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QUESTION OF THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS
IN ANY PART OF THE WORLD, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO COLONIAL
AND OTHER DEPENDENT COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES

Letter dated 16 February 1983 from the delegation of the Socialist Republic of
Viet Nam addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATION OF VIET NAM REGARDING THE REPLY BY THE
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC (ESCAP) 1/

(Human rights and massive exoduses)

Viet Nam's points of view and its policy concerning the departure of persons from the country have been fully and clearly stated in numerous international forums, including the United Nations General Assembly. However, since the reply of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Pacific to the Secretary-General on the question of "Human rights and mass exoduses" mentioned a number of incorrect "reasons" for such departures, the following clarification of some specific points seems necessary:

1. In example 2 of the reply, the reason given, namely "Political and economic discontent", is cryptic to say the least and may give a distorted picture of the true situation. It passes over the true, deep-seated causes, which are:

(a) Thirty years of continuous wars of aggression, colonialism and, particularly during the last twenty years in the south of the country, neo-colonialism;

(b) The grave and enduring consequences of this recent past, particularly the distortion and devastation of the economy and the unprecedented disruption of society and morals in the south;

(c) A succession of natural disasters in recent years, aggravating the difficulties of the post-war period;

1/ E/CN.4/1983/33, Annex III, pp. 1-3.

(d) Above all, the many-faceted war of attrition, currently being waged by China, in collusion with the United States, with the declared intent of "bleeding" Viet Nam and bringing it to its knees. The deliberate policy of intimidation and incitement to flee the country is an integral part of this joint strategy, the purpose of which is to destabilize Viet Nam's political system, further disrupt the economy inter alia, by means of the brain drain and the siphoning off of skilled labour - and make provision for hiring armed mercenaries and others for the activities of undermining, vilifying and discrediting Viet Nam vis-à-vis international opinion.

2. The reason invoked in example 5, namely "Expulsion of Vietnamese of Chinese descent" is still more tendentious. At the end of 1977, and especially in April 1978, alarming rumours were deliberately spread by agents of Peking in the "Hoa" (Vietnamese of Chinese descent) colony, warning of the danger of an imminent war between the two countries and urging them to return to China. This campaign to intimidate the Hoa and incite them to flee - instigated and sustained by Peking - is a subversive manoeuvre of the type employed by this same Power in previous decades against Burma, Indonesia and other South-East Asian countries. In the case of Viet Nam, it was part of a two-pronged offensive involving internal subversion and external aggression in various forms: war by proxy, followed by direct war and lastly, the present multi-faceted war of attrition. The situation of tension, disorder and insecurity thus created since April 1978 was to facilitate the advance of the forces of Pol Pot at the end of 1978 on the Mekong Delta in the direction of Ho Chi Minh City, and pave the way for the invasion of our northern provinces by the forces Power in February 1979. The "refugees" thus created provided the invaders with commando units and scouts since they were familiar with the country invaded. Some of these Hoa were shipped off to other South-East Asian countries, for equally shameful purposes.

The allegation of the expulsion of the Hoa from Viet Nam was and is only a subterfuge and smoke-screen to mislead opinion in China and throughout the world with a view to covering up these past wars of aggression and the present armed provocations, subversive activities and other manoeuvres hostile to Viet Nam.

3. In giving incorrect reasons for the departures from Viet Nam, ESCAP's reply misrepresents the policy of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam. Based on its traditions of national unity and humanism, this policy has always been to show clemency to those who go astray and to reintegrate them into the national community. There was no "blood bath" as certain propaganda sources predicted; nearly all those who collaborated with the neo-colonial regime - following re-education - now enjoy full citizens' rights; increasingly, efficient efforts were, and are being, made to heal the wounds of war, eliminate the vestiges of neo-colonialism, progressively restore and develop the economy and culture and root out the causes of these departures. Vis-a-vis the Hoa (Vietnamese of Chinese descent), Viet Nam's policy has always been, and still is, to allow them all the rights and duties of citizens, without any discrimination between them and the rest of Viet Nam's citizens. The Government obliges none of its citizens to leave Viet Nam; the so-called "expulsion of the Hoa" has never been a part of its policy. Furthermore, in its concern for security and respect for the legitimate interests of the neighbouring countries of first asylum, Viet Nam wishes such departures to be orderly and ensures that they are. It has severely punished the instigators of illegal departures and co-operates increasingly effectively with the High Commissioner for Refugees, with a view to achieving a rational and lasting solution to this humanitarian problem of international solidarity. At the same time, Viet Nam is opposed to any use being made of the refugee problem for political ends, in violation of the sovereignty and security of States, peace and friendship among nations, and the interests of the refugees themselves.

With regard to the reply by ESCAP, the delegation of Viet Nam regrets that the so-called "reasons" given for departures from Viet Nam do not correspond to the facts, and is obliged to reject flatly the allegations contained in that reply as untrue, unobjective and harmful to Viet Nam's interests.

DELEGATION OF THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM
TO THE THIRTY-NINTH SESSION OF
THE COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS