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No O35/PDVN/P2  
Unofficial translation

S T A T E M E N T

BY

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ACTING CHIEF OF THE DELEGATION

OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM

AT THE 35TH SESSION

OF THE OFFICIAL MEETINGS BETWEEN

THE TWO SOUTH VIETNAMESE PARTIES

Friday, January 4, 1974

Dear Compatriots,

At today's session which marks the beginning of 1974 the Delegation of the Republic of Viet-Nam wishes to seize the opportunity of speaking first to appeal to your side to join your efforts to ours so as to create a new atmosphere and a new spirit at this conference, and thus open up a new phase in our talks.

To this end our Delegation wants to hope that your side will respond in a positive way to our conciliatory statements in order to establish a serene climate essential to a peace conference. We want to hope also that you will adopt the same open attitude which has always been ours so as to try to settle in equitable way the legitimate concerns of the concerned parties, and that you will share our will and sincere desire to get the Conference out of its present deadlock, during the coming year so that concrete results could be achieved at every meeting.

The Conference will be immediately able to make progress if your side shows the same restraint in its words as we do, the same open attitude in the manner to put forth and examine problems, and above all, the same determination to achieve rapidly a peaceful settlement to the conflict.

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Though the Paris Accord has already clearly stipulated the problems our two parties must solve at this Conference we have lost a lot of time discussing about its agenda. Through the two sides' presentations of the past months we can all see that there are 4 essential issues to solve here, apart from the 2 issues of "cease-fire" and "release of captured personnel" the implementation, the supervision and the guarantee of which,

were entrusted by the Paris Accord to the Joint Military Committees and the ICCS.

Four essential issues are being assigned to us at this Conference, they are :

- the so-called issue of "democratic liberties"
- the issue of the establishing of the "National Council of National Reconciliation and Concord" (NCNRC)
- the issue of the organization of "general elections" and
- the issue of the "vietnamese armed forces in South Viet-Nam"

During 9 months of meeting here the Delegation of the RVN has put forth numerous initiatives and concrete realistic and fair proposals with a view to satisfactorily solve the four above mentioned issues. Our efforts have always encountered a totally negative attitude from your part which has mechanically rejected all our constructive initiatives and proposals.

So as not to let the Conference sink further in last year's rut, the Delegation of the RVN wishes to offer a realistic and fair basis to our discussions by setting forth today our viewpoint and our position in the search of a solution to the problems being posed to this Conference.

1/- First of all, the Delegation of the RVN reminds that the purpose of the La Celle Saint Cloud Conference, in conformity with the spirit and the letter of the Paris Accord of 27 January 1973, is to permit our two parties to solve through negotiations a certain number of issues assigned to the Conference by the Paris Accord in order to peacefully put an end to the conflict that opposes us and restore a true and lasting peace in South Viet-Nam on the basis of the strict respect of the right of the South VN's people to self-determination, through free and democratic general elections under

international supervision.

2/- To this end the Delegation of the RVN's conception of the negotiations is as follows :

a) All issues, military as well as political are interrelated and should be solved in a parallel manner according to a clearly established calendar and process.

b) The agreement on the internal problems of South Viet-Nam that our two parties should reach according to art.12(a) of the Paris Accord will be a global settlement encompassing all issues, military as well as political ones and putting a satisfactory and peaceful end to the conflict that presently opposes the two South Vietnamese parties.

3/- In order to speed up the settlement of problems posed to this Conference by the Paris Accord the Delegation of the Republic of Viet-Nam maintains that the most efficient procedure, which is by the way customary to all negotiations, is to activate working committees so as to study, thoroughly examine and find appropriate, satisfactory and fair solutions to those issues.

These working committees will study and determine the concrete measures aimed at rapidly solving the four essential issues that "the guarantee of democratic liberties" the establishing of the National Council of National Reconciliation and Concord" (NCNRC) "the organization of general elections" and "the issue of Vietnamese armed forces in South Viet-Nam" are.

While activating the task of working committees the Delegation of the Republic of Viet-Nam advocates a close coordination between the different commissions so as to enable the two sides to clearly realise the effects that the settlement of an issue may bring to another one, within the framework of a global settlement.

4./ With regard to the content of issues, the Republic of Viet-Nam's position is as follows :

I. On "general elections" :

a/ With regard to the essential issue of a political settlement for South Vietnam that the general elections, issue is, as stipulated in art. 9 (b) and 12 (b) of the Paris Accord of 27 January 73 and in art. 10 (a) of the Joint Communiqué of 13 June 73, the government of the RVN advocates the universal suffrage with direct and secret ballot by which the South Viet-Nam's population will elect a sovereign organ to decide of South Vietnam's political future. That organ will make decisions relative to state institutions at central as well as regional level.

The two SVN parties solemnly pledge to respect the results of general elections and to scrupulously implement the decisions of the organ representing the SVN people that will be elected from these elections.

b/ The general elections will take place under international supervision : the two SVN parties will invite international observers to watch the elections. The NCNRC and ICCS will be in charge of the control of elections, as stipulated by the Paris Accord.

c/ To ensure the truly honest character of general elections the working committee entrusted with the general elections issue will coordinate its tasks with the committees in charge of the issues of "NCNRC", of the "guarantee of democratic liberties" and of the issue of "Vietnamese armed forces in South VN" in order to solve all the aspects pertaining to the general elections in accordance with the spirit and the letter of chapter 4 of the Paris Accord which prescribes truly free and democratic general elections without external interference in the internal affairs of the RVN and in the strict respect of the SVN people's right of self-determination

as stipulated at art. 9 of the Paris Accord, at art. 4 and 5 of the International act on Viet-Nam and at art. 10 of the Joint Communique.

II. The issue of the National Council of National Reconciliation and Concord. (NCNRC)

a/ As clearly stipulated at art. 9 (b) and 12 (b) of the Paris Accord, the NCNRC will study and establish the procedures and modalities for the general elections.

b/ The two SVN parties will agree by negotiations upon the number and modality of designation of components in the NCNRC. Each of the SVN parties will decide of its component. The remaining component will be agreed upon by both parties.

c/ The two SVN parties will decide of the attributions, organization and working modalities of the said Council in conformity with the spirit and letter of art. 12 of the Paris Accord.

III. The issue of democratic liberties.

a/ The Delegation of the RVN agrees to discuss about, and solve the so-called issue of "democratic liberties" in accordance with the spirit and letter of the Paris Accord.

b/ Parallel to a satisfactory settlement of the issue of the "vietnamese armed forces in South Viet-Nam" as clearly mentioned in art. 13 of the Paris Accord and the strict enforcement clauses relative to the cessation of hostilities visaed at art. 2 and 7, chapter II of the Paris Accord and at 4, 5, 6 and 7 of the Joint Communique, the Delegation of the RVN advocates that the two SVN parties put an end to restrictions due to the war regarding the exercise of democratic liberties when the two parties have reached a global settlement in which is clearly indicated the date of general elections.

c/ The committee in charge of the issue of guaranteeing democratic liberties will study and establish concrete and detailed measures to this and in a spirit of national reconciliation and concord.

IV. The issue of the vietnamese armed forces in South Viet-Nam.

a/ In accordance with the spirit and letter of art.13 of the Paris Accord the Delegation of the RVN advocates the settlement of the issue of "the vietnamese armed forces in SVN" on the basis of reduction of the military effectives and the demobilization of the troops thus reduced.

b/ So as to let the SVN people decide freely of their own political future, without external interference, the non-south vietnamese armed forces will withdraw from South Viet-Nam and return to their country of origin. Parallel to this withdrawal the government of the Republic of Viet-Nam will demobilize an equal military effective .

c/ The above mentioned withdrawal and demobilization may be carried out in many phases. The commission in charge of the issue of "vietnamese armed forces in South Viet-Nam" will examine in detail the manpower and time limit for a satisfactory settlement of that problem of withdrawal and demobilization.

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Dear Compatriots,

The Delegation of the Republic of Viet-Nam has just briefly presented its position with regard to the substance of issues that must be settled at this Conference by way of negotiations between our two parties.

Our Delegation has also clearly explained its view with regard to these negotiations, that we deem most efficient so as to put an end to the present deadlock of the Conference. In addition our Delegation feels that to avoid endless discussions, it is important to set some date limits, as guidelines to our discussions.

a) Our two sides should immediately agree upon a precise delay for the completion of the elaboration and conclusion of an accord on the internal problems of South Viet-Nam.

b) Our two sides should also agree immediately upon a realistic and reasonable deadline to settle all problems, military as well as political according to a precise process and calendar in which the date of general elections is clearly stipulated.

Through our statement, your side can see the special effort we have made in order to create a climate favourable to negotiation by our courteous statements. In the same time we have presented and offered a realistic and fair basis for the two sides to engage immediately into serious talks.

Our sincerity and our goodwill in the search of a peaceful settlement to put a definite end to the war and restore a just and lasting peace in the strict respect of the right of South Viet-Nam's people to self-determination have been just evidenced again at this session, at the beginning of a new year. Whether this Conference will be able to avoid the old path and make progress depends entirely upon your response to the appeal we just made.

Therefore, it is with a special attention that we will listen to your statements at this conference table and follow the developments of the situation in South VN in the next days through your activities on the battlefield.

I have concluded./-