'drew the line' of the Cold War in two parts of the world. These two conflicts were of major importance for the development of the Cold War.

**Exercise 7:** Compare and contrast the impact and significance of two Cold War crises each chosen from a different region.

(Structure: Show the similarities and the differences. Use Berlin and Korea as your examples but it must be limited to 1948/1949 and 1950.)

**Similarities:**

1. Both these conflicts are normally considered as having a **profound effect** on the course of the Cold War. **In September 1950, Truman signed the NSC68 report.**
2. Both the **USSR and the US were the key drivers** and policymakers in these crises even though it took place in two other countries.
3. In both conflicts the superpowers **limited their actions**, i.e., didn't allow the conflicts to escalate into an armed conflict between the superpowers.
4. Taking into account why these crises actually started, nothing was achieved.
5. Both conflicts led to the superpowers committing themselves even more to their allies—many examples can be mentioned.

**Differences:**

1. The Korean War was an **armed conflict**, Berlin was not.
2. As a result of the crisis in Germany, **two German states and NATO** were formed in 1949.

3. In Korea, the **UN** was used as a tool. Truman chose not to use the UN in 1948.
4. With the Korean conflict came immediate commitments from the superpowers. Examples of this were the US support to the French in the **Indochina War and a US pledge to defend Taiwan.**
5. **China** involved herself militarily in Korea—nothing similar happened in Germany.
6. If Gromyko was right, **Stalin tricked the US into getting involved** in the war by boycotting the meeting at the Security Council. Stalin was definitely not planning for an armed conflict in Berlin.
7. The states involved in the two crises differed a lot. There was no similarity to the UN coalition and China in Berlin. That 300,000 Chinese soldiers attacked the UN/US was of course very serious.

**Conclusion:** Similarity: These two conflicts had both the superpowers as the drivers but in both they limited their actions to avoid a direct confrontation.

Difference: In Korea, the UN was involved and it led to an armed conflict. In Korea many states were directly involved, but was not the case in Berlin.

**Two Cold War Leaders**

The syllabus also asks how **different leaders from different regions affected the course and the development of the Cold War**. When 1953 had come to an end, we have the opportunity to assess two of the key figures in the Cold War, **Stalin and Truman**. The guide will present two summaries about their policies and contributions to the development of the Cold War:

**Cold War Leader 1: Josef Stalin Secretary General and Soviet Leader, 1929–1953**

The Soviet Union emerged from WWII as one of the two **superpowers**. It can of course be debated how much the USSR deserved this title, taking into account the enormous damage that had been caused by the war. But the USSR and the Red Army controlled Eastern Europe.

1945

At Yalta, in February 1945, Stalin committed himself to free elections in countries liberated from Nazi control. The **Declaration of Liberated Europe** was one achievement at Yalta. Others were that the USSR promised to join the UN and to help the US in defeating Japan. Agreements were also made about post-war Germany and the zonal division of the country. In July, when it was time for the Potsdam conference Western leaders accused the Soviets of violating the agreement made at Yalta over free elections and there were **sharp exchanges** over the development in countries controlled by the Red Army.

One major source of tension after the war was the future of Germany. While **Stalin feared a German recovery** and wanted to prevent this with all possible means, the US came to realise that a German recovery was vital for a working economy in Europe. Stalin also wanted control of countries in Eastern Europe, which traditionally had been used when the USSR had been attacked by Western powers.

1946

When Churchill delivered his Iron Curtain Speech in 1946, Stalin tightened his grip on Eastern Europe.

1947

The next year Truman issued his **Truman Doctrine** and **Marshall Aid**. Stalin saw this as an attempt to control countries economically, which would later lead to political control. The satellites in Eastern Europe were forced to reject American aid.

1948

In 1948, all states in Eastern Europe were under Soviet control except for Yugoslavia. Stalin could not allow this form of 'national communism' and withdrew his economic and military advisers and the country was expelled from Cominform, the international communist organisation, accused of 'bourgeois nationalism'. The Eastern Bloc now announced an economic blockade and broke off diplomatic relations, but Tito and his regime had considerable national support and didn't share a border with the USSR. The US offered considerable financial assistance. The outcome of this crisis led to the creation of a **non-aligned, non-Stalinist, communist state**. **Czechoslovakia** was another satellite. A coalition ruled the country including non-Communists. After disputes in the government over nationalisation of industries, the non-Communists resigned. When elections were held, the Communists won 237 of 300 seats in parliament and soon **all other parties were dissolved**. The only country in the Eastern Bloc with a genuine multi-party system had now been transformed to a communist single-party state.

The final crisis in 1948 was the Berlin Crisis. When it became obvious to Stalin that the Western powers were planning to form a separate West German state, and when a currency reform in the Western zone was announced, the Soviet Union closed off all land routes to West Berlin. The USSR needed to solve the Berlin problem where hundreds of thousands fled the Eastern zone every year. The US and Britain opened an airlift lasting 10 months which meant that Berlin and its 2.5 million inhabitants survived the blockade. Both the coup in Czechoslovakia and the **Berlin Blockade** were seen as proof of Soviet aggression.