

PERMANENT MISSION
of the
SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM
to the United Nations, WTO
and Other International Organizations in Geneva



MISSION PERMANENTE
de la
REPUBLIQUE SOCIALISTE DU VIETNAM
auprès de l'Office des Nations Unies, WTO
et des autres Organisations Internationales à Genève

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STATEMENT

BY H.E.MR. PHAM BINH MINH

ASSISTANT FOREIGN MINISTER,

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF VIETNAM

AT THE HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT

THE 4TH SESSION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

(GENEVA, 13 MARCH 2007)

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BY H.E. MR. PHAM BINH MINH, ASSISTANT FOREIGN MINISTER
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(Geneva, 13 March 2006)

Mr. President,
Madame High Commissioner,
Excellencies,

At the outset, on behalf of the Vietnamese Delegation, I would like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to the contributions of Ambassador Luis Alfonso de Alba, President of Council for the last three important sessions of the Council. It is our confidence that again under your able leadership, our Fourth Session would be a fruitful one. May I assure you and the Bureau of our full support for your work.

Mr. President,

It was a real milestone for the Human Rights Council to be established when the world community celebrated the 60th Anniversary of the United Nations. It underscored the international commitment to construct an effective instrument to promote and protect human rights. Vietnam shares the view that the efforts of the United Nations system towards the universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, contribute to the stability and well-being necessary for peaceful and friendly relations among nations, and to the improvement of the conditions for peace and security as well as social and economic development of countries around the world.

In this regard, our newborn Council represents a great new opportunity to deal with new challenges in the area of human rights. In Vietnamese, we have a saying "*The first step is the most difficult one.*" So the Council has been going through its first year of existence, taking difficult steps in its efforts to carry out the commitment to provide equal treatment to both civil and political rights and economic, social and cultural rights, the right to development, as well as commitment not to allow confrontational approaches, exploitation of human rights for political purposes, selective targeting of individual countries for extraneous consideration and double standards in the conduct of its work. Let us praise the Council for its efforts. However, we are concerned to note that the trend of politicization and confrontation has continued. It is our earnest hope that the Council will be able to fulfill its commitment in its endeavor in the years to come.

Mr. President,

Viet Nam welcomes the important work carried out by the Council in the last three sessions: the Council has adopted resolutions on important issues, such as the

resolutions on "International Convention for the protection of all persons from Enforced Disappearance," on "The Right to Development" and many other issues essential to human rights promotion and protection. Not only that, four Special Sessions have been organized in that short period of time to deal with pressing and serious violations of human rights that need special attention and urgent actions from the world community.

We note that in its first year the Council has spent a considerable amount of time dealing with issues indispensable to long term activities, such as agenda building; method of work and procedure, Universal Periodic Review, expert advice and special procedures review. We also note that the Council is approaching the deadline of June 2007 for finalizing all the works on institutional building as set out in the Resolution 60/251. We highly appreciate efforts from all countries, especially by facilitators of the Working Groups. Though certain progress has been made, there are still major differences that need to be worked out. It is high time now for us to overcome divergences to reach consensus on institutional building matters, and to consolidate the Human Rights Council as an effective institutional body capable of adapting itself to the new challenges of this fast-changing world to better and efficiently defend the rights of people from all parts of the world.

In this respect, Vietnam would like to stress our view that: the UPR should be objective and transparent with consistent follow-up. It should be a result oriented, cooperative mechanism, based on a interactive dialogue, with the full involvement of the country concerned and with consideration given to its social and cultural specificities, level of development, as well as capacity-building needs. It should be complementary, not overlapping with the existing mechanism; we support rationalizing the various special procedures and formulating a code of conduct to make procedures more credible, impartial and effective. Vietnam is of the view that it is necessary to abolish what was the main cause leading to politicization, selectivity and double standards that undermined the credibility of the Commission in the past.

Mr. President,

The year 2006 continued to be a successful year for Vietnamese people in their cause of comprehensive reforms in which people lie in the center of economic and social policies. The people is indeed viewed as both the goal and driving force of the national construction. Achievements, among other things, are also reflected in the continued implementation of policies, laws and regulations to promote and protect human rights in all fields, among which are the enhancement of the various State mechanisms, especially the active role of the National Assembly, the strengthening of the People's Supreme Court, the People's Supreme Procuracy, administrative reforms, wider and more active participation of the people in various aspects of the national life, the increased religious activities, lively press... For example, as a result, in 2006, we have scored important achievements in socio-economic development, in terms of UNDP's Human Development Index (HDI), Viet Nam rank has continued to improve; our economy grew at a rather high rate of 8.1 - 8.2% (the average growth rate target for the 5 years 2006-2010 of 7.5-8% per annum), the living standards of the Vietnamese people have increased by two folds in the last 10 years, poverty reduction gained major achievement, the poor household rate fell to 19%, compared to 22% in 2005. There are

now 553 print newspapers and 200 electronic newspapers; about 550 million copies of all kinds of mass media per year (in 1990, there were only 258 newspapers and journals); religious activities have never been more profound and lively as they are today.

In Vietnam today, a high priority for the period of 2006 - 2010 is to build a democratic society where all the policies, laws and regulations of the State are for the interest and benefits of the people, with the contribution of opinion from the people. It would be a society where state institutions are organized with mechanisms to ensure democratic participation of the people in all fields, such as economic, political, social and cultural fields. That is to build the rule of law with the continued reform of the organization and function of the National Assembly, the enhancement of administrative reform, the building of a transparent, strong, democratic, strict and clear judicial system so as to guarantee justice and human rights.

Mr. President,

The full realization of human rights is the common goal of countries throughout the world and an important goal for Viet Nam in our efforts to build a democratic and prosperous society. Vietnam once again reaffirms our dedication to the work of the Human Rights Council and strongly commits to support every effort to strengthen international human rights cooperation, both bilateral and multilateral, on the basis of equal, constructive, mutual-respect and understanding for the common goal of promoting and protecting human rights.

Thank you for your attention./.