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EMBASSY OF THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM
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SPEECH OF VIETNAMESE FOREIGN MINISTER
NGUYEN CO THACH AT THE 35TH PLENARY SESSION OF
THE U.N. GENERAL ASSEMBLY, ON SEPTEMBER 25, 1980.

Mr. President,

The United Nations was founded 35 years ago.

In the past 35 years, the world has entered a new stage of development with the deepest changes in history. The unprecedented scientific and technological inventions have opened great possibilities for mankind to advance to new heights in economic development, in doing away with poverty and backwardness on this planet and in taking man into the era of space conquest, the era in which nature is made to serve the happiness of man.

On the other hand, the wonderful achievements of science and technology have also been used to manufacture the most sophisticated weapons which can destroy all materials, wealth and cultural projects which mankind has created on earth for thousands of years now. Every year, hundreds of billions of dollars have been poured into the arms race with the aim of researching and producing means of mass extermination. The present nuclear stockpiles are more than four and a half times bigger than the quantity needed to completely destroy life on the earth. In the fever of the arms race mankind has experienced long years of cold war in the 1950's and 1960's and many times stood at the brink of war of extermination.

It is a wonderful thing in a world so full of lethal

weapons humanity has triumphed, the last 35 years have been a period in which mankind has enjoyed the longest and firmest peace of this century. For the first time in history, the principles of peaceful co-existence and of settling all international disputes by peaceful means of negotiations have sunk deep roots into human society and have become universal principles guiding modern international relations.

These wonderful achievements have been made possible primarily by the fights and victories of the forces of peace and democracy, especially the Soviet Red Army in defeating fascism in World War II, thus seriously weakening the most bellicose forces. They are also due to the awakening of mankind to the danger of a new world shambles, the determination to prevent it and the ardent desire of hundreds of millions of people to maintain peace. If peace has been firmly and durably maintained it is as a result of the growth of the socialist countries and their policy of peace. It is also the result of the national liberation and national independence movements which have been developing for more than 30 years now and which have shattered the colonial system - the source of manpower and material supplies to the war mongering forces, and at the same time have weakened the most bellicose forces by means of liberation wars. The struggle of the peoples of various countries for peace and democracy has made an important contribution to thwarting the war p schemes.

At present, the aggressive imperialist forces are trying to join international reactionary forces in their attempt to drive mankind into a new arms race, rekindling the cold war and undermining peace and international detente, the expansionists and hegemonists are trying to sow discord among nations, to push countries into a chaos and to clamour that "the third world war is inevitable". The whole mankind should continue to heighten vigilance. However, the possibility to push back war and to defend peace now is greater than in the period before the second world war and the 1950's and 1960's. Gone is the time

when imperialism relied on its money and means of war to rule over peoples, especially since the US defeat in the Vietnam war. More than ever before, our peoples have real possibility to prevent world war, secure peace and international detente and promote peaceful co-existence among countries with different social systems.

Obviously, the trend of development of history is irreversible. The most important task of our peoples is to struggle against the attempt by imperialism and international reactionary forces to turn back the wheel of history.

The Vietnamese people pledge to do their best to contribute to mankind's common struggle for peace and international detente. We fully support the initiatives of the socialist and non-aligned countries aimed at easing international tension, reducing the arms race and eventually carrying out all round and resolute disarmament and peaceful co-existence, especially the Soviet Union's proposal on urgent measures to reduce the war danger expounded by Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko at the current session of the U.N. General Assembly. We hold that all international disputes must be settled by peaceful means through negotiations on the principle of equality and mutual benefit. Only in this way can the peace the world people have obtained over the last 35 years be lasting and durable.

Mr. President,

Over the past 35 years, the world people have had the great happiness to live in the longest peaceful years of this century, during this period, however, we Vietnamese people, who joined the allied forces in the fight against fascism and militarism in the second world war, have not enjoyed a single day of peace.

With their ambition to crush our people's will for independence and freedom the colonialist and imperialist forces successively imposed the bloodiest and longest colonial war on the peoples of Vietnam and other Indo-chinese countries.

Since 1975, the reactionary rulers of our northern neighbour have worked hand in glove with imperialism in conducting an all round hostile policy towards the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, waging a war of aggression against Viet Nam, impudently interfering in the internal affairs of the peoples on the Indochinese peninsula and now threatening war against our people.

We all remember that in the past, colonialism and imperialism cooked up the story that "Vietnam is an instrument for expansion of China and the Soviet Union" and concocted the Tonkin Gulf incident as a pretext for their criminal war of aggression against the Vietnamese people. Today, to disguise their expansionist and aggressive policy the rulers of the sole Asian country that has nuclear weapons have also claimed that "Viet Nam is an instrument for Soviet expansion in Southeast Asia".

The fact is that over the past 35 years, Southeast Asia has been one of the most unstable areas in the world, the only area where gunfire has never ceased, after World War 2 many Southeast Asian countries quickly became victims of colonialist wars. Then came the US imperialist bloody war in Viet Nam, Laos and Kampuchea. Also over the past 30 years and more, the rulers of the most populous country in the world through their overseas citizens and bandit gangs who pass themselves off as the most revolutionary, have interfered in the internal affairs of Southeast Asian countries, provoking protracted civil wars and rebellions, sabotaging the peaceful life of the people in the region and inciting those countries to oppose one another. They have so far lodged territorial claims both on land and on sea with almost all neighbouring countries. With regard to the Eastern Sea, they have ambitions to turn it into their own lake.

They occupied Vietnam's Hoanh Sa (Paracel) Archipelago in 1974 and are claiming sovereignty over our Truong Sa (Spratly) islands and have defined their territorial waters in the South China Sea as encompassing the entire whole exclusive economic zones and continental shelves

of Viet Nam, Malaysia, Indonesia and the Phillipines.

After the US defeat in Viet Nam, the Northern hegemonists on the one hand provoked a military conflict in Viet Nam Northern border areas, and also used their henchmen headed by Pol Pot to launch a war against Viet Nam from the Southern border, thus invading Viet Nam from two sides. At the same time, they seriously threatened the security and independence of Laos. The Kampuchean people's uprising, in coordination with the Vietnamese people's war of self defence overthrew the genocidal Pol Pot - Ieng Sary regime, shattering their vicious scheme. Not resigning themselves to their defeat, they continue to threaten war, frenziedly conduct sabotage, and seriously threaten the security, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Viet Nam, Laos and Kampuchea.

At the same time, they pressed other countries to carry out an embargo against the three Indochinese countries and launched a world - wide slander campaign against them. They hope to dominate the peoples of these countries. Taking advantage of the special situation of Laos which has a small population and no sea, they have sought to put pressure on this country, threatened intervention, carried out sabotage, instigated reactionary forces in Laos Western neighbour to make slanderous charges against Laos and provoke border conflicts as a pretext for cutting supply routes and carrying out an economic blockade in an attempt to subdue Laos and split it from the other two Indochinese countries.

They have rejected all proposals aimed to cease hostilities and restore peace on the Viet Nam - China border and to reestablish normal relations between the two countries. They have twice rejected the proposal for holding the third round of Viet Nam - China negotiations as they pledged to do in the last six months of 1980. They continually threaten to teach Viet Nam a second lesson. That constitutes an impudent challenge to an independent and sovereign country. It is an expression of the hegemonist of a big nation which gives itself the

right to teach lessons to other countries just as the US assumes the role of international gendarme and considers any area in the World as vital to its security interests.

It is well known that over the past 35 years, the peoples of the three Indochinese countries have endured great sacrifices in fighting for their independence against bloody aggression by the colonialists, imperialists and expansionists. However, to cover up their criminal activities, the aggressors have always hidden behind the signboards of opposing aggression, defending the right to self-determination and defending human rights to oppose the three Indochinese peoples. At present, they do not hesitate to openly support the genocidal Pol Pot Gang, the bloodiest violator of human rights in the century and work against the Kampuchean people and other Indochinese peoples as they have supported the South African racists, the Chilean fascists and the Israeli aggressors, while claiming themselves to be in the forefront of the defence of human rights in the World.

Looking back on the situation in Southeast Asia over the past 35 years, we can clearly see that the lack of peace and security in this region stems from the policy of aggression and intervention of the imperialist forces and hegemonism of a country which considers itself the centre of the World. On the other hand, the Vietnamese, Lao and Kampuchean peoples and the people of the countries in Southeast Asia are the victims. By their persevering struggle which defeated new and old forms of colonialism and expansionism, the Vietnamese, Lao and Kampuchean peoples have defended their national independence, and at the same time, made a contribution to the defence of peace and stability in Southeast Asia and the rest of the World.

Mr. President,

After their repeated failures in trying to revive the genocidal Pol Pot regime in Kampuchea, the international reactionary forces now nurture the illusion of reversing the Kampuchean situation.

They are working hand in glove with the imperialists, using a number of reactionary elements in a neighbouring country of Kampuchea to help Pot Pot's remnants and other Khmer reactionaries to oppose the Kampuchean people and creates an extremely tense situation along the Kampuchean - Thai border to obscure their criminal scheme. They have whipped up a new anti - Viet Nam campaign.

For a long time, Viet Nam, Laos and Kampuchea have been subjected to policies of aggression and annexation of Western imperialist countries and Northern expansionist forces. To implement their plans, the aggressors have always regarded the three Indochinese countries as one battlefield and have tried to sow discord between the peoples of the three countries and incited national enmities. To make these countries fight each other. To defend their independence and freedom, the Vietnamese Lao and Kampuchean peoples have closely united with one another and with the countries fighting against their common enemy, and this militant solidarity is a matter of vital importance to the interests of each nation. In this spirit, the Vietnamese Army have three times been shoulders to shoulders with the fraternal peoples of Laos and Kampuchea in the fight to defend the independence of their respective countries, in the struggle against colonialism, in the resistance against the US imperialist and at present, in the struggle against the Northern hegemonists. Respecting the national rights of Laos and Kampuchea, the Vietnamese army have two times, after the resistance against the French colonialist and after the struggle against the US imperialist, withdrawn back home. At present, the presence of the Vietnamese armed forces in Laos and Kampuchea is in accordance with the Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Co-operation between Viet Nam and Laos and between Viet Nam and Kampuchea aiming at defending together the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and the peaceful life and labour of the people of each country. The presence of the Vietnamese armed forces in Kampuchea and Laos threatens no one. During the past 35 years, while fighting together with the peoples of Laos and Kampuchea, the Vietnamese armed forces have never passed

beyond the three countries territories. Those who are most loudly crying about the presence of the Vietnamese army in Kampuchea are no one other than those who themselves have invaded Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea and committed unheard crimes against the three nations. At the peak of their aggressive war the U.S.A. had over half a million troops in Viet Nam and dropped 15 million tons of bombs over the head of the peoples of Viet Nam, Laos and Kampuchea. In history, China had dominated Vietnam for 1,000 years from the first to the 10th century, and since the 10th century up to now has on 10 occasions sent troops to invade Vietnam. In history, Laos and Kampuchea have always been victims of aggression by Thailand. In the past 40 years alone, Thailand has twice sent troops to invade Laos and Kampuchea. In history Vietnam has never invaded Thailand. But during the past 300 years Thailand has sent troops to invade Vietnam on 3 occasions. Those who are most loudly crying about the presence of Vietnamese army in Kampuchea are also those who most vigorously supported the US aggression against Viet Nam, Laos and Kampuchea, and did not voice their protests against the Israeli aggression against the Arab countries. The U.S. who fabricated the so called " use of toxic chemicals in Afghanistan, Kampuchea and Laos " had itself sprayed hundred of thousand of tons of toxic chemicals in South Vietnam (an average of 6Lbs/head) which annihilated the life of our people and the result of which is also being borne by American soldiers.

These historical realities prove that Vietnam and other Indochinese countries have never invaded any one, on the contrary, always been victims of foreign aggression.

Thailand itself had to openly state that its security is not threatened, and it refused the signing of a treaty of non-aggression against one another between Vietnam and Thailand and the establishment of a demilitarized zone at the Kampuchean-Thai border. The fact that imperialist and international reactionary forces are raising a hullabaloo about the so-called Viet Nam threatening Thailand and causing tense situation at the Kampuchean - Thai border is just a

Mr. President,

An end to the policy of aggression, intervention and war threats by the expansionists in collusion with imperialism against the national independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Southeast Asian countries is basic to the re-establishment of peace and stability in Southeast Asia.

The key to the Kampuchean issue is to cease the hostile policy of the international reactionary forces against Kampuchea, Laos and Viet Nam. The presence of Vietnamese armed forces in Kampuchea is aimed at opposing the threat of expansionism at the request of the peoples revolutionary Council of Kampuchea. The Vietnamese armed forces will withdraw from Kampuchea as soon as that threat no longer exists and as soon as the peoples revolutionary council of Kampuchea so requests, it is clear to the whole world that the Pol Pot clique is a horde of culprits with no place in Kampuchea. However, their supporters have tried to mis-represent the presence of Vietnamese armed forces in Kampuchea in the hope of maintaining their presence at the United Nations and continuing to use them as an instrument against the Kampuchean people and peace and stability in Southeast Asia.

It is common knowledge now that the genocidal Pol Pot clique have massacred three million Kampucheans, and it is a common belief that the overthrow of the Pol Pot clique has given the Kampuchean people a chance to revive from the ruins, and that a normal life is returning to Kampuchea which has been freed from the nightmare of genocide. No one can justify and attempt to legitimizing the genocidal Pol Pot clique to oppose the revival of the Kampuchean people. No one, under any pretext, can negate this glaring truth: The people's revolutionary council of Kampuchea is the only genuine and legal representative of the Kampuchean people, because it represents the Kampuchean people's aspirations to abolish the genocidal regime in the interests of their revival. The seat of Kampuchea at this forum must be given to the people's Revolutionary Council of Kampuchea.

There remain differences between the ASEAN countries and the Indochinese countries on the Kampuchean question. It is impossible to impose the ASEAN view on the Indochinese countries and the latter has never wanted to impose its views on the former. We regret that the proposal put forward by the ASEAN countries at this general assembly proves that they have not renounced their design to intervene in the internal affairs and grossly trample upon the sovereignty of Kampuchea and the other two Indochinese countries. This proposal cannot solve the main problem, of eliminating Chinese threats to the national independence, sovereignty as well as peace and security in Southeast Asia. The ASEAN countries and Indochinese countries should temporarily put their differences aside and together build Southeast Asia a zone of peace, stability and co-operation. These are the common interests of the Southeast Asian countries. We hold that if the ASEAN countries are bent on imposing their attitude to the Kampuchean question on the Indochinese countries as they have done, their deeds will not help settle the worsening situation in Southeast Asia. The Indochinese countries have respected the security of the ASEAN countries and they hope that the ASEAN countries will also honour the security of the Indochinese countries. Southeast Asian countries, especially the Indochinese and ASEAN countries, should join hands to build new relations based on mutual understanding, respect for the interests of each other, and peaceful co-existence aimed at turning Southeast Asia into a peaceful, and stable region, thus contributing to peace and security in the world.

Proceeding from these facts, once again we call on the ASEAN countries to respond positively to the proposals forwarded in the Vientiane statement of July 18, 1980 by the foreign ministers conference of Viet Nam, Laos and Kampuchea. They should begin by making positive responses to the proposals of the People's Republic of Kampuchea on the establishments of a demilitarized zone between Kampuchea and Thailand. WE are ready to hold immediate discussions with the Asean countries on the formation of a peaceful and stable region in Southeast Asia on the

basis of the Kuala Lumpur statement, the Kwatan principles, and the Vientiane statement. We are also ready to hold discussions with concerned countries aimed at solving disputes in the Eastern Sea so as to make this sea area a peaceful and cooperative zone among regional countries on the basis of respect for each country's rights concerning territorial water, continental shelves and exclusive economic zones, and respect for international communication lines on the sea and in the air.

We would like to inform the general assembly that, with the assistance of the UN Secretary General Kurt Waldheim, Vietnamese and Thai foreign ministers will meet at the UN in the very near future. We hope that this meeting will establish favourable conditions for restoring peace and stability in Southeast Asia.

At the same time, we have notified the UN Secretary General of the following agreements between the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam and the People's Revolutionary Council of Kampuchea the presence of Vietnamese armed forces in Kampuchea is aimed at opposing the Chinese threats to Kampuchea and Viet Nam and is at the request of the People's Revolutionary Council of Kampuchea. When these threats no longer exist and at the request of the PRCK, the Vietnamese armed forces will leave Kampuchea.

The strained situation along the Kampuchean - Thai border is threatening peace in this region. The establishment of a demilitarized zone along both sides of the Kampuchean - Thai border is the best measure for ensuring peace, security and stability in the border areas of Kampuchea and Thailand. With the help of the UN Secretary General, Kampuchea and Thailand will hold negotiations to settle the tense situation along the Kampuchean - Thai border on the basis of respect for each other's interests.

Proceeding from the situation of peace, security and stability along the Kampuchean - Thai border,

the governemnt of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam^{will} hold discussions with the People's Revolutionary Council of Kampuchea and decide on the wthdrawal of part of Vietnamese armed forces from Kampuchea.

Mr. President,

Together with the growth of the forces of peace, over the past 35 years the awakening of the oppressed and dependent nations has constituted a historical development that has overturned the international order which imperialism imposed on mankind. With determination not to live in poverty backwardness, oppression and exploitation of imperialism, these nations have risen up to control their own destinies. The colonial system which trampled heavily on mankind for over 300 years collapsed within decades, the foundation of a series of new states and their active participation in international political life has created favourable conditions for gradual formation of a new international order among independent, equal and sovereign states.

Being a nation which has experienced thousands of years of struggle against enemies many times stronger than itself fro national independence, the Vietnamese people have always consistantly sided with the peoples of Asia. Africa and Latin America in the fight for peace, national independence, democracy, people's welfare and social progress.

Because of the US imperialists' policy of playing the China card, Asia has now become a very strained region, its peace and security is being seriously jeopardized.

We highly value the initiatives of the Soviet Union, the constructive proposals of India which proceed from its foreign policy of peace and non-alignment, and the efforts made by other countries aimed at consolidating peace and security in Asia. We support the legitimste desire of nations to turn the Indian Ocean into a peaceful region and demand that the United States stop its efforts to strengthen its armed forces and military activities and to expand its military bases, particularly the Diegos Garcia base, and build new ones in this region. We support the initiatives of the Democratic Republic of Madagascar to convene a submit conference of countries concerned about peace in the Indian Ocean and we

declare that Viet Nam is ready to attend such a conference. We welcome the holding of the Indian Ocean conference in Colombo next year. We demand that the U.S. renounce its scheme to annex Micronesia, withdraw its troops from South Korea and stop its collusion with the expansionist in an attempt to prolong the division of Korea and stop its policy of aggression, intervention and subversion against the people of Afghanistan, Iran and other countries in the Indian sub-continent.

The Vietnamese people are determined to unite with the people and government of Afghanistan in the struggle to defend their revolutionary gains and their independence and sovereignty, we highly value the Soviet Union's comprehensive assistance to the Afghanistan people and government against aggressive intervention and conspiracy of the forces of imperialism and international reaction.

US imperialism colluding with international reaction is the biggest accomplice of the aggressive policy of Israeli Zionism against the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Arab peoples, which has rendered the already tense situation in the Middle East constantly explosive. The Vietnamese people fully support the struggle of the Palestinian people, whose sole genuine representative is the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) for the restoration of their fundamental national right including the right to establish an independent and sovereign state, and against US imperialism's scheme of imposing the separate Egyptian-Israeli accords. The Vietnamese people support the Arab peoples' struggle to recover all the territories occupied by the Israeli aggressors and to demand that Israel give up its scheme of permanently occupying Jerusalem, a sacred and inviolable territory of the Arab peoples.

Over the past 35 years, the African continent has undergone the deepest changes in its history. Africa's complexion has completely changed and African nations smashing slavery are joining fraternal nations in Asia and Latin America in building a new life. The Vietnamese

people warmly greet the African nations' latest achievement - the birth of the Democratic Republic of Zimbabwe and its admission to the U.N. We firmly support the struggle of the Namibian people and South African people under the leadership of the SWAPO and ANC against the brutal colonialist and apartheid domination of the South African racist and for genuine independence and self determination. The victories of the Zimbabwean people and other nations in Southern Africa can not be separated from the support of the front-line countries, the Organization of African Unity, the non-aligned movement and the world people. We fully support the fraternal Angolan people in the struggle to defend their independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity against the aggressive schemes and actions taken by the South African colonialists. The struggle of the people and government of the Saharwi Arab Democratic Republic led by the Polisario Front for the realization of their basic national rights continues to receive the sympathy and warm support of the Vietnamese people.

The policy of aggression, intervention and threats of forces of imperialism in collusion with international reaction is the greatest danger to the national independence peace and stability in central America and the Caribbean Sea as well as in other parts of the world.

Now, as in the past, the Vietnamese people continue to side with the fraternal Cuban people against the policy of political hostility, economic encirclement and military intimidation on the part of the US imperialist and international reaction. We demand that the U.S. give back to Cuba the Guantanamo naval base it has ^{been} illegally occupying.

We are pleased at the important victories of the governments and peoples of Nicaragua and Grenada in consolidating their independence and rebuilding their countries. We resolutely support the Panamanian people's struggle to exercise their sovereignty over the canal zone, we support the Jamaican people's struggle against the scheme of conspiracy and intervention of imperialism, and support the

Chilean people's struggle to overthrow the domination of the fascist Pinoche junta. We totally support the just struggle of the peoples of Puerto Rico and Belize for independence and self-determination against the domination by imperialism.

The Vietnamese people particularly express their solidarity with the people and the Revolutionary Democratic Front of El Salvador in the struggle against the fascist rule of the Salvadorean militarist junta and the threat of intervention by imperialism and for the right to live in independence and freedom and to decide their own destiny by themselves.

. The Independence of Asian, African and Latin American nations will not be consolidated and made firm and steady as long as they have not yet regained their mastery over natural resources after having overthrown the colonialist exploitation.

It is regrettable that the negotiations on the world economy have so far brought no results because of the shortsighted policies of imperialist countries. The Vietnamese people are doing their best to contribute to the struggle of the peoples in the developing countries to eliminate all forms of colonialism and neo-colonialism, regain their natural resources, put an end to all discrimination and inequality and set up new and equitable world economic order.

Mr. President,

On the 35 th anniversary of the United Nations Organization and the 20th anniversary of the proclamation of independence to colonial countries and peoples, our people note with joy that despite all schemes and machinations of imperialism and other international reactionaries to reverse the trend of historic development, the forces of peace, national independence, democracy and socialism have developed constantly. The strongly developing non-aligned movement which includes the great majority of developing countries

is an indispensable factor and plays an ever more important role in the world people's/^{common}struggle for peace, security and international co-operation.

Numerous difficulties and obstacles lie ahead of us. We should do all we can to overcome them and we are advancing into the 80s with confidence.

The Vietnamese people will spare no effort to contribute to the common cause of the people of the world.

Thank you, Mr. President.
