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# STATEMENT

BY

Mr. NGUYỄN-XUÂN-PHONG

DEPUTY LEADER OF THE DELEGATION

OF

THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM

AT THE **164<sup>th</sup>** PLENARY SESSION OF THE PARIS MEETINGS ON VIET-NAM

OCTOBER 26, 1972

164th PLENARY SESSION.  
OCTOBER 26, 1972.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I hope that, at today's session, your side will join ours in a meaningful exchange of views on substantive matters which are still confronting us.

In the current context, I wish to raise the following issues which, I am sure you will agree with me, cannot be dealt with in general terms and require more detailed discussions and examination.

I.- First of all, it is obvious that the most urgent problem for you as well as for us is to find ways to put a rapid end to the fighting. Our side has always stated that it is only in the silence of the guns that all the parties concerned can fully devote themselves to the difficult task of searching for an overall solution to the conflict satisfactory to everybody.

We regret that you have not yet come to share this view with us and still consider it necessary to intensify your military efforts which, by the way, are far from producing the military and political effects you hope for but only compel our side to carry out its counter measures. This is deplorable and uncalled for state of affairs and it is in the mutual interest of both sides to bring an end to it as soon as possible.

Our side has sought an end to the killing through an internationally supervised ceasefire throughout Indochina which we believe will not cause prejudice to any party, a ceasefire which neither side can take advantage of to promote its own military position or to acquire political gains at the expense of the other. We continue to believe that there is no other

way more objective and more equitable to conceive of the ceasefire.

Considering the nature and various aspects of the current hostilities, our side has stressed the necessity to have the ceasefire extended throughout Indochina, covering all the belligerent forces which are present and ending all acts of force in any form.

And I also think that, like us, you are looking for a definitive cessation of the hostilities and not merely a simple truce which would lead to future conflicts more bloody and more devastating. This means that, to be effective, any ceasefire must include formal guarantees ensuring its proper implementation by all the parties concerned. That is the reason why our side has proposed to place the ceasefire under international supervision. At today's session, you may wish to discuss with us details related to the ceasefire as well as other measures aimed at providing effective guarantees for its implementation. Our side is prepared to enter into such discussions immediately.

And as we have repeatedly said in the past, we strongly believe that an early ceasefire will create a beneficial climate of detente and will enable all the parties concerned to resolve other problems of substance speedily, free from the pressure of the battlefield.

II.- There is, however, another substantive matter which remains unsettled and which constitutes an essential element in the mechanism of any peace plan : this is the problem caused by the presence and the activities of North Vietnamese troops operating outside their borders.

Considering that Hanoi's war apparatus is reaching deeply into Laos, Cambodia and South Viet-Nam and that the quasi-totality of North Viet-Nam's regular army is deployed on the territories of these countries, it is necessary, on the military level as well as in the political context, that this problem receive a clear-cut answer on your part.

The process by which we hope to bring about an end to the war will be unrealistic and unworkable if your side continues to evade this substantive question. We still consider your past declarations on this matter elusive and unsatisfactory.

We very much hope that you will spare us the ritual reading of these same declarations and that, at today's session, you will give us a more specific indication as to the role and the position in the process of restoring peace which you plan to give to the 14 North Vietnamese divisions currently operating in South Viet-Nam, Laos and Cambodia, because, as I just said a while ago, the problem posed by the presence and the activities of these North Vietnamese divisions which are currently operating outside their own borders constitutes an essential element in the process of ending the hostilities definitively and of restoring genuine and lasting peace in Indochina.

III.- Lastly, on the generally recognized complex issue of the South Vietnamese political problem, I wish to dwell on various fundamental differences which are separating your position from ours.

The problem which is facing us here, as we have repeatedly stated at this meeting table, is that of guaranteeing the right of the South Vietnamese population to decide its own future by itself through democratic means without threat or coercion of any kind and free from any outside interference.

Although you do not cease to pay lip service to the right to self-determination of the South Vietnamese population, the political solution which you have put forth is far from dealing correctly with this right but is concerned rather with the question of power, more precisely, with how you wish to have power put in your hands, something which to date you have failed to acquire by the force of arms and for which you lack popular support.

Thus, to begin with, you have already evaded the issue at hand and wrongly formulated this South Vietnamese political problem.

Nevertheless, let us proceed further with the examination of your proposed political solution :

The political process which you are advocating begins, first of all, with measures aimed at disrupting the entire administrative and state organization currently existing in South Viet-Nam. The easily foreseeable consequences of this would be the neutralization of the political forces which could exercise an effective opposition to the realization of your schemes. Only under this aspect, your political solution is already unrealistic and unacceptable.

Recently, one of your leaders in Hanoi has reportedly said however that any solution to the conflict must reflect the realities of the situation. No one is denying this but your proposals unfortunately fail to express the most obvious realities in South Viet-Nam :

- what realities would give you the right to demand that a so-called "3-segment government of national concord" be arbitrarily set up and imposed on the South Vietnamese population ?

- what realities would give you the right to acquire or to participate in power outright before the South Vietnamese population has an opportunity to express itself on this very question of your political importance and status within the national community ?

- from what realities do you derive the criteria according to which you claim that power in South Viet-Nam must be divided between this group and that group, one way or another, even going so far as to fix both the number and the relative importance of the participants in the so-called 3 equal segments?

Even with the greatest effort of imagination, we really fail to see the "realities" which would give you the right to consider power as your own private property and to dispose of it as you please.

Therefore, the process which you have put forth for the settlement of the South Vietnamese political problem in no way reflects the realities of the situation as you claim. Furthermore, it does not even comply with the most elementary rules of the democratic game and, above all, it does not provide effective guarantees for the strict respect of the right to self-determination of the South Vietnamese people.

Besides, you must admit that we have good reasons to be skeptical of your proposed political solution for it resembles so strangely the now to well-known irreversible process used by the communists to seize power in many countries in the world.

Our delegation has presented here many times the position of the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam on this South Vietnamese political problem and your side is already aware of the principles which guide our thinking and conduct in the search for a solution satisfactory to the parties concerned on this matter.

I think I only need to reaffirm once more today that, for us, the South Vietnamese political problem is that of guaranteeing strict respect for the right of the South Vietnamese population to decide by itself its own future through democratic means free from any threat or coercion under whatever form and without any outside interference from whatever source. It is not, as you want us to believe, the problem of power and of how to set up and arbitrarily impose on the South Vietnamese population a so-called "3-segment government of national concord".

In my declaration, I have just commented on the proposals put forth by your side and I have raised a number of problems which remain unsettled. Would your side be in a position, at today's session, to make positive contributions on how these outstanding issues may be resolved in a satisfactory manner for all the parties concerned ?

In the current context of events, now more than ever, it is time for you to join your efforts to ours in the urgent task of restoring a just and lasting peace not only in Vietnam and in the countries of the Indochinese peninsula but in the whole of South East Asia.-

