



Press Release Secretary-General

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SECRETARY-GENERAL THANKS VIET NAM FOR GIFT TO UNITED NATIONS

Following is the text of Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali's remarks today on the occasion of the presentation by President Le Duc Anh of Viet Nam of a gift to the United Nations:

It is an honour for the United Nations to receive this gracious and generous gift. In the exquisite detail, we can almost see the Vietnamese craftsmen at work on the original of this drum 3,000 years ago.

Workers on an irrigation project on the Red River discovered the original just over a hundred years ago. The Dong Son bronze drums celebrate the miracle of harvest. The workers on the river ensure that its waters will make the harvest possible.

All through my years as an Egyptian diplomat I urged that the Nile River become the lifeline of a great African economic renaissance. So I personally am moved by the significance of this work of art from the Red River of Viet Nam.

For the United Nations, these few days have seen a harvest of hope. We are honoured by the presence of more than 150 leaders of nations. We are strengthened by their commitment to the world Organization.

But harvests require patience and hard work. The United Nations is only 50 years young. When we think of the history of this drum, 50 years is only the start of the season of growth. Like a young plant the United Nations must be protected and nourished. Storms may shake it. But no tempest should uproot it. The water it requires must be assured. As it grows, it, itself, will serve as a source of life.

To the Government and people of Viet Nam, our deepest thanks. To the National Museum of History of Viet Nam, and its workers who made this replica, our gratitude and admiration. They have given us a symbol to cherish.

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