This is a translation of an editorial which appeared in the Vietnam Workers’ Party paper NHAN DAN on August 17, 1972, on the occasion of the Conference of Foreign Ministers of Non-Aligned Countries held in Georgetown, Guyana.

An important international political event of profound significance has just taken place at the Conference of Foreign Ministers of Non-Aligned Countries in Georgetown, Guyana. The conference, reflecting the will of almost half the total number of countries in the world with an aggregate population of over one thousand million, focused its discussions and adopted many resolutions on questions relating to the struggle against colonialism and neo-colonialism, against the imperialists’ wars of aggression, and for peace and national independence. It accepted as full members the delegation of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam and that of the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia.

The Georgetown conference clearly is a conference of solidarity among nations, first of all the nations of Asia, Africa and Latin America struggling against US-led imperialism and colonialism. Since its first conference, held in September 1961, the movement of the non-aligned countries has witnessed new steps of development both in the number of its participants and the content of its activities. Starting with 25 countries, it now has a membership of 64 countries and 6 national-liberation movements. The voice of opposition to imperialism, colonialism is prevailing more and more over the wrong note, with the tide of national independence now surging in all continents.
The participation of representatives of the South Vietnamese resistance and those of the Cambodian resistance to the conference as titular members is an expression of the warm feelings of other nations toward the just struggles of the Indochinese peoples. It is a strong and precious support for our stand concerning a correct political solution to the problems of Viet Nam and the other countries of Indochina. This support is encouraging the three Indochinese peoples to persist in and step up their resistance against US aggression and for national salvation, till the complete triumph of this stand.

While US imperialism is using the “Nixon doctrine” and taking advantage of the détente among a number of countries to negate the RSVN Provisional Revolutionary Government and the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia, this event reflects the cordial feelings of the Third World nations toward the just patriotic struggle of the nations of Indochina. This recognition is an affirmation of the will of the Third World nations to take their destinies into their own hands and oppose all schemes by the US imperialists to settle international problems with certain countries in disregard of their interests and aspirations.

The movement of non-aligned countries representing the third force made its appearance after the formation in the world of two systems -- the socialist system and the capitalist system. The Third World is made up of those countries that have got rid of colonialist rule or are carrying on their struggle, to achieve full national independence. These countries have in fact become a great anti-imperialist force. The independence movement, developing incessantly, has become a trend of history, which together with two other trends -- the socialist trend and the peace and democratic trend -- forms a mighty revolutionary torrent which is shaking imperialism and colonialism to their very foundations. The storm of revolution is blowing in Asia, Africa and Latin America. The centre of this storm, as recognised in fact by the whole of mankind, lies in Viet Nam and the other countries on the Indochinese peninsula, which has been singled out by US imperialism -- the international gendarme, the enemy number one of all nations and the biggest exploiter and aggressor in the present-day world -- as the main focus of its efforts to check the national liberation movement and to test its various strategies of neo-colonialist war. The victories of the peoples of Viet Nam, Laos, and Cambodia and the defeats of the US aggressors are playing an important role in accelerating the movement of national liberation and the movement for peace and democracy, helping to ensure the security of the socialist countries, and weakening US imperialism.

Because of its position and character, the patriotic struggle of the Indochinese countries has won the sympathy and support of the socialist countries, the working class in various countries, the peace - independence - and freedom-loving nations, and progressive mankind.

In the global strategy US imperialism has been pursuing since the end of World War Two, neo-colonialism forms an important part. US imperialism schemes to replace the old-type colonialism practised by the other imperialist countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America by its own neo-colonialism, and to turn these vast regions of the world into the rear area of the US, a spring-board and a ring to encircle, contain and attack the socialist countries. This strategy of the US, however, is an anachronism born at a time when deep changes have taken place in the world: the socialist system has become the factor that decides the trend of development of human society: imperialism and colonialism, condemned by history, is in a process of crisis and disintegration; and the enslaved nations have risen up to win back the right to live in independence and freedom.

As the political representative of the American military-industrial complex, the Nixon clique, the most reactionary and warlike clique of all headed by Nixon, is carrying out a new global strategy called the “Nixon doctrine”. This strategy aims at using a policy of equilibrium of forces among the big powers and of division of the socialist countries, starting from their main elements, as a shield which would give US imperialism complete freedom of action in checking, by means of violence, the national liberation movement, first of all in hurling back the patriotic struggle of the nations on the Indochinese Peninsula. The offensive and uprising that has been going on without interruption in South Viet Nam since March 30 is breaking the backbone and washing away big chunks of the “Vietnamisation” strategy. The aggressors have had to hurriedly re-Americanise the war by throwing in huge American air-naval forces, going far beyond the limits of
a war fought according to the “Nixon doctrine”. These great material and technological forces and the unprecedented barbarities of the US, however, have failed to stop the heroic fight of the armed forces and people in both zones of Viet Nam. Nor can it check the valiant struggle of the resistance forces in Laos and Cambodia. The complete defeat of the US aggressors is inevitable.

The independence movement continues to rise in various countries while Nixon is leaving no stone unturned to contain it. We have witnessed, in recent years, the emergence of many independent countries: Bangla Desh, Sri Lanka, and many others which swell the ranks of the free nations. The Georgetown conference, held in the neighbourhood of the United States, is a reflection of this new situation. This conference clearly embodies a new trend of the time: the small nations are standing up to shape their own destinies in defiance of all sinister schemes by the imperialists and all manifestations of rightist opportunism and unprincipled compromise.

The victory of the national liberation movement and of the Georgetown conference means indeed the failure of the “Nixon doctrine”. This victory should serve as a severe warning to those who are departing from the great, invincible revolutionary thoughts of the time, and are pitifully mired on the dark and muddy road of unprincipled compromise.

What is the fundamental situation in the world today? Are the revolutionary forces repelling imperialism or is the latter ruling the roost? Is the world revolution on the upswing or is it receding? What force is deciding the trend of development of history? Who is the main foe of the world revolution? On which side is revolution and which side counter-revolution? The answers to those fundamental questions used to be quite simple, but now unhealthy trends have thrown everything into confusion and the crafty imperialists have also interfered to blur the line between right and wrong, between black and white.

For the Vietnamese people and revolutionaries who are fighting on the frontline of the struggle against US aggression, for peace, national independence, democracy and socialism, to clarify the above problems takes on important significance in both theory and practice.

We are living in an epoch in which the invincible revolutionary ideas of marxism-leninism have won the hearts and minds of hundreds of millions of people; scientific socialism has become a vivid reality for over a billion people and is deeply influencing the trend of development of history.

Our generation, for whom history has reserved uncommon bliss, has witnessed many successive revolutionary upheavals unknown for centuries, even tens of centuries. Once every few years, it seems, a revolution would break out and achieve success, and many newly independent countries have appeared.

We have also witnessed the disintegration and collapse of imperialistic forces formerly believed to be eternally lording it over the world. The myth of the tremendous, almost matchless might of US imperialism has been exploded. The “wonders” of the scientific and technical revolution in the US have quickly shown their negative side and today the erroneous belief that the powerful productive forces of US imperialism can war off economic crises and repel the revolution has been rejected by facts.

Those who persevere in revolution and remain faithful to marxism-leninism have witnessed the successive fiascos and bankruptcies of opportunistic trends of all hues, some of them having ruled the roost for some time.

The present detente is the product of a world situation which has changed: though having to overcome great difficulties in their march forward, the revolutionary forces continue to develop whereas imperialism is facing a new period in its general crisis. An overall crisis is unfolding in the US -- the main bastion and the last prop of imperialism. The repeated setbacks suffered by the US everywhere, including its bitter defeats in Viet Nam, have turned it into a “clay-footed colossus”. In the US, the masses, especially the youth, are demanding a change in US policy.

Genuine detente between the nations rests on respect of the independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of all countries, big and small. But, for US imperialism, detente is but a perfidious policy aimed at carrying out schemes of aggression, enslavement, subversion, and peaceful regression through new means, that is, the “Nixon doctrine”. The imperialists pursue a policy of detente with some big countries in order to have a
free hand to consolidate their forces, oppose the revolutionary movement in the world, repress the revolution in their own countries, bully the small countries and stamp out the national liberation movement while never giving up their preparations for a new world war.

With regard to the socialist countries, the defence of peace and peaceful co-existence cannot be dissociated from the movement for independence, democracy and socialism in the world. For a country to care for its immediate and narrow interests while shirking its lofty internationalist duties not only is detrimental to the revolutionary movement in the world, but will also bring unfathomable harm to itself in the end. The vitality of marxism-leninism and proletarian internationalism manifests itself in revolutionary deeds, not in empty words. In the present-day world we can find many examples proving that very seldom do genuine national interests clash with the overall interest of world revolution. A principled policy of détente with imperialistic countries must aim at consolidating and strengthening the revolutionary forces, isolating and dividing the class enemy, and aiming the spearhead of the revolutionary forces at the leading imperialist warmongers. To achieve détente in certain concrete conditions in order to push forward the offensive of the revolutionary forces is correct; but in order to serve one's narrow national interests, one is to help the most reactionary forces stave off dangerous blows, one is indeed throwing a life-buoy to a drowning pirate: this is a harmful compromise advantageous to the enemy, and disadvantageous to the revolution.

The struggle aimed at solving this question: "which will win -- socialism or capitalism" in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism on a world scale is long, difficult and complex, diverse in form and content and in concrete steps. This is a struggle that is both violent and non-violent, one that is at the same time military, political, economic and ideological. The revolutionary waves that are surging up are precisely parts of the process of development of this transitional period. To defend peace, prevent a world war and without yielding on questions of principle, accept those indispensable compromises aimed at increasing the masses' revolutionary potentialities -- such is a truly revolutionary policy.

We hold that the consolidation and strengthening of the socialist forces is an important historical task. In the world, a great many countries still have to bring their liberation struggle to completion and hundreds of millions of workers must still be freed from servitude.

The existence and development of the world socialist system is the factor deciding the trend of development of history; but this trend can only materialise through the unrelenting revolutionary struggle of thousands of millions of people.

Revolution in any one country is part and parcel of the world revolution and the revolutions in various countries impel and support one another.

The triumph of the revolution in one country does not mean the end but is only the beginning of the thousand-league road leading to world communism. Socialism and communism are a thousand times finer than feudalism and capitalism. Proletarian internationalism towers above bourgeois nationalisms and national egoism. The revolution is a path strewn with fragrant flowers. Opportunism is a fetid quagmire. We communists must persevere in the revolution and not compromise with our adversaries. Led by our Party, our people have been fighting for decades, successively opposing three truculent imperialisms and their reactionary lackeys. Hundreds of thousands of our comrades and fellow-countrymen have laid down their lives for national independence and freedom, for the emancipation of the working class and of the oppressed peoples in the world. We firmly maintain our marxist-leninist stand, which is also that of patriotism and proletarian internationalism. We fight perseveringly, unyielding and uncompromisingly. The battles now going on in Quang Tri province stand out as a new epic. Our people in both the South and the North are fighting with miraculous strength. The awesome air and naval power of the US imperialists has failed to get the better of our people; on the contrary their aggressive will is being crushed by the latter's strength.

We are resolved to persist in our revolutionary effort in order to build a peaceful, unified, independent, democratic and prosperous Viet Nam.