## DECLARATION on the Threat to Peace Resulting from Extension of American Aggression in Vietnam

The members of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation, represented at the Meeting of the Political Consultative Committee in Sofia—the People's Republic of Bulgaria, the Hungarian People's Republic, the German Democratic Republic, the Polish Péople's Republic, the Socialist Republic of Rumania, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic—discussed the situation brought about by the further extension of

American aggression in Vietnam.

The participants in the Meeting, reaffirming the principled positions set out in the Statement on the United States' aggression in Vietnam, adopted at the Bucharest Meeting of the Political Consultative Committee on July 6, 1966, note that the escalation of American aggression against the Vietnamese people is a serious threat to world peace. Intensified bombing of densely-populated centres including the capital of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam —Hanoi, and the port of Haiphong, the latest increase in the numerical strength of American forces in South Vietnam, the expansion of military operations against states bordering on Vietnam-Laos and Cambodia, taken together, is a still more dangerous step in American policy of extending the war against the Vietnamese people. The reckless threats made by some American military and political leaders to use nuclear weapons in Vietnam are fresh manifestations of the aggressive policy of blackmail and pressure and are a challenge to all peoples striving for peace.

These events complicate not only the situation in South-East Asia but the international situation as a whole, and are one of the main

sources of tension in the world.

A half-million-strong American army is now in Vietnam, a country thousands of kilometres from the United States of America, as a conqueror, a strangler of freedom, whose object is to impose its will upon the Vietnamese people through force of arms and to establish in

the South a colonial order in the interests of American imperialism. But the Vietnamese people reject foreign domination. They are defending their inalienable right to settle their own destiny without any outside interference, under the terms of the Geneva Agreements, which the United States has flagrantly flouted.

In their attempts to smash the resistance of the Vietnamese people the American aggressors commit numberless crimes. They wreak vengeance on the peaceful population of Vietnam because of their military-political failures. Their disgraceful path on Vietnamese soil is marked by the killing of tens of thousands of civilians, the destruction of schools and hospitals, savage bombing and shelling by rockets, the devastation of whole towns and villages.

The participants in the Meeting resolutely denounce American imperialism's barbarous actions against the Vietnamese people. Inexorable retribution awaits those guilty of crimes

against peace and mankind.

Those governments, which together with the United States overtly or-covertly participate in the aggression and in all atrocities against the heroic Vietnamese people, will not escape responsibility either. This refers to Thailand, Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, the South Korean puppet—all who have sent troops to South Vietnam to participate in the piratical war in the imperialist interests of the United States. This also applies to other states including reactionary revanchist circles in the Federal Republic of Germany that are rendering political and material aid to the American aggressors.

The US Government must realise that neither escalated aggression nor new crimes will help it break the will of the courageous people to defend their freedom, independence and national existence. The US Government will meet even stronger rebuff on the part of the Vietnamese people who have the support and all-round

assistance of the countries of the socialist com-

munity.

The latest events in Vietnam—the large-scale offensive operations of the People's Liberation Armed Forces of South Vietnam, the establishment of people's administration in the liberated areas and the emergence of new patriotic organisations that come out for peace, democracy, independence and neutrality of South Vietnam—show that the liberation struggle of the Vietnamese people has entered a new stage.

The South Vietnamese patriots have proved once again that they are capable of successfully waging military operations not only in the jungle and rural areas but also in the cities, the biggest cities at that, including Saigon. The liberation forces' offensive, which is actively supported by the South Vietnamese people, has strongly undermined the entire US-Saigon military system. It has again most fully shown the unity of the people and their National Liberation Front, the heroism and courage of the Vietnamese patriots and the revolutionary strength of the liberation movement which expresses the people's national aspirations and their determination to drive the aggressors from Vietnamese soil.

The people of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam who are building socialism are strengthening their country's defence capacity and their armed forces are strongly repulsing the US attacks from the air and the sea.

The Vietnamese people's successes in the struggle against imperialist aggression are of great international importance, make a big contribution to the struggle of the countries of the world socialist system, of all peoples for peace, independence, democracy and socialism.

On behalf of the peoples of their countries, the participants in the Meeting warmly congratulate the Vietnamese Working People's Party, the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, all the heroic people of North Vietnam and their armed forces on their wonderful achievements and victories in developing and defending their socialist homeland; they warmly congratulate the National Liberation Front, its armed forces and patriots of South Vietnam on their successes in the struggle against the imperialists and the corrupt Saigon clique.

A fair foundation for a settlement in Vietnam has been provided by the well-known four-point proposal of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the programme of the South Vietnam National Liberation Front, which enjoy the full support of the socialist countries and wide approval throughout the world. The United States went into Vietnam with aggression as its aim, it must end the war and withdraw both its forces and those of its allies from Vietnam.

The Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam has expressed its readiness to open talks as soon as the United States really and

unconditionally stops all bombing and other acts of war against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. This initiative of the DRV Government awakened deep international response, and is actively supported by many statesmen even in countries allied with the United States, and by world's public opinion. The US Government bears full responsibility for the fact that the talks have not yet started. The hypocritical statements by the US President about a peaceful settlement of the Vietnamese question, including his statement in San Antonio, have each time been accompanied by conditions unacceptable to any sovereign state. US utterances about peace are always followed by new escalation of aggression. This shows convincingly that in fact the US Government does not want talks.

The member-states of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation in signing this Declaration most seriously warn the United States Government of the responsibility it is assuming before mankind by continuing and extending the aggressive war in Vietnam.

If the United States Government is able to heed the voice of reason it should examine realistically the present situation and take advantage of the proposals made by the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the National Liberation Front, proposals which fully accord with the 1954 Geneva Agreements and the interests of peace in South-East Asia and throughout the world.

The member-states of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation in signing this Declaration express firm support for the position of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the South Vietnam National Liberation Front. They demand that the United States immediately, completely and unconditionally end the bombing and other acts of war against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, discontinue the military intervention in South Vietnam, recall the American troops and those of its allies and satellites from South Vietnam, respect the Vietnamese people's right to settle their own affairs. They call upon all states, governments, all who value the interests of peace, to strongly demand that the United States immediately stop the aggression in Vietnam in all its forms and seek a peaceful solution of the Vietnamese problem without laying down conditions.

In conditions of further escalation of the American aggression in Vietnam the member-states of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation reaffirm the need for unity of action of the socialist countries, all progressive, peace-loving forces in rendering all-round support for the just struggle of the Vietnamese people.

The member-states of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation, true to the principles of proletarian internationalism, express their fraternal

solidarity with the heroic people of Vietnam, who are waging a selfless struggle against aggression by American imperialism. They reaffirm that they will continue to render full support and all necessary assistance to the fraternal socialist country, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, and the Vietnamese people, including economic aid, defence facilities, equipment and specialists. This assistance will continue as long as the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the Vietnamese people need it to enable them to repulse the imperialist attack.

The member-states of the Warsaw Treaty

Organisation once again express their readiness, if the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam requests it, to allow their volunteers to go to Vietnam.

On the side of the Vietnamese people, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, standing in the frontline of the armed struggle against imperialist aggression by the United States, are the fraternal socialist countries, all anti-imperialist and peace-loving forces. With their support and assistance, the Vietnamese people will win and the just cause they are fighting for will triumph.

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Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the People's Republic of Bulgaria

For the Hungarian People's Republic

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Sofia, March 7, 1968.

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