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TEXT OF MME BINH'S STATEMENT AT 121ST PARIS SESSION

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[Statement by Minister Nguyen Thi Binh, head of the PRGRSV delegation, at the 121st plenary session of the Paris conference on Vietnam, 15 July 1971]

[Text] Ladies and gentlemen, .

Two weeks have passed since our seven-point peace plan was presented at this conference. Like the Vietnamese people, the American people and world public opinion are awaiting the serious and positive response of the U.S. Government to these correct proposals, full of good will, in order to put an early end to the war and restore peace in Vietnam.

In Point 1, we have pointed out: If the U.S. Government sets a deadline for the total withdrawal of U.S. troops and those of the foreign countries in the U.S. camp from South Vietnam in 1971, the parties will at the same time agree on the modalities of guaranteeing the safety of this total troop withdrawal and of the release of captured militarymen of all parties and of civilians captured in the war, so that they may all soon return to their families. These two operations will begin on the same date and will end on the same date. An agreement on these modalities is not difficult, and can be quickly achieved.

Our proposals fully respond to the aspirations of the American people who want their sons and brothers to be reunited with their families soon.

The U.S. Government has often said that they are "anxious" for the safety of U.S. servicemen and "concerned" about the fate of captured U.S. militarymen. Then what prevents them from announcing a deadline for the troop withdrawal, as proposed by our side, in order to quickly realize the American people's aspirations? The refusal to set a date for the total troop withdrawal in 1971 means that the Nixon administration does not yet want to end the war, and that its statements about its desire to see an early release of captured militarymen are sheer hypocrisy. Many persons in U.S. political circles and relatives of captured U.S. militarymen have also said: If the U.S. Government does not accept the PRGRSV's proposals, the main reason is because it does not want to give up the Nguyen Van Thieu administration of hirelings.

As for the question of an administration in South Vietnam, we have pointed out: To respect the South Vietnamese people's right to self-determination, the U.S. Government must put an end to its interference in the internal affairs of the South Vietnamese people, cease backing the present warlike power-wielding group headed by Nguyen Van Thieu, and stop all maneuvers, including tricks of elections, aimed at maintaining this lackey. The political, social, and religious forces in South Vietnam will, by various means, form in Saigon a new administration favoring peace, independence, neutrality, and democracy. The PRGRSV will immediately enter into talks with this new administration to restore peace and achieve national concord. The PRG and the new administrations will agree to the formation of a broad government of national concord to hold free and democratic general elections in South Vietnam.

The Nixon administration has repeatedly stated that it "respects" the South Vietnamese people's right to freely decide for themselves their political future. Why does it not respond to our proposal in Point 2, a proposal approved and supported by broad segments of the South Vietnamese people? Meanwhile, it supports

and protects Nguyen Van Thieu, who has resorted to all means to terrorize and suppress all segments of the population and those who oppose him. The Saigon press has continually exposed the dictatorial Nguyen Van Thieu group's wicked maneuvers, from the passage of a fascist "election law," briberies, crude intimidation, and assassinations to orders given to his henchmen in various localities to prepare fraudulent operations such as changes of votes, poll boxes, registration books, and so forth. The U.S. press also affirms: "No one has any real prospects of being elected without U.S. support... U.S. intervention is a truth, an implacable truth" (New York POST, 24 May 1971). Thus, the Nixon administration is still plotting to force the South Vietnamese people to accept a lackey administration of the United States, disregarding the aspirations of the population.

The spirit and letter of the seven-point statement of the PRGRSV are clear. The content of the questions raised is correct, logical, and reasonable; the attitude adopted is flexible and full of good will.

We want that peace be re-established as soon as possible, so that the countless sufferings and deaths caused to our people during the past dozens of years by the U.S. war of aggression will cease. We do not want that hundreds of thousands of young Americans be bogged down in South Vietnam, to be killed or disabled there in an unjust war that goes against the U.S. people's legitimate interests.

However, to realize this desire, there must be good will on both sides.

At present, while the United States is multiplying the mopping-up operations and bombings in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, the U.S. delegate to this conference tries to obscure our will for peace and to fallaciously pretend that we "still have no intention of ending the fighting." He pretends that we advanced a "categorical decision" aimed "merely at fulfilling" our own "criteria."

But how can one qualify as "categorical decision" the fact that the Vietnamese people demand an end to the presence of foreign aggressor troops on their territory, the cessation of massacres perpetrated against them and of the destruction caused to their hamlets and villages? How can one consider as a demand aiming at "fulfilling" our "criteria" the fact that the South Vietnamese people demand that the United States cease supporting the warlike group rigged up by itself, with a view to forming an administration that conforms with their pressing aspirations for peace and national concord?

By demanding that the Vietnamese people "change" their legitimate demands with regard to their national rights and their right to self-determination, at a time when the United States still clings to its position of colonialist aggressor and persists in the "Vietnamization of the war," the Nixon administration demands that the Vietnamese people renounce their independence and freedom and accept the U.S. neocolonialist domination in South Vietnam. Neither the Vietnamese people, nor fair and just public opinion in the world will accept such an absurd demand.

We hope that the U.S. Government will see reality and seriously respond to our positive and constructive proposals, so that the United States can withdraw itself as soon as possible from this unpopular war--costly in manpower and material--and so that the South Vietnam problem may be settled in accordance with the interests of the Vietnamese and U.S. peoples and in accordance with the interests of peace in Indochina and the rest of the world.

By prolonging the war of aggression and by hindering serious negotiations, the Nixon administration goes against the interests of the United States and it will not be able, in any way, to evade its responsibility should this conference fail to move forward.