



**STATEMENT BY H.E. NGUYEN XUAN PHUC  
PRIME MINISTER OF THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM  
AT THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE 73<sup>RD</sup> UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
FOR A WORLD OF PEACE, EQUALITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT  
(New York, 27 September 2018)**

*Your Excellency Madame María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, President of the 73<sup>rd</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly,*

*Your Excellency Mr. António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations,*

*Ladies and gentlemen,*

It is my great honor to deliver this statement at the General Debate of the 73<sup>rd</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly under the theme of: *“Making the United Nations relevant to all people: Global Leadership and Shared Responsibilities for Peaceful, Equitable and Sustainable Societies”*.

I would like to congratulate Madam Garces on your election as the President of the 73<sup>rd</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly. I do believe that under your leadership, the Session shall be a great success.

May I also express my appreciation for the very important initiatives that Secretary-General Guterres has championed since taking office.

On behalf of the Government and people of Viet Nam, allow me to express my sincere gratitude to the General Assembly for the minute of silence in memory of the late President of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam Tran Dai Quang who recently passed away.

*Madam President,*

Today, mankind has yet to forget the scourge of the two World Wars of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, since the birth of the United Nations in 1945, world wars have become a thing of the past. The foundations of peace on our planet has continued to be reinforced, thanks to the efforts of the United Nations - the largest multilateral organization, where most countries assemble.

Over the last 70 years, the United Nations has played an enormous role, exerting tireless effort to preserve peace, prevent conflicts and wars, and realize the purposes and principles as codified in the United Nations Charter.

We have seen significant achievements in recent years in global cooperation and development, ranging from the Convention on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, to the reforms of the United Nations, to the realization of the 2015 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the adoption and implementation of the

2030 Agenda. The United Nations has also been vital in the work to address global issues: poverty reduction, protection of women and children, promotion of human rights, improvement of healthcare, culture and education, preservation of the environment, and response to climate change.

Today the United Nations has truly become a symbol of global solidarity, the embodiment of humanity and progress, and where our aspiration to strive for a world of peace, prosperity and equality, are realized.

**2. Viet Nam** has been a companion to the United Nations and contributed to the noble goals pursued by the Organization over the last 70 years. We are a staunch supporter of the central role of the United Nations in the multilateral international system, and have actively joined in efforts to realize the fundamental cooperation pillars of the United Nations: the maintenance of global peace and security, development cooperation, and the protection and promotion of human rights.

Once a poor, under-developed, food-deficit country, Viet Nam has recorded average annual GDP growth of over 6% over the last 20 years, to become among the world's largest food exporters. Since 2010, we have become a middle-income developing country and the living standards of nearly 100 million of our citizens have improved dramatically. By actively engaging in international integration, Viet Nam enjoys free trading relations with nearly 60 major countries and partners in the world as a result of its membership of 16 Free Trade Agreements (FTAs), some of which are in the final stage of negotiations. Most recently, we successfully hosted the 2017 APEC Year, the 132<sup>nd</sup> Inter-Parliamentary Union General Assembly, the 2018 World Economic Forum on ASEAN, the 6<sup>th</sup> Greater Mekong Sub-region Cooperation Summit, and are working towards the 2025 Vision for the ASEAN Community, which aims to strengthen ASEAN centrality in the evolving regional architecture. Viet Nam has also taken the initiative and taken part in many important UN mechanisms, contributing responsibly in many different areas.

Viet Nam is also making greater efforts to promote justice and sustainable development, foster equality and support for disadvantaged groups, protect the environment, and ensure rights for all citizens, while upholding the spirit of dialogue and cooperation in the area of human rights. We always attach importance to preserving cultural and natural heritages and national identity, and are one of the few countries having accomplished multiple 2015 Millennium Development Goals ahead of schedule, particularly on poverty reduction.

It is our consistent policy to uphold the United Nations Charter and the fundamental principles of international law in the settlement of international disputes through peaceful means, including in the South China Sea, which should be addressed on the basis of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and the safeguard of maritime security and safety and freedom of navigation and over-flight.

Cooperation and assistance from the international community, including the United Nations, has been extremely valuable to Viet Nam's achievements in sustainable development, international integration and poverty reduction. On this occasion, on behalf of the Vietnamese Government and people, I would like to

express my sincere gratitude to the United Nations, and all countries and international organizations who have lent their active and effective assistance to Viet Nam.

*Madam President,*

3. Our planet is experiencing a rapid evolution, propelled by the scientific and technological breakthroughs in the Fourth Industrial Revolution, as well as the irreversible globalization. This opens up a range of new opportunities to guide mankind into a new era of economic growth never seen before in the history of our civilization, thus further bolstering the global main streams of peace, cooperation and development. Yet the world is also faced with new, immense challenges. World peace has yet to be guaranteed. The situation on the Korean Peninsula has seen new progress. In the Middle East, Africa and elsewhere, conflicts or the threat of conflict are extant still, and immigration remains a pressing matter for many countries.

Power politics, the use or threat of force, and the rise of unilateral measures continue to be threats to international peace and stability. Injustice and inequality remain in many parts of the world. Risks and instabilities remain in global development. The impacts of climate change and environmental pollution are widespread. Poverty is still a major challenge with nearly 750 million still living in extreme poverty. Among them are many children suffering from hunger and deprivation, without access to healthcare or proper education.

No single nation, regardless of their might or wealth, can singlehandedly address these enormous global challenges. They require the common efforts and collaboration of all nations. I would like to suggest that a concept of "dual responsibility" be universally upheld. Each nation shall take additional responsibility for addressing global issues; and each individual shall take additional responsibility as a global citizen. Against this backdrop, I share Secretary-General Guterres' view that the role of the United Nations has become all the more important in the creation of new foundations to more effectively address global challenges. We must continue highlighting the role of the United Nations, and join hands for a world of peace, equality and sustainable development.

In this process, it is my hope that major powers and developed countries shall, by taking meaningful actions, play an exemplary role in maintaining peace and fostering development. The United Nations General Assembly *should* be the heart of cooperation among countries and peoples for peace, equality and sustainable development.

We support lifting the unilateral embargo on Cuba, so that this nation may exercise its freedom to participate equitably and fairly in economic and trading relations in accordance with international law.

4. Peace, freedom and prosperity have always been the desire and aspiration of all peoples. In the age of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, mankind's progress is measured not only by the feats of technological advancement, but peace and prosperity first and foremost; and even the smallest opportunity for peace must be cherished and nurtured. From our long struggle for freedom and independence, Viet Nam understands profoundly the value of peace, equality, self-determination, the right to the pursuit of happiness, and the democratic values extolled by the United Nations Charter. The voice of small nations and the aspiration of the disadvantaged

need to be respected, heard, and shared. This is the foundation for sustainable and inclusive development, one that leaves no one behind. This is the foundation of social stability, to guarantee the rights and harness the creativity of every person.

Today, it is vital that the United Nations engage in strong and comprehensive reforms, improving its effectiveness, democracy and transparency to better fulfill its *indispensable* role in leading efforts to address global challenges. As the Secretary General had quoted in his opening remarks the words of the esteemed, late Secretary General Kofi Annan: ' We can master our destiny it only if we face it together. And that, my friends, is why we have the United Nations.' That is also the reason why, immediately after the establishment of the Vietnamese State on September 2<sup>nd</sup> 1945, in January 1946, the beloved President Ho Chi Minh of the Vietnamese people submitted a request for UN membership.

I ask you now: What do we want the UN to be? In answering this question, we must applaud the reform proposals that Secretary-General Guterres have brought forward, particularly on the repositioning of the United Nations Development System. I propose that the UN strengthen cooperation with the various regions, particularly the UN – ASEAN High-level Cooperation mechanism, highlighting the UN more within ASEAN, and ASEAN more, within the UN.

5. Viet Nam takes pride in being an active member of the United Nations. Ours is a foreign policy of independence, self-reliance, peace, cooperation and development, multilateralization and diversification of foreign relations, and active and engaged international integration. With this policy, we hope to make greater contributions to the creation of multilateral mechanisms and fulfillment of the common responsibilities of the international community. For Viet Nam, we have dispatched a level-2 field hospital to the UN peacekeeping mission in South Sudan.

Viet Nam has submitted our candidacy for non-permanent membership of the United Nations Security Council for the 2020 – 2021 term. I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the 53 countries of the Asia-Pacific group for endorsing Viet Nam as the sole candidate of the Group, and to many others for your extensive support so far for our candidature. At this most prestigious forum, on behalf of the Vietnamese Government and people, I would like to call for, and very much hope to receive, the support of all member states. Viet Nam is committed to be an active and responsible member of the international community and the United Nations.

*Ladies and gentlemen,*

We have every reason to believe that, given our global partnership, solidarity and high level of commitment, the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals and 2030 Agenda shall triumph, living up to the aspirations of all mankind: for a world of peace, equality and sustainable development.

May the 73<sup>rd</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly be a resounding success.

*Thank you for your kind attention!*