



**SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM
MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**866 UNITED NATIONS PLAZA
SUITE 435
NEW YORK, NY 10017**

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**STATEMENT
BY H.E. MR. LE CONG PHUNG
FIRST DEPUTY MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
HEAD OF THE DELEGATION OF VIET NAM
AT THE 59TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

New York, 27 September 2004

Mr. President,
Distinguished Delegates,

At the outset, allow me, on behalf of the Vietnamese Delegation, to warmly congratulate you, an eminent son of Gabon and of Africa, with which Viet Nam has always enjoyed warm sentiments and brotherly relations, on your election as President of the 59th Session of the General Assembly. I am confident that under your able guidance, this Session will be crowned with fine success. I also take this opportunity to express our high appreciation of the tremendous efforts and contributions made by the previous President, H.E. Mr. Julian Hunte, to the work of the 58th Session of the General Assembly.

Mr. President,

As the fifth year of the 21st century is approaching, we all cannot help asking ourselves whether the world is safer, fairer, or in a more comprehensive assessment, a better place for our peoples to live in. With all what has happened over the last year, unfortunately, the answer cannot be affirmative.

The recent barbaric and inhuman massacre of hostages at the school in Beslan of Russia, its scale and the manner in which it was committed show that terrorism has become more brutal than ever, that it is spreading to almost every corner of the world and sparing no nation. At this august forum, we wish to reaffirm the position of the Vietnamese Government denouncing every act of terrorism. We urge the international community to further strengthen cooperation with a view to eliminating terrorism from our civilized world. We have more than once stated our fundamental position that for it to enjoy broad support and participation and therefore be effective, the fight against terrorism must be pursued in conformity with the provisions of the UN Charter and must be free from selectivity and double standards. A serious review would reveal that is not a situation we can claim we have today. For a second time in two years, last April, in pursuit of their secessionist aim of creating a so-called "independent State of Degar", Kok Ksor and the organisation he created, the "Montagnard Foundation" staged a violent terrorist riot in the Central Highlands of Viet Nam, seriously threatening the security and territorial integrity of our country. And still today, they continue to enjoy unjustified protection by various forces.

Mr. President,

While being encouraged by the trend of enhanced cooperation and friendship among countries and regions, we are equally concerned about conflicts and other threats mounting in different areas, especially in the Middle East and Africa. The Iraqi people are yet to know of genuine peace. Non-traditional security threats such as narcotics, the spread of diseases, transnational organized crimes and environmental degradation continue to affect adversely the life of peoples and the development of nations.

Mr. President,

2005 is approaching. We are to review the realization of the Millennium Development Goals. An undeniable fact is that the window of opportunity for economic development and integration for developing countries has become narrower while the gap between the rich countries and the poor countries and that between the rich and the poor within countries are increasingly wider. According to a recent report by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the gap between the world's richest and poorest countries at present is 74 times. That being the reality, what is discouraging is that the proportion of resources being utilized for economic development is negatively unbalanced. Last year, for example, military expenditures by rich countries amounted to more than US \$700 billion, which was 10 times higher than the total amount of their official development assistance for developing nations.

Instead of receiving a stronger commitment for development assistance, developing countries have fallen victim to unfair practices in international trade. A case in point is the application of protectionist measures under the form of anti-dumping duties imposed on Viet Nam's catfish and shrimp as well as similar products of other developing countries. The unfair imposition of anti-dumping duties on Viet Nam's shrimp export by the United States has inflicted losses on 3.5 million Vietnamese poor farmers who earn their livings directly or indirectly from the shrimp industry. This has not only run counter to the principles of the WTO but also undermined the poverty reduction efforts of the Vietnamese Government as well as the results of technical assistance provided by international bodies such as the World Bank, the IMF, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), as well as different United Nations agencies.

Mr. President,

In such a world where injustice and uncertainties remain, it is both a desire of all nations and a primary task of the international community to build a more peaceful and fairer environment conducive to development and prosperity. Such an environment can only be created if all nations strictly comply with the fundamental principles of the United Nations Charter and international law, of which respect for the national independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in the internal affairs of nations are most important. As the world's largest multilateral organisation, the United Nations is the sole entity fully capable of creating that new environment. Viet Nam holds that, to fulfil that crucial role, the United Nations should be reformed in a way that will improve its effectiveness and democracy. We highly appreciate the on-going efforts of the High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, and hope that the Panel will be able to put forth recommendations which can serve as a good basis for member states to discuss in depth with a view to arriving at concrete measures to be implemented soon, thus meeting the expectations of the world public at large of a new, effective and more democratic United Nations. In this connection, Viet Nam is of the view that, for its democracy, effectiveness and transparency to be enhanced, for it to truly act on behalf of all UN members as stated in the UN Charter, both the non-permanent membership and the permanent membership of the Security Council should be enlarged and developing countries should be more adequately represented in this important body. We wish to reiterate our support for Japan, Germany, India and other capable countries from different continents to become permanent members of the Security Council once the Council is enlarged.

A more peaceful, fairer and more favourable environment for development requires international economic relations based on equality, mutual benefits, shared responsibilities and the realization of commitments. Developed countries should seriously realize their commitments to allocate 0.7% of GDP for ODA, provide broader, faster and deeper debt relief to poor nations, finance development projects and create fairer and more favourable conditions for developing nations to access the world market and to join the WTO.

Viet Nam holds that regional and inter-regional cooperation and new partnerships between developed and developing countries are effective measures to put in place a fair and favourable condition for development and make sure that all nations will benefit from the present process of globalisation. We welcome the initiative on a new strategic partnership between Asia and Africa which is being discussed among countries of the two continents. The initiative "New Partnership for Africa's Development" (NEPAD) is highly commendable. Viet Nam attaches great importance to promoting South-South cooperation, especially with African countries, as manifested in the 2+1 formula, in which Viet Nam and an African country with the participation of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) cooperate in agricultural development. With a view to increasing cooperation with and assistance to developing nations, we call for an end to unjust embargoes, especially the unilateral embargo against Cuba which has been in place for years now and which has caused untold difficulties and sufferings to the Cuban people.

It is Viet Nam's consistent policy to support the just cause of the Palestinian people in the struggle for their inalienable rights. We call on the parties concerned to refrain from and cease acts of violence and actively participate in the implementation of the Peace Roadmap towards a just and lasting solution that takes into account the interests of the parties concerned for the sake of peace and stability in the Middle East.

Restoring peace and security and reconstructing Iraq are pressing needs of the people of this country at present. Viet Nam is concerned about the escalating violence against innocent civilians. We hope that the situation in Iraq will soon be stabilized so that the Iraqi people can focus on their national reconstruction and development. The United Nations should play a more active role in Iraq in commensurate with its mandate. Viet Nam attended the Conference on the Reconstruction of Iraq and is willing to involve more actively in this process.

Mr. President,

In our national reform and development process over the past 18 years, we have surmounted enormous challenges to realize the goal of "a rich people, a strong country, a just, democratic and civilized society". Encouraging results have been recorded. Over the past 10 years, our average annual GDP growth has been maintained at as high as 7.4% with the number of poor households reduced by half. Special importance has been given to people-centred development. We are resolved to sustain high economic growth in combination with the development of culture, the advancement of social progress and equality, the improvement of living conditions for the people and, most important, the achievement of the goal of becoming a industrialized country by 2020. With substantial initial achievements and the right path we have embarked on, the United Nation

Development Programme in its Third Report on the Implementation of Millennium Development Goals in Viet Nam in 2003 assessed that Viet Nam is capable of overcoming challenges to reach the MDGs set in the UN Millennium Declaration. We wish to take this opportunity to express our deep gratitude to the UN agencies for their effective assistance. The UN agencies in Viet Nam have taken important steps to further enhance cooperation effectiveness, especially those within the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). We are committed to continuing to work with them in striving for the achievement of the MDGs.

In our reform process, Viet Nam pursues a foreign policy of openness, independence, sovereignty, diversification and multilateralisation of relations and is willing to be a friend and a reliable partner of all countries striving for independence, peace, development and co-operation. Increasing regional and inter-regional cooperation is a consistent policy and an inseparable component of the Vietnamese Government's policy towards greater international integration. Viet Nam is actively participating in economic cooperation activities within the frameworks of APEC, ASEM and ASEAN.

Within ASEAN, Viet Nam works closely with other ASEAN countries to promote regional cooperation through such initiatives as those concerning the building of the ASEAN Security Community, the ASEAN Economic Community and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community, the Initiative for ASEAN Integration, the initiative on sub-Mekong regional cooperation and development triangles. ASEAN attaches great importance to promoting its relationship with dialogue partners. Active steps are being taken to establish free trade areas between ASEAN and China, Japan and the Republic of Korea and promote closer economic partnership with the US, EU, Russia and India, including free trade areas. Viet Nam believes that multi-faceted cooperation in South East Asia will make important contributions to building a peaceful, fair and favourable environment for regional countries.

As an evidence of the determination to participate more actively in inter-regional cooperation frameworks, Viet Nam is going to host the Fifth Asia-Europe Summit in Hanoi this October and the APEC Summit in 2006. We are trying to speed up the negotiations on our accession to the WTO. We are standing for election to a non-permanent seat in the Security Council for the term 2008-2009. In undertaking these important efforts, we look forward to enjoying the continued support and cooperation of the international community.

Mr. President,

Our global village is longing for a more peaceful, stable and favourable environment for development and shared prosperity. Striving together, we will turn that dream into reality.

Thank you./.