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DRV GOVERNMENT ISSUES STATEMENT ON VIETNAM NEGOTIATIONS

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[Text] Hanoi VNA October 26--Following is the full text of the statement issued here today by the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam on the present state of the negotiations relating to the Vietnam problem:

Following years of a glorious resistance war of our armed forces and people in both zones, the United States had to stop in October 1968 the bombardments against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and accept the holding of a four-party conference on Vietnam in Paris. That situation opened up prospects for restoring peace in Vietnam.

The Nixon administration chose, however, to embark on the path of "Vietnamization of the war", and negotiation from a position of strength. As a result, the U.S. war of aggression in Vietnam dragged on, was intensified and expanded, and the Vietnam peace negotiation could not make any progress.

Over the past four years, the valiant and undaunted Vietnamese people have stepped up their just struggle on the military, political and diplomatic fronts, and have recorded unprecedented victories, especially since spring 1972, thus inflicting a very important setback on the "Vietnamization" policy.

At the same time, the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam has constantly shown its serious attitude and goodwill in the search for a peaceful solution to the Vietnam problem on a basis guaranteeing the Vietnamese people's fundamental national rights and the South Vietnamese people's right to self-determination.

In full agreement with the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam, the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam has held private meetings with the U.S. Government with a view to a peaceful settlement of the Vietnam problem. But till September 1972, the negotiations on the Vietnam problem had remained without result.

With a view to making the negotiations progress, at the private meeting on October 8, 1972, the DRV side took a new, extremely important initiative: It put forward a draft "agreement on ending the war and restoring peace in Vietnam," and proposed that the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, with the concurrence of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam, and the Government of the United States of America, with the concurrence of the Government of the Republic of Vietnam, immediately agreed upon and signed [as received] this agreement to rapidly restore peace in Vietnam. In that draft agreement, the DRV side proposed a cessation of the war throughout Vietnam, a cease-fire in South Vietnam, an end to all U.S. military involvement in Vietnam, a total withdrawal from South Vietnam of troops of the United States and those of the foreign countries allied with the United States and with the Republic of Vietnam, and the return of all captured and detained personnel of the parties. From the enforcement of the cease-fire to the installation of the government formed after free and democratic general elections, the two present administrations in South Vietnam will remain in existence with their respective domestic and external functions.

These two administrations shall immediately hold consultations with a view to the exercise of the South Vietnamese people's right to self-determination, achieving national concord, ensuring the democratic liberties of the South Vietnamese people, and forming an administration of national concord which shall have the task of promoting the South Vietnamese parties' implementation of the signed agreements and organizing general elections in South Vietnam. The two South Vietnamese parties shall settle together the internal matters of South Vietnam within three months after the cease-fire comes into effect. Thus the Vietnam problem will be settled in two stages in accordance with the oft-expressed desire of the American side: The first stage will include a cessation of the war in Vietnam, a cease-fire in South Vietnam, a cessation of the U.S. military involvement in South Vietnam and an agreement on the principles for the exercise of the South Vietnamese people's right to self-determination; in the second stage, the two South Vietnamese parties will settle together the internal matters of South Vietnam. The DRV side proposed that the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the United States sign this agreement by mid-October 1972.

The above initiative of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam brought the negotiations on the Vietnam problem, which had dragged on for four years now, onto the path to a settlement. The American side itself admitted that the draft "agreement on ending the war and restoring peace in Vietnam" put forward by the DRV side was indeed an important and very fundamental document which opened up the way to an early settlement.

After several days of negotiations, on October 17, 1972, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the United States reached agreement on almost all problems on the basis of the draft agreement of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, except for only two unagreed issues. With its goodwill, the DRV side did its utmost to remove the last obstacles in accepting the American side's proposals on the two remaining questions in the agreement. In his October 10, 1972 message to the premier of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the President of the United States appreciated the goodwill of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, and confirmed that the formulation of the agreement could be considered complete. But in the same message, he raised a number of complex points. Desirous of rapidly ending the war and restoring peace in Vietnam, the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam clearly explained its views on this subject. In his October 22, 1972 message, the President of the United States expressed satisfaction with the explanations given by the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. Thus by October 22, 1972, the formulation of the agreement was complete. The main issues of the agreement which have been agreed upon may be summarized as follows:

- 1) The United States respects the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Vietnam as recognized by the 1954 Geneva agreements.
- 2) Twenty-four hours after the signing of the agreement, a cease-fire shall be observed throughout South Vietnam. The United States will stop all its military activities, and end the bombing and mining in North Vietnam. Within 60 days, there will be a total withdrawal from South Vietnam of troops and military personnel of the United States and those of the foreign countries allied with the United States and with the Republic of Vietnam. The two South Vietnamese parties shall not accept the introduction of troops, military advisers and military personnel, armaments, munitions, and war material into South Vietnam. The two South Vietnamese parties shall be permitted to make periodical replacements of armaments, munitions, and war material that have been worn out or damaged after the cease-fire, on the basis of piece for piece of similar characteristics and properties. The United States will not continue its military involvement or intervene in the internal affairs of South Vietnam.

3) The return of all captured and detained personnel of the parties shall be carried out simultaneously with the U.S. troops withdrawal.

4) The principles for the exercise of the South Vietnamese people's right to self-determination are as follows: The South Vietnamese people shall decide themselves the political future of South Vietnam through genuinely free and democratic general elections under international supervision; the United States is not committed to any political tendency or to any personality in South Vietnam, and it does not seek to impose a pro-American regime in Saigon; national reconciliation and concord will be achieved, the democratic liberties of the people ensured; an administrative structure called the National Council of National Reconciliation and Concord of three equal segments will be set up to promote the implementation of the signed agreements by the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam and the Government of the Republic of Vietnam and to organize the general elections, the two South Vietnamese parties will consult about the formation of councils at lower levels; the question of Vietnamese armed forces in South Vietnam shall be settled by the two South Vietnamese parties in a spirit of national reconciliation and concord, equality and mutual respect, without foreign interference, in accordance with the post-war situation, among the questions to be discussed by the two South Vietnamese parties are steps to reduce the military number on both sides and to demobilize the troops being reduced; the two South Vietnamese parties shall sign an agreement on the internal matters of South Vietnam as soon as possible and will do their utmost to accomplish this within three months after the cease-fire comes into effect.

5) The reunification of Vietnam shall be carried out step by step through peaceful means.

6) There will be formed a four-party joint military commission, and a joint military commission of the two South Vietnamese parties.

An international commission of control and supervision shall be established.

An international guarantee conference on Vietnam will be convened within 30 days of the signing of this agreement.

7) The Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam, the Government of the United States of America, and the Government of the Republic of Vietnam shall strictly respect the Cambodian and Lao peoples' fundamental national rights as recognized by the 1954 Geneva agreements on Indochina and the 1962 Geneva agreements on Laos, i.e., the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of these countries. They shall respect the neutrality of Cambodia and Laos. The Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam, the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Vietnam undertake to refrain from using the territory of Cambodia and the territory of Laos to encroach on the sovereignty and security of other countries. Foreign countries shall put an end to all military activities in Laos and Cambodia, totally withdraw from and refrain from reintroducing into these two countries troops, military advisers and military personnel, armaments, munitions and war material.

The internal affairs of Cambodia and Laos shall be settled by the people of each of these countries without foreign interference.

The problems existing between the three Indochinese countries shall be settled by the Indochinese parties on the basis of respect for each other's independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity, and non-interference in each other's internal affairs.

8) The ending of the war, the restoration of peace in Vietnam will create conditions for establishing a new, equal, and mutually beneficial relationship between the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the United States. The United States will contribute to healing the wounds of war and to post-war reconstruction in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and throughout Indochina.

9) This agreement shall come into force as of its signing. It will be strictly implemented by all the parties concerned.

The two parties have also agreed on a schedule for the signing of the agreement. On October 9, 1972, at the proposal of the U.S. side, it was agreed that on October 18, 1972, the United States would stop the bombing and mining in North Vietnam; on October 19, 1972, the two parties would initial the text of the agreement in Hanoi; on October 26, 1972 the foreign ministers of the two countries would formally sign the agreement in Paris.

On October 11, 1972, the U.S. side proposed the following change to the schedule: On October 21, 1972, the United States would stop the bombing and mining in North Vietnam; on October 22, 1972, the two parties would initial the text of the agreement in Hanoi; on October 30, 1972, the foreign ministers of the two countries would formally sign the agreement in Paris. The Democratic Republic of Vietnam agreed to the new U.S. schedule.

On October 20, 1972, under the pretext that there still remained a number of unagreed points, the U.S. side again put forth another schedule: On October 23, 1972, the United States would stop the bombing and mining in North Vietnam; on October 24, 1972, the two parties would initial the text of the agreement in Hanoi; On October 31, 1972, the foreign ministers of the two countries would formally sign the agreement in Paris. Despite the fact that the U.S. side had changed many times what had been agreed upon, the DRV side with its goodwill again agreed to the U.S. proposal while stressing that the U.S. side should not under any pretext change the agreed schedule.

Thus, by October 22, 1972, the DRV side and the U.S. side had agreed both on the full text of the "agreement on ending the war and restoring peace in Vietnam" and on a schedule to be observed for the formal signing of the agreement on October 31, 1972. Obviously, the two sides had agreed upon an agreement of extremely important significance, which meets the wishes of the peoples in Vietnam, the United States and the world.

But on October 23, 1972, contrary to its pledges, the U.S. side again referred to difficulties in Saigon, demanded that the negotiations be continued for resolving new problems, and did not say anything about the implementation of its commitments under the agreed schedule. This behaviour of the U.S. side has brought about a very serious situation which risks to jeopardize the signing of the "agreement on ending the war and restoring peace in Vietnam."

The so-called difficulties in Saigon represent a mere pretext to delay the implementation of the U.S. commitments, because it is public knowledge that the Saigon administration has been rigged up and fostered by the United States. With a mercenary army equipped and paid by the United States, this administration is a tool for carrying out the "Vietnamization" policy and the neocolonialist policy of the United States in violation of the South Vietnamese people's national rights. It is an instrument for the United States to sabotage all peaceful settlement of the Vietnam problem.