

August 14, 1969

# STATEMENT

by Ambassador PHAM-DANG-LÂM, Chief of the  
Delegation of the Republic of Viet-Nam at  
the 30th Plenary session of the Paris Meetings

August 14, 1969.-

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

In the last plenary session, you have raised the problem concerning which side has genuine goodwill for peace. You asked what constitutes our goodwill for peace and where is the door leading to peace which we have opened.

Although in the last session, I have already shown clearly that as far as we are concerned our deeds always go together with our words. Nevertheless, I shall reply again to your questions in a precise manner in order to show to public opinion throughout the world and at home which side is preventing the progress of these meetings. I even hope that, becoming at last conscious of the contrast between

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our goodwill attitude and your intransigence, people with responsibilities on your side will reconsider their policies and adopt an attitude more compatible with the search for peace.

To this effect, the few following objective criteria could be used to assess the goodwill for peace of each side :

1)- A real desire for peace must manifest itself by concrete acts and not by sheer affirmations.

2)- A real desire for peace must be expressed by an attitude of compromise. To maintain stubbornly one's views and demand in their entirety is not the attitude of people who sincerely desire peace.

3)- To proceed to a negotiated peace, one must negotiate with one's opponent. This is a self-evident truth which I feel obliged to remind you since you always pretend to ignore it.

Based on these 3 criteria, which side has up to now demonstrated its goodwill for peace inside and outside this meeting room ?

I.- We may not have used the word peace as often as you have, but people can record that we have taken

concrete acts to reduce the intensity of the war. On March 31, 1968, the bombing has ceased on almost the whole territory of North Viet-Nam. Since November 1, 1968, this bombing has ceased completely. On June 8, 1969, at the Midway Summit meeting, the two Governments of the United States and of the Republic of Viet-Nam decided on the first replacement of 25.000 U.S. combat troops - an equivalent of two divisions - before the end of this month. This measure is being carried out as it has been decided. Other important replacements may be decided, subject mainly to your activities on the battle-field and your attitude at this meeting table.

Despite your slanderous propaganda, people of good-will will recognize that they are positive acts of considerable significance demanding an appropriate response from your side. But what have you done up to now ?

On this point, I have read carefully your statements of self-justification made in the last session. Besides your gratuitous affirmation on your so-called "goodwill and correct attitude" for the convening of these meetings and the so-called "clear expose" of your 4-point, 5-point and 10-point positions, you could not cite any concrete act which would show, as we have done, that you wish to reduce the level of hostilities and to create an atmosphere favorable to the search for a negotiated solution of the conflict.

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This is of no surprise since "fight and talk" is precisely the tactic of people who are convinced that only the use of violence will be able to settle <sup>the</sup> Vietnamese problem. Since the opening of these meetings, your forces have not ceased to launch waves of attacks, such as those of Xuân Ky-Dâu in last May and, recently, of Tây-Ninh and Bến-Hêt. Your side has not ceased to intensify your acts of terrorism, your shelling against our major cities. On August 7, 1969, just before the 29th plenary session opened, communist sapper units have mercilessly massacred the patients in a hospital at Cam-Ranh, and have exploded plastic charges at a school of languages in Saigon. In the last few days, your side has increased your military operations in the demilitarized zone and at various locations on the territory of the Republic of Viet-Nam. In the night of August 11, 1969, your side launched a series of shelling on numerous urban centers and populated areas, including Saigon, Huê and Dà-Nang. Do these acts reflect your eagerness to search for peace through negotiations?

According to the AP cable of August 8, 1969, PHAM-VAN-DONG has declared on the occasion of the release of the 3 American prisoners that 1970 will witness the biggest battles of the Viet-Nam war. This war-mongering declaration shows your stubbornness to prolong the war. It bares your design to wait for the withdrawal of the allied forces and then to escalate your war of aggression. It also brings out once

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again the truth which we have repeatedly presented at these meetings, namely that the North Vietnamese communists organize, direct and nurture the war of aggression in South Viet-Nam.

Your activities in the neighbouring countries are increasing our scepticism on your pretended goodwill for peace. The Royal Government of Laos has denounced the aggression perpetrated by 60.000 North Viet-Nam's regular troops and the major role they played in the attacks of Muong-Suoi. On August 9, 6 members of the communist North Viet-Nam's embassy in Vientiane were caught red-handed for spying and were expelled out of Laos. The Khmer Armed Forces Chief of Staff has many times warned world public opinion about the violations of territory of Cambodia by North Vietnamese communist forces in the provinces of Mondokiri and Ratanakiri.

Your side continuously encouraged and aided the insurgent elements in the North East of Thai-Land. According to AFF, North Viet-Nam's newspaper "Nhân-Dân" in its issue dated August 7, 1969, cynically lauded the activities of these rebels while praising the achievements of the "Father-land Front of Thailand" and the "Supreme Command of the People's Liberation Forces of Thai-Land".

A simple comparison between, on the one hand, your acts of aggression, of terrorism and subversion against the neighbouring countries and on the other hand, the decisions

by our side on the cessation of bombing against North VietNam, the decisions to lower the number of external forces and to respect the sovereignty of the neighbouring countries, is enough to allow public opinion to see clearly which side has really manifested goodwill.

2.- Genuine goodwill for peace must be expressed by concrete acts aimed to reduce the war. At this meeting table, it must also expressed by an attitude of compromise aimed to reduce the difference between the respective positions. To maintain stubbornly till the end one's views and demands, to monopolize righteousness and advantages for oneself, is certainly not the attitude of people who wish to negotiate seriously. It cannot be the mark of a sincere desire for peace.

Our side has come to this meeting table with concrete proposals concerning the restoration of the Demilitarized zone, the withdrawal of external forces, the establishment of an effective international control body, and the return to the essential principles of the 1954 Geneva Accords. These measures encompass identical rights and obligations for both sides and aim to reduce the intensity of the armed conflict in South Viet-Nam.

Furthermore, we have also proposed a political solution based on the genuine right to self-determination of

the South Vietnamese people to be expressed through free, open and internationally supervised elections.

That is the meaning of President NGUYEN-VAN-THIEU's basic 6-point position of April 7, 1969 and peace initiative of July 11, 1969. That is also the meaning of President Richard NIXON's peace plan of May 14, 1969 and the meaning of the joint communique of the Midway summit meeting. The Republic of Viet-Nam is also prepared to discuss with the North Vietnamese administration the questions of reunification of the country and of establishing temporary relations between the two zones. That is the substance of President NGUYEN-VAN-THIEU's basic 6-point position of April 7, 1969 and proposal of July 10, 1969. The facts which I have just related show that we have a flexible and open attitude, that we are prepared to give consideration to our interlocutors' demands in order to formulate solutions of conciliation which would not penalize anyone.

What side could consider itself at a disadvantage by the mutual withdrawal of all non-South Vietnamese forces ? How can there be any disadvantage if both sides pledge to respect the results of a free choice by the South Vietnamese people ?

We do not limit ourselves with making logical and reasonable proposals. We have further declared that we are

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prepared to engage into serious discussions about your propositions.

Meanwhile, what has been your attitude ?

The more we consider the declarations you have made up to now, the more we are disappointed for it does not matter how you present your demands, whether in 4 points, 5 points or 10 points, whether they are labelled position, political program or global solution, they merely amount in the end to ask for a surrender of the opponent: military surrender by the unconditional withdrawal of forces which have come to assist the South Vietnamese people to resist aggression by North Viet-Nam; political surrender by abolishing all the democratic institutions which the South Vietnamese people have freely opted for.

That is the real meaning of the illogical demands which your side has presented and which your side has stubbornly held on since the opening of these meeting without changing an iota.

You stubbornly demand the total and unconditional withdrawal of the allied forces while refusing to discuss the withdrawal of North Viet-Nam's troops and subversive forces.

You stubbornly demand the overthrow of the legal and

constitutional regime of South Viet-Nam, in complete disregard of the choice of the South Vietnamese population.

You stubbornly reject the formula of elections as long as you have not obtained satisfaction on your demand for the formation of a "provisional coalition government", in other words, as long as you have not seized the essential levers of power in South Viet-Nam in order to undermine the political life, to destroy the state institutions and in fact abolish all genuine freedom and democracy.

Your subjective and bad faith attitude constitutes the major obstacle on the road to a negotiated peace. That is not the attitude of people who really have goodwill for peace.

3.- As I have said, to obtain peace through negotiations, first of all one must negotiate.

Because it has accepted without reservation this rule, and although it is the only legal Government and genuine representative of the South Vietnamese population, the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam has declared ready to have talks with the so-called "NLF". In addition, it has offered to this organization participation in the Electoral Commission in order to assure equal opportunities for all the candidates. That is the meaning and the substance of President NGUYEN-VAN-THIEU's proposal for private and secret talks of March 25,

1969 and peace initiative of July 11, 1969.

World public opinion has warmly acclaimed this generous attitude of the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam <sup>as</sup> a clear manifestation of the utmost goodwill for peace.

In this respect, what has been your attitude up to now ?

Despite your pledge to engage in serious talks on all the problems after the total cessation of bombing on North Viet-Nam, and despite your declarations at this meeting table according to which you are prepared to negotiate with all the parties concerned, you systematically refuse to engage in serious discussions with the Delegation of the Republic of Viet-Nam.

You demand the replacement of your interlocutors or more precisely the replacement of the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam with a so-called "peace cabinet" composed of people who would in fact have been chosen by you according to your own criteria. Such interlocutors will, of course, be ready to accept any of your conditions. Further when you state that "the question of the Vietnamese armed forces in South Viet-Nam will be settled between the Vietnamese parties", you purposely remain vague and refuse to reveal what will be these Vietnamese parties.

Public opinion at home and abroad is severely condemning such an irresponsible attitude.

In fact, with all these exclusiveness and ambiguity you only want to mark time with the negotiations while waiting for a military victory or a political upheaval. As I stated many times, that is precisely what constitutes the major obstacle for these meetings.

II.- Now, I want to come back to your formula of coalition.

Contrary to your erroneous affirmations, we are not contradicting ourselves when, on the one hand, we object to this policy of "coalition" and, on the other hand, we expose the so-called "NLF's" scheme to seize power. In practice, the experience on governments of coalition in various communist countries, such as the one in North Vietnam in 1945-1946 and in Tchecoslovakia in 1945-1948, has shown us that coalition in your way is just a facade to hide party dictatorship, a screen to mask the communist regime machinery.

What are your real aims when you demand the formation of the "provisional coalition government" ?

You want to seize power without having to go through really democratic and free elections. You are trying to annihilate people who do not share your political views for, in

your own words, only people who meet fully the conditions which you yourself have set, are acceptable. You want to turn the elections by the South Vietnamese people into a farce to legalize your take-over of power by methods normally used in communist countries.

It is all very clear that what you have at heart is political power in South Viet-Nam and not the right to self-determination of the South Vietnamese people.

To paint a new face on the so-called "provisional coalition government" which is currently being forgotten by public opinion in the country as well as abroad, you are now striving to rally a number of people who do not represent anything but their own ambitions and discontent. Whether or not your scheme has a chance to succeed, whether or not you manage to change the label of the "provisional coalition government", all these metamorphoses will not have any value or fool anybody, and they will not change anything in the South Vietnamese situation. As <sup>all</sup> organizations set up in the past in North Viet-Nam / under various designations such as the so-called "Viet-Minh Front", the "Liên Việt Front", the "Fatherland Front" etc... are nothing but the North Vietnamese communist party, the present organizations, such as the so-called "Alliance of democratic and peace forces", the "peace cabinet", the "transition government", etc., are nothing but offsprings of the so-called "NLF".

The road to a negotiated peace does not proceed from these political tricks but must go through a democratic process as proposed by the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam. I also consider it necessary to remind you again that no decision concerning the fate of South Viet-Nam could be reached without the participation and agreement of the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam which is the legitimate and sole representative of the South Vietnamese people.

III.- All your slanders and calumnious accusations will not alter this evidence. You will merely waste your time if you continue to hold your dreams as realities, to play the role of prophet of doom and to predict the disintegration of the legal government in South Viet-Nam.

As a matter of fact and in contrast to your subjective predictions, the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam is every daybroadening its popular base. There are presently 10.676 hamlets over a total of 12.116 throughout the country which lie within the control of the legal government. The number of people living in these hamlets constitutes over 90% of the entire population in South Viet-Nam. The Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam is striving to develop the democratic institutions which are in position to meet the aspirations and to satisfy the needs of the people : elections for the village councils have been held in 1.853 villages over a total of

2.307 throughout the country, representing a percentage of over 80%.

Parallel to the development of these democratic institutions, the Armed Forces of the Republic of Viet-Nam made enormous improvements in order to protect these institutions as well as the life and properties of the people against the destruction caused by your side.

The growth of the Republic of Viet-Nam's armed forces has made possible important replacements of Allied troops. Likewise, the urban as well as the rural population are enthusiastically joining the movement of self-defense, for they now realize that to defend their villages and homes against the subversive undertakings of the communists is in fact to protect their own life and happiness and those of their relatives. In this regard, among the most ardent supporters of the present constitutional and legal regime are the millions of South Vietnamese farmers who have now become owners of the land they till thanks to the policy of agrarian reform which has recently been implemented.

Meanwhile, it is your ranks and files which are in the process of disintegration. Only in the first half of 1969, the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam has welcomed back as returnees 20.275 communist troops, including a large numbers of officers and cadres, such as the Captain in charge

of political affairs for Sub-Region I, the 265th Battallion Commander of Military Region 2, the Colonel, Chief of the Research office of Military Region 2, the 1st Battalion Commander of the Quyết-Thang Regiment etc... They have informed the people of the desperate situation prevailing in your side.

Is it not this desperate situation which compelled your side to launch the present attacks and indiscriminate shellings of the urban center with the vain hope to create an illusion of strength before world opinion and right in your own ranks. Far from reaching any significant objective, these attacks and shellings are only causing additional suffering to the innocent civilian population and are in no way impairing the potential of the national and allied forces, or affecting the morale of the South Vietnamese population.

The troops as well as the people of South Viet-Nam are even more determined to repel all attacks and to inflict heavy losses to those who persist in their criminal acts.

These attacks are not only causing you heavy losses in men and equipment but are also demonstrating to world public opinion that, contrary to what people have hoped, the relative lull in recent weeks is not an indication of a sincere desire on your part to reduce the level of hostilities with the aim to facilitate the work of these meetings.

Thus, the continuation of your attacks and shellings will bring you nothing but heavy losses, the hatred of the South Vietnamese people and the indignation of the peace-loving people. In the face of these realities, there is nothing better for you to do, for the future of the nation, for world peace and for your own interests, than to engage immediately in direct and serious discussions with the representatives of the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam.

I have concluded my statement.-

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