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S T A T E M E N T

B Y

HIS EXCELLENCY DR. NGUYEN LUU VIEN,
DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER
CHIEF OF THE DELEGATION
OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM
AT THE 26TH SESSION
OF THE OFFICIAL MEETINGS BETWEEN THE
TWO SOUTH VIETNAMESE PARTIES

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THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 1973

My dear Compatriots,

The purpose of our prepared statement today is to specify with the utmost clarity the policy of the Government of the Republic of Vietnam at this conference table.

Since we came here our Delegation has never ceased to show our goodwill and sincere desire for peace and has settled without respite to the task of finding a satisfactory solution to the conflict which opposes our two sides. We have demonstrated such a sincere desire for peace and goodwill through our open attitude and our conciliating words; we also showed voluntary restraint in our critics and have put forth concrete, constructive and realistic proposals.

Right at the first session our Delegation proposed that our two sides avoid to engage into the path of critics and mutual recriminations in order not to further deepen the breach of hatred and dissension that is dividing us. To enable our conference to reach the results our people has been yearning for, we put forward proposals with regard to a working method that we deem adequate. Indeed, experience of past conferences has shown that official meetings during which each side exposes its policy and defends its attitude, can only lead to useless polemics. We accordingly proposed that our two sides hold informal talks during which there could be open hearted discussions, the substance of such talks needs not be made public. In addition to plenary sessions we also proposed private talks and working sessions at the commissions level. Thus our two sides will be able to fully examine issues taken up at this Conference in order to find out in the shortest time the solutions to those issues.

That, on the form of the talks. For the substance, we advocate that our two sides examine all the issues within the framework of a global solution as stipulated by the Paris Agreement. We feel such a proceeding is the only one that is likely to enable our two sides to fully examine all points of view and principal concerns of both sides, in order to lead to exchanges of view in a constructive spirit and in an atmosphere of mutual concession that will lead to the finding of a settlement acceptable for everybody. Moreover, in accordance with the spirit and the letter of the Paris Agreement all our proposals are aimed primarily at allowing the people of South-Vietnam to freely choose its political future through general elections.

Our proposals were concretely put forth for the first time in our preliminary draft agreement of 25 April 1973. The draft worded out all the basic principles for an overall settlement of issues and can be regarded as a basis for serious negotiations at this conference table. With a view to examine in detail the steps to be taken and the solution to be adopted we have proposed four commissions relative to "Democratic liberties", "National Council of Reconciliation and Concord", "General Elections" and "The Vietnamese armed forces in South-Vietnam".

At the 18th session on 25 July 1973 we put all our concrete and constructive proposals together in a draft agreement on principle alongside with a precise time-table. According to that time-table the general elections that the people has been waiting for, are scheduled for Christmas day this year.

We regret however to note that all the realistic and constructive proposals from our part up to now, either those concerning the form of the meetings, the working method, or the proposals relative to the substance of issues to be solved

have been all rejected in a mechanical way by your side. As long as your attitude remains unchanged this Conference will continue to mark time and peace will not be restored in South-Vietnam.

For our part we are as always ready to begin serious discussions with you about the issues to be solved. All the concrete, realistic and constructive proposals that we have set forth still remain on this conference table, and if your side really wishes to negotiate with us in order to find out a satisfactory solution to the conflict you will see that from our part we are always prepared to show a forthcoming and constructive spirit. We assert once more our will not to enter into fruitless polemics which are apt solely to further deepen the breach that divides us. If your side persists in considering this conference table as propaganda forum to stir up and deceive public opinion your side will be held responsible for this Conference stalemate, for the prolongation of the bloody conflict, and for the disastrous consequences which will result for the future of our people and our country.

I have concluded. /-

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