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Items 42, 72, 130 and 137 of the
preliminary list*
QUESTION OF PEACE, STABILITY AND
CO-OPERATION IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA
REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
THE DECLARATION ON THE
STRENGTHENING OF INTERNATIONAL
SECURITY
PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES
BETWEEN STATES
DEVELOPMENT AND STRENGTHENING OF
GOOD-NEIGHBOURLINESS BETWEEN
STATES

SECURITY COUNCIL
Forty-third year

Letter dated 21 March 1988 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i.
of the Permanent Mission of Viet Nam to the United Nations
addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government and further to my previous letters, I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of a note sent on 17 March 1988 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its enclosure circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under items 42, 72, 130 and 137 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) NGUYEN BINH THANH
Acting Permanent Representative

* A/43/50.

ANNEX

Note dated 17 March 1988 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Viet Nam addressed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam presents its compliments to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China and wishes to convey the following:

True to its constant policy of granting precedence to the fundamental interests of both peoples, the Government of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam has continuously worked for the normalization of relations between the two countries and the restoration of the traditional friendship between the people of Viet Nam and that of China and will henceforth continue to persevere along this line.

It is regrettable that, while it still has to respond to Viet Nam's goodwill, the Chinese side has recently dispatched its navy to occupy the two reefs of Chu Thap and Chau Vien and a number of other reefs within the Vietnamese archipelago of Truong Sa, and attacked unarmed Vietnamese freighters in the proximity of Sinh Ton Island of this same archipelago. The aforesaid actions by the Chinese side not only fail to contribute to the settlement of differences but even aggravate the tension in the relations between the two countries, cause deep concern among South-East Asian countries and run counter to the growing trend of dialogue in the region.

Adhering to the principle of the non-use of force in the settlement of disputes between States, the Vietnamese side unswervingly advocates talks to solve disputes between the two countries concerning the Truong Sa Archipelago as well as their common border and the Hoang Sa Archipelago. The Vietnamese side is interested in the view expressed on 24 September 1975 by former Vice-Premier Deng Xiao Ping during the talks held with late General Secretary Le Duan in Beijing, according to which there exists a dispute between the two countries over the two archipelagos that can be discussed among them. In the years 1974, 1977 and 1978, the two countries in effect held talks regarding problems of borders on land and in the Tonkin Gulf, talks that have been temporarily suspended since March 1980 at the proposal of the Chinese side.

In the above-mentioned spirit, the Government of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam proposes that the Vietnamese and the Chinese Governments designate representatives for the holding of talks, the level, venue and date of which should be mutually agreed upon. Meanwhile the Vietnamese side proposes that both sides commit themselves not to use force to settle disputes.

It is hoped that, in the interest of the two peoples and for the sake of peace, stability and co-operation in South-East Asia, the Chinese side will react favourably to this constructive proposal on the part of Viet Nam. The Government of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam is convinced that the eventual holding of talks between Viet Nam and China in order to solve the problems already mentioned conforms to the interests and aspiration of the two peoples and will be widely welcomed by regional and world opinion.
