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S T A T E M E N T

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ACTING CHIEF OF THE DELEGATION

OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM

AT THE 40TH SESSION

OF THE OFFICIAL MEETINGS BETWEEN

THE TWO SOUTH VIETNAMESE PARTIES

Friday, February 8th, 1974

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Dear compatriots,

During the three last meetings the Delegation of the Republic of Viêt-Nam has put forth and clarified extremely concrete, constructive and fair proposals aimed at a "principle agreement" between our two parties at this conference table for the holding on 20 July 1974 of general elections scheduled in art. 9-b and 12-b of the Paris Accord.

However, until now your side has always tried by all means to put forth all kinds of pretexts to elude true negotiations on the issue of elections.

Since the opening of the Conference of La Celle Saint Cloud you have made everyone understand that you regard this place simply as a propaganda forum to slander your adversary, stir up public opinion and support your war and subversive activities in South Viet-Nam.

Instead of engaging into the path of serious negotiations as stipulated in the Paris Accord, it is clear that you still pursue your unchanged objective of conquering South Viet-Nam by force, in total disregard of the South Vietnamese people's right of self-determination.

That is the basic reason which accounts for your refusal to implement the clauses of the Paris Accord. That also accounts for the intensification of your war efforts, instead of engaging with us in the search of a peaceful settlement to the conflict.

That is the reason why your side refuses to correctly implement the cease-fire on place as stipulated by the Paris Accord, and tries to increase its war, terrorist, sabotage and subversive activities in South Viet-Nam, with a view to grab more land and population and in the hope of improving your position on the military and political fields.

That is also the reason why the communist administration of Hanoi keeps infiltrating, as from the signature of the Paris Accord more than 100,000 North Vietnamese regular troops as well as hundreds of thousands tons of war material of all kinds, more than 600 artillery pieces, hundreds of tanks, and also, at the same time tens of thousands of cadres, "young pioneers" so as to increase the handful of your followers in South Viet-Nam.

All those reasons explain why your side does not wish to negotiate at all at this conference table and tries by all means to elude the issue of general elections, as it refuses to solve the issue of "vietnamese armed forces in South Viet-Nam" as stipulated in art.13 of the Paris Accord.

No one can deny that we have made all necessary efforts in order to reach a peaceful settlement to the conflict and help restore a just and lasting peace on the basis of the strict respect of the South Vietnamese people's right of self-determination.

Our side has constantly put forth constructive initiatives aimed at putting an end to recriminations at this conference table and at creating a favourable climate for serious negotiations. We have ceaselessly put forth realistic proposals, concerning the form of our meetings as well as the working procedures in order to allow the Conference to progress. We have tried to get the Conference out of the impasse too by offering fair proposals on the basis of reciprocity. Your party has however mechanically rejected all those proposals and initiatives from our part.

With regard to general elections your side has shown a particularly negative attitude.

At the 8th session on 24th April 1973 the Delegation of the Republic of Viet-Nam has set forth a "preliminary draft agreement" aimed at an overall settlement of all military and political problems assigned to this conference. In that spirit, our

Delegation has proposed to hold general elections on 26th August 1973.

In the absence of a constructive response from your part to our proposal, the Delegation of the Republic of Viet-Nam proposed then at the 14th session on 28th June 1973 to hold general elections on Christmas 1973. But your side kept refusing to discuss on elections.

At the 18th meeting on 25th July 1973, the Delegation of the Republic of Viet-Nam set forth a "principle draft agreement" that included numerous initiatives aimed at solving the substance of essential issues being posed to this Conference, and again appealed to your side to agree on Christmas 1973 for the date of the organization of general elections. Your side had however continued to elude the issue of general elections.

Recently during the 3 last meetings, our Delegation has proposed an "Agreement of principle" for the holding of general elections on 20th July 1974. We have given additional clarifications on the negotiating position of the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam. We have also stated that if your side agrees to hold on 20th July 1974 free and democratic general elections under international supervision as stipulated in art.9-b of the Paris Accord, the Delegation of the Republic of Viet-Nam is ready to solve rapidly with your side all the other matters of contention being posed to this conference table, namely :

- the establishing of the National Council of National Reconciliation and Concord (NCNRC)
- the guarantee of democratic liberties
- the issue of vietnamese armed forces in South Viet-Nam.

Our Delegation has also proposed that experts from both sides meet immediately and set to work, so as to arrive at the signing of a "global and final accord" on 19th March 1974, to settle all issues on the military as well as political fields, to establish the NCNRC at latest 19 April 1974, and to terminate the elaboration of

modalities and procedures of general elections by the end of May 1974, i.e 60 days before elections day, that is also the period scheduled for the electoral campaign.

Although the Delegation of the Republic of Viet-Nam has given all explanations relative to that very concrete, open and fair proposal, your side had stubbornly rejected in a mechanical way all constructive proposals from our side and continue to elude true negotiations regarding general elections.

At the last session, you have not found anything better than renew your 6-point proposal that was presented 7 months ago, on 25th April 1973.

That proposal as clarified by your side at the 14th meeting of 28th June 1973 still unveils more clearly your eluding of the general elections. Under the form of a 6-point proposal, you have presented a series of unilateral demands as follows :

1. Implementation of the cease-fire order.
2. Release of captured personnel.
3. Guarantee of democratic liberties.
4. Establishing of the National Council of National Reconciliation and Concord (NCNRC)
5. Organization of general elections.
6. The issue of vietnamese armed forces in South Viet-Nam.

Right after the presentation of those six points, your side has stated that they must be solved in two phases. First : our side must successively satisfy points 1, 2, 3 and 4 according to the order set by your side; you declared that those 4 "urgent" issues "must be settled first and completely" and that they must be the basis for the settlement of issues no 5 and 6. The second phase will be the settlement of points 5 and 6.

With such a negotiating position you have let everyone see that you try by all means to elude the issue of general elections

to a point one can say that is ridiculous.

You have not only set forth a series of unilateral and absurd demands with points 1, 2, 3 and 4, knowing full well that no progress could be made in negotiations relative to those 4 points, but to make it safer, you have set the additional precondition that those 4 points must be satisfied before point 5 concerning general elections could be discussed.

Thus, with a view to avoid any discussion on the general elections issue, you have set forth no less than 5 preconditions, that are really too much, for only one is enough to block all discussions.

Besides we have not yet mentioned point 6 concerning "the vietnamese armed forces in South Viet-Nam". The way you demand that your so-called "proposals" be satisfied before we reach general elections clearly shows that your side will only agree to discuss the issue of "vietnamese armed forces in South Viet-Nam", long after the organization of general elections, if ever they would be held. The elections would take place with the illegal presence in South Viet-Nam of more than 400,000 North Vietnamese regular troops. That is sufficient to let everyone see how you conceive the general elections.

Your side only accepts the so-called "general elections" when all your preconditions will be satisfied, in other word, once you have seized power in South Viet-Nam and have imposed your domination on the South Vietnamese's people thanks to 400,000 North Vietnamese troops present in South Viet-Nam.

With such a negotiating position it is clear to everyone that your side intends to achieve its ultimate objective, that of paving the way for the domination of all the country by the totalitarian communist regime of Hanoi.

Dear compatriots,

After having continually set forth our proposal for general elections on 20 July 1974 at the last 3 sessions, we have to note that your side, still tries by all means to elude that issue. Today we are compelled to state clearly why you try to elude the issue of general elections to unmask the way and you have tried to avoid it since the beginning of this Conference.

Our proposal to organize elections on next 20 July , still remains valid but at today's session we do not nurture any hope that your side will engage into the path of true negotiations, and enter into constructive discussions relative to the general elections issue. You are going to continue your fruitless task of making biased propaganda, setting forth subjective and erroneous allegations in support of your calumnies, unfounded charges and unilateral and absurd demands.

Your side will still persist to elude the general elections issue and will be only concerned with the pursuit of your "struggle", thus putting blindly your partisan interests above the higher interest of the country. Consequently you will have to be entirely responsible for the deadlock at this conference and the pursuit of the war in South Viet-Nam with all its disastrous consequences.

I have concluded./.

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