

Saigon, Viet-Nam
February 26, 1975

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Dear Mr. President;

President Ford has asked me to transmit to you the following message.

"Dear Mr. President:

Your thoughtful letters of January 24 and 25 come at a time when Viet-Nam is very much on my mind and on the minds of other people here and throughout the world. I share your concern about North Viet-Nam's failure to observe the most fundamental provisions of the Paris Agreement and about the heightened level of North Vietnamese military pressure. I wish to assure you that this Government will continue to press for the full implementation of this Agreement.

Once again the South Vietnamese people and Armed Forces are effectively demonstrating their determination to resist Hanoi's attacks. Despite your existing limitations on ammunition and other supplies, I was particularly impressed by the performance of your forces at the Phuoc Long province capital and at Ba Den Mountain, where they were overwhelmed only by greatly superior numbers after being cut off from resupply and reinforcement.

Even though your offers to reinstitute negotiations have been rejected thus far, they clearly demonstrate that it is the communist side -- not the Republic of Viet-Nam --

His Excellency
Nguyen Van Thieu
President of the Republic of Viet-Nam
Saigon

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which is prolonging the war. We continue to believe that implementation of the Paris Agreement, with direct negotiations between the Vietnamese parties, is the quickest, most appropriate, and most effective way to end the bloodshed in Viet-Nam. We strongly support your efforts to resume negotiations and will make every effort to provide the assistance that is so necessary to your struggle until peace comes.

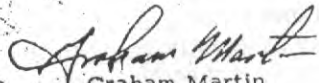
The path to peace is never easy. It has been extraordinarily long and difficult in Viet-Nam. But I remain hopeful that if we persevere we will yet reach our objective of a fair peace, a lasting peace and a peace which is consistent with the will of the South Vietnamese people -- justifying the sacrifices of the Vietnamese and American peoples.

Sincerely,

Gerald R. Ford"

With renewed assurances of my highest consideration,

Sincerely,


Graham Martin