

NGUYEN PHU TRONG

**THEORY
AND PRACTICE
OF SOCIALISM
IN VIETNAM**



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Translated by Nguyen Manh Chuong

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NGUYEN PHU TRONG
General Secretary
of the Communist Party of Vietnam Central Committee

INTRODUCTION

Advancing towards socialism is the aspiration of the Vietnamese people. It was the right choice made by President Ho Chi Minh and the Communist Party of Vietnam because it was consistent with historical development patterns and the realities of Vietnam. This has been tested and challenged by the experience of the revolutionary struggle of the Vietnamese people for the past 90 years, particularly during the 35 years of renewal (*Đổi mới*). “Our country has never enjoyed such fortunes, potentials, and international status and prestige as they are today.”¹ This achievement of great historical significance has validated that the path taken by President Ho Chi Minh and our Party was the right one, reinforcing our people’s faith and determination as Vietnam travels on the road towards socialism.

At the 13th National Party Congress, General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong emphasized: *After 35 years of renewal and 30 years of implementation of the Platform on National Construction in the Period of Transition to Socialism*, the theories on renewal guideline, on socialism and the path to socialism in our country have been further improved and realized, step-by-step. Documents of

1. The Communist Party of Vietnam (2021), *Documents of the 13th Party Congress* (English version), National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, p. 73.

the 13th Party Congress have also described the high-level tasks of building up the Party politically, ideologically, and theoretically: Raising the Party's philosophy, analyzing theory and reality, applying scientific principles to plan for the Party's directions and guidelines and State's policies and laws.

In order to reorganize the theory and practice of socialism and the path to socialism in Vietnam, to facilitate theoretical research, reality checks and to ensure a better understanding of socialism, the Central Council on Theoretical Studies in coordination with the National Political Publishing House has published the book, *Theory and Practice of Socialism in Vietnam*, by General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong.

The book is composed of his 29 selected writings, articles and speeches. Its contents reflect a high degree of theory and cover a broad range of theoretical issues, yet it is written in a very simple and refined manner that summarizes the realities and shows real-life practices that are convincing and fact-based. Therefore, his writings and speeches are highly persuasive and influential among government officials, Party members and the people. They describe the Party's comprehensive leadership and directions, headed by the General Secretary, in all areas including political, economic, socio-cultural, Party building, national defense, security, and foreign relations matters.

On the theoretical framework, in his article, "Theory and Practice of Socialism and Vietnam's Path to Socialism in Vietnam," General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong raises many big questions and step-by-step explains each of these questions with sharp arguments and with the mind and spirit of a patriot and a soldier: *What is socialism? Why has Vietnam chosen the path to socialism?*

How and in what ways has socialism been gradually built in Vietnam? He raises another issue: “We need to determine the *shape* and *direction* of socialism that are suitable to the realities and circumstances in Vietnam.”

By analyzing the nature of capitalism from the standpoint of dialectical materialism, and by evaluating the objects and phenomena in their objective relations with constant change and development from different angles, General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong has determined that a *socialist society* that humanity seeks to attain - with its core values that are good and sustainable - is *a society in which development must truly serve human beings; economic development should go hand-in-hand with social progress and equity; society must be compassionate and united, and with mutual assistance, head towards progressive and humane values; sustainable development has to be in harmony with nature so as to ensure a pure and clean living environment for the present and future generations; and the political system whose power truly belongs to the people, by the people and for the people's interests.* This was the goal and the path that President Ho Chi Minh, our Party and our people have chosen and strived to implement.

In the report “Advancing towards Socialism: Fulfilling President Ho Chi Minh’s Wishes and National Aspiration,” at the 13th National Party Congress, General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong affirmed: “*The thorough guiding ideology* of the entire Party, people and armed forces is to be committed and creative in applying and developing Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Thought; to be steadfast in the goals of national independence and socialism; to be committed to the Party’s directions of renewal; to be committed to Party building principles; to protect to the utmost national interests based on the fundamental principles of international law, equality,

cooperation and mutual benefit to firmly build and defend our socialist Vietnamese Homeland.” This is a fundamental principle of vital significance for our system, and a solid foundation of the Communist Party of Vietnam, where “no one should waver or hesitate.”

At the opening meeting of the First Session of the National Assembly, 15th legislature, General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong provided directions for parliamentary work of the National Assembly in the new tenure: “It is necessary for the National Assembly to further promote its role and position in *establishing the legal framework* for the country’s activities, serving the task of socio-economic development, ensuring national defense, security, and foreign relations;” to “*further improve the efficiency and effectiveness of monitoring activities*, particularly monitoring specific issues; to improve debates, promote democracy, develop arguments, effectively analyze and clarify the strengths and weaknesses in order to determine the causes, learn from the experiences, and carry out proper and feasible solutions;” to “*raise the quality of the decisions on the country’s important issues* by making them more precise and practical;” and to “*strengthen external relations activities*, we must be proactive and active in international integration and cooperation.”

As for the Government’s activities, General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong has asked the Government of the 2021-2026 tenure “to continue to innovate more dynamically its organization and operations in order to achieve many important outcomes and further contribute to the renewal process, to accelerate industrialization and modernization to advance the country step-by-step transitionally towards socialism, and being worthy of its role and position as *the highest State administrative body exercising*

executive power of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam; as the agency that directly organizes, manages, and implements effectively all directions and guidelines of the Communist Party of Vietnam, and turns the Party's directions and guidelines, the State's law into vivid realities, that will bring about prosperity, freedom and happiness to the people, thus glorifying our nation and our citizens."

In order to strengthen and enhance the people's trust in the Party, the State and the socialist system, to encourage the ambitions for developing the country's prosperity and well-being, and to promote the will, determination, and strength of national unity together with international opportunities as shown in the Documents of the 13th Party Congress, at the Conference of the Vietnam Fatherland Front and its member organizations towards enacting the Action Program to implement the Resolution of the 13th Party Congress on August 16, 2021, the General Secretary asked the Front and its member organizations "to be dynamic, creative, and further promote innovation; to be more effective and practical, helping to rally more people from all strata of our united society; to strengthen the flesh and blood relationship between the people, the Party and the government, thus creating a great, invincible strength to build up our Homeland to be stronger, our people to be happier, and our country to be more developed and prosperous."

The strong, close coordination and the active participation of our political system, together with the undivided solidarity and high determination of our Party, people and armed forces, all have important roles in the successful implementation of the Resolution of the 13th Party Congress. This approach is a new, methodical and scientific way of doing things, with the collective spirit strongly promoted by the General Secretary: "When the front calls, the back

cheers” (*Tiền hô hậu ứng*), “One calls, one hundred respond” (*Nhất hô bá ứng*), “One common heart from top to bottom” (*Trên dưới đồng lòng*), “Smoothness flows both vertically and horizontally” (*Độc ngang thông suốt*) to overcome difficulties and challenges and achieve greater successes.

Therefore, soon after the First Session of the National Assembly, 15th legislature, the national conferences of the Government and the Front were held to plan for the implementation of the Resolution of the 13th Party Congress. As well, the first National Conference of the Internal Affairs Bureaus was held on September 15, 2021. Attending and speaking at this conference, General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong said: “Besides education and moral guidance, a good country and society must also have national order. Strict laws protect the good and the right things, and deter and punish the bad and the wrong that are detrimental to the people and the country. That is, we must have rules and regulations; in other words, there must be *national law*. To this end, there must be the *internal affairs bureaus*.” These organizations play a very important role, because their functions are critical and directly related to many aspects of our social life. Therefore, “[these organizations] must clearly understand their functions, responsibilities and authority for proper implementation. They must “play the right roles, perform the right tasks” (*đúng vai, thuộc bài*). That is, they must truly understand and strictly implement the law, and most importantly, they must be impartial, objective and ethical. They must effectively use and monitor the authority assigned by the Party, the State and the people, as they are considered the “sharp swords” (*thanh bảo kiếm sắc bén*) and the “solid shields” (*lá chắn vững chắc*) to protect the country and maintain law and order.

Cultural development is a central and prominent issue in the Documents of the 13th Party Congress. For the first time in the Congress' documents, the Party has discussed it in a comprehensive and profound manner, because cultural development is both the spiritual foundation (*nền tảng tinh thần*)* of society and the goal - the intrinsic strength and important motivating force for national development. This is also the Party's cross-cutting viewpoint on the promotion of rapid and national sustainable development, with (1) socio-economic development being the centerpiece, (2) Party building being the key, (3) cultural development being the society's spiritual foundation, and (4) national defense and security being vital and of permanent importance.

Speaking at the National Cultural Conference on November 24, 2021, General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong affirmed: "Culture must be placed on par with economic, political and social issues." He said, "facing new opportunities and challenges, the task for our revolutionary cause is to continue building, preserving and developing our Vietnamese culture to become modern and deeply imbued with national identity." He also emphasized that "as long as culture exists, the people exist," that culture is truly the "spiritual foundation," the "driving force of development," and the "light shining the path for our people." Thus, it is important to "promote cultural values and the strength of the Vietnamese people and to foster aspiration for developing a prosperous and happy nation" in order to create the collective synergy of the whole country to take advantage of opportunities and overcome challenges, achieving the

* Includes social, cultural, psychological, emotional, mental, and other non-material well-being.

goal of a developed, high-income and socialist-oriented country of Vietnam by the mid-21st century.

At the National Foreign Relations Conference to implement the Resolution of the 13th National Party Congress on December 14, 2021, General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong provided directions for the Party's external relations activity, the State's diplomatic affairs, people-to-people external relations activity, and overall, the external relations work of the political system. He affirmed that we have built a unique and fascinating school of foreign relations and diplomacy of the Ho Chi Minh era, with rich national characteristic of "the bamboo of Vietnam" (*cây tre Việt Nam*) of "strong roots, stout trunks, and flexible branches," deeply filled with the soul, character and spirit of the Vietnamese people. That is, (1) to be supple and subtle but firm and forceful, flexible and creative but bold, tenacious and courageous against all odds to achieve national independence, freedom and happiness of our people; (2) to be united and compassionate but determined and resilient in defending national interests; and (3) to know when to be gentle and when to be tough, to know the time and the tide, to understand ourselves and others, to determine when to advance and when to retreat, to "act as the situation demands" (*tùy cơ ứng biến*), like "a soft bamboo string that can still tie really tight" (*lạt mềm buộc chặt*).

He made clear the fundamental tasks in foreign relations in the current period: "To continue promoting our vanguard role in shaping and firmly protecting a peaceful and stable environment, mobilizing external resources for national development, and enhancing our country's status and prestige. These tasks are inter-related and inter-dependent, with maintaining peace and stability as crucial and permanent, serving national development as central, and enhancing our country's position and prestige as important."

Vietnam is striving to effectively implement the Resolution of the 13th National Party Congress, determined to achieve the objectives and attain strategic breakthroughs towards socio-economic recovery and development in 2022 and the five-year plan of 2021-2025, realizing the goal of “becoming a developed, high-income and socialist-oriented country by the mid-21st century,” making efforts to prevent and fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, the directions of the General Secretary in all fields, from general theoretical issues to the leadership and direction in all sectors and at all levels, have had great impacts and profoundly inspired the people to move forward. With objective and comprehensive evaluation of our achievements, as well as understanding the limitations and weaknesses, and with detailed analysis of the causes, he has provided the roadmap for concrete solutions that need to be implemented. Therefore, each of his writings and speeches has been well received, responded and adopted by the entire Party and the people. Government officials, Party members and people of all strata have turned them into specific action programs to implement, creating positive changes, with strong and better results. The leadership of General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong is indeed the crystalized intellect of our Party in the renewal of our country, reflecting the core, fundamental issues on socialism and the path to socialism in Vietnam.

The book by General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong reflects a thinking that is thorough, consistent, committed and creative, a refined theoretical mindset and understanding of socialism and the path to socialism in Vietnam that has been taken by the Party and the people. In the new context, it points to the goals, orientations and solutions for national construction. It helps government officials,

Party members and the people to understand more thoroughly and firmly, and to organize the successful implementation of socialism in Vietnam, thus fulfilling the wishes of President Ho Chi Minh and the aspiration of our people.

The National Political Publishing House has the honor of introducing this book to the reader.

THEORY AND PRACTICE OF SOCIALISM AND VIETNAM'S PATH TO SOCIALISM*

Socialism and Vietnam's path to socialism is a very important topic, both in theory and in practice. It encompasses a broad array of diverse and complex issues under various approaches. It requires both painstakingly serious study and deeply scientific application. Within the scope of this writing, I will touch upon some aspects from Vietnam's practical perspective. I will only focus on answering the following questions: What is socialism? Why has Vietnam chosen the path to socialism? How and in what ways has socialism been gradually built in Vietnam? What is the significance of "Đổi mới" (*Renewal*) and the path to socialism in the past years in Vietnam? And what are the issues facing this evolutionary process?

Socialism is usually understood in three aspects: as a *doctrine*, as a *movement*, and as an *institution*. Each one manifests itself differently, depending on the international and national circumstances at a

* The article was written on May 15, 2021 on the occasion of the 131st birth anniversary of President Ho Chi Minh (May 19, 1890 - May 19, 2021) and the election of deputies to the 15th National Assembly and all-level People's Councils for the 2021-2026 tenure.

specific point in history. The socialism mentioned in this writing is a scientific socialism, one based on contemporary Marxism-Leninism as it exists in the world today. How, then, shall we *define* socialism and the *charted course* towards socialism, one that done in a suitable manner to fit the particular conditions and characteristics in Vietnam?

Previously, when the Soviet Union and its system of socialist countries existed in the world, the question of moving towards socialism in Vietnam seemed beyond doubt and implicitly validated. However, after the collapse of socialist systems in the Soviet Union and many other Eastern European countries and the decline of socialist revolutions around the world, the movement towards socialism was once again put into question. It became a topic of much discussion, drawing many heated debates. Critics of communism and political opportunists rejoiced, and seized the opportunity to spread misinformation and subvert the movement.

Among revolutionaries, there were those who wallowed in pessimism and faltered. Some even began to doubt the science and successes of socialism, and blamed the dissolution of the Soviet Union on the errors of Marxism-Leninism and questioned the choice of socialism as the way forward. From this premise, they believed we had chosen the wrong way and had to march along another path. Some echoed the hostile arguments that disparaged and criticized socialism, and indulged in one-sided praise of capitalism. Some even claimed “repentance” for having had faith in Marxism-Leninism and socialism.

But is it true that capitalism still grows well today, including those in long-standing capitalist countries? Has Vietnam chosen the wrong way?

We concur that capitalism has never been global as it is today. It has achieved immense accomplishments, especially in realizing

and developing productive capacities and advancing science and technology. Many developed capitalist countries, based on their high-level economic development and also thanks to the struggles of laborers and the working class, have made reforms and set up considerable social welfare investments that are more progressive than ever before. Since the mid-1970s, and particularly after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, international capitalism has spared no effort to adjust itself and promoted a neo-liberalism policy on a global scale in order to adapt to new conditions. For this reason, it is still able to grow further.

Yet capitalism still cannot address its innate and fundamental contradictions. Crises continue to break out. Most notably, in 2008 and 2009, the world witnessed a financial crisis and a deep economic recession in the United States. It then rapidly spread to other centers of capitalism and affected nearly every country in the world. Governments in the West injected vast amounts of money into their economic systems to save transnational corporations, industries, financial and banking institutions, and securities markets, but they only gained limited success.

And today, we witness a multi-faceted health, social, political and economic crisis unfolding under the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Fourth Industrial Revolution. An economy in recession has unmasked social injustice within capitalist societies. The living standards of the majority of working-class people have fallen dramatically while unemployment rises. The gap between the rich and the poor grows even larger, exacerbating antagonisms and conflicts among ethnicities. Instances of “bad growth” and “anti-development” paradoxes have spilled over from the economic and financial domain into social life, igniting social conflicts. In many places, economic crises became political ones, where waves of demonstrations and strikes would shake the entire regime.

Reality has shown us that the “free market” of capitalism itself cannot help solve these problems, and in many cases even causes serious harm to poor countries and deepens the conflict between global *labor* and *capital*. This reality also rips apart economic theories or development models that have long been considered as “in vogue.” They were praised by politicians in the West and viewed as “optimal” and “sensible” by Western experts.

The economic and financial crises are accompanied by energy and food crises, the exhaustion of natural resources and the degradation of the environment and ecosystems. These are posing monumental challenges to the existence and development of humanity. They are the consequences of a process of socio-economic development that has crowned profit as the ultimate goal, that has revered the possession of wealth and material consumption as the yardstick of civilization, and that upholds individual interest as the pillar of society. These are the core characteristics of the capitalist mode of production and consumption. The ongoing crises once again prove the *economic, social and ecological unsustainability* of capitalism. According to many scientists, the present crises are impossible to be fully resolved within the framework of a capitalist regime.

Recent social protest movements flaring up in many developed capitalist countries have further exposed the truth about the nature of capitalist societies. In fact, Western democratic institutions in the name of “freedom and democracy” that the West spares no effort to promote and impose upon the entire world have not guaranteed at all that power shall truly be of the people, by the people and for the people - what democracy is supposed to mean at its core. This system of power still belongs mainly to the wealthy few and serves the interest of big cartels. A tiny minority, even just about

1% of the population, possesses the vast majority of wealth and means of production, controls three-quarters of the financial and knowledge-based resources and the major media conglomerates, and accordingly dominates the entire society. This was the root cause of the “99% versus 1%” movement in the United States in early 2011, which has since spread like wildfire into other capitalist countries. The claim of “equal rights” detached from “equal opportunities” to exercise these rights has led to a democracy in name only - a hallow word. In political life, once the power of money dominates, the power of the people becomes suppressed. This is why in developed capitalist countries, “free” and “democratic” elections, as they claim, may change governments, but may not change the ruling power. Behind the multi-party system there exists the dictatorship of capitalist cartels.

We need a society in which development is truly for people, not for the sake of profit by exploiting and trampling on human dignity. We need economic development accompanied by social progress and equity, instead of an increase in the gap between the rich and the poor or greater social inequity. We need a society of compassion, solidarity and mutual assistance towards progressive and humane values, instead of unfair competitions where “big fish eat little fish” (Cá lớn nuốt cá bé) to satisfy the selfish interests of a few individuals and groups. We need sustainable development in harmony with nature to secure a pure and clean living environment for present and future generations, instead of unlimited exploitation and possession of resources, unrestrained consumption and destruction of the environment. And we need a political system where power truly belongs to the people, is enforced by the people and serves the people, not merely the interests of the wealthy few. Such beautiful ideals are the true values of socialism, aren't they? And, are they the goal

and the path that President Ho Chi Minh and our Party and people had chosen, the path upon which we persevere?

As we all know, the Vietnamese people have experienced a long and arduous revolutionary struggle filled with sacrifices against colonialist and imperialist domination and foreign invasion in order to defend our sacred national independence and sovereignty, and for the freedom and happiness of our people, echoing the spirit “*Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom.*”¹

Vietnam’s revolution for national independence was guided by the theory of socialism through the quintessential legacy of President Ho Chi Minh. Through his wealth of practical experience, combined with the revolutionary and scientific theories of Marxism-Leninism, Ho Chi Minh came to the profound conclusion that *only socialism and communism can fully answer the question of national independence and bring about freedom, well-being and happiness to everyone and every nation.*

Since its inception and throughout its revolutionary struggle, the Communist Party of Vietnam has always asserted that socialism was the goal and ideal of the Party and the Vietnamese people, and that moving towards socialism was the objective demand and the inevitable course of the Vietnamese revolution. In 1930, in its Political Platform, the Communist Party of Vietnam adopted a directive to carry out the people’s national democratic revolution under the leadership of the working class and “advance towards socialism, bypassing the stage of capitalism.”²

1. Ho Chi Minh (2011), *Complete Collection*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 15, p. 130.

2. The Communist Party of Vietnam (2002), *Complete Party Documents*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 2, p. 94.

In the late 20th century, while a large part of socialism in reality (*chủ nghĩa xã hội hiện thực*)* collapsed around the world, the bloc of socialist states ceased to exist and the socialist movement entered a period of crisis, decline and hardship, the Communist Party of Vietnam continued to hold that "Our Party and people are determined to build Vietnam on the path to socialism on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Thought."¹ At the 11th National Congress of the Communist Party (January 2011), in the *Platform on National Construction in the Period of Transition to Socialism* (amended and revised in 2011), once again we affirmed: "Advancing to socialism is the aspiration of our people and the correct choice of the Communist Party of Vietnam and President Ho Chi Minh, and is in line with the development trajectory of history."²

However, *what is socialism, and how will we advance it?* That is the question we are always pondering, deliberating, investigating and weighing, in order to gradually improve our guidelines and perspectives, and to organize for implementation, so as to both observe the general theory and satisfy the particular conditions in Vietnam.

During the years of renewal, from putting theories into practice to refine the theories, the Communist Party of Vietnam has been gradually reaching a more complete and profound understanding of socialism and the evolution of socialism. We have gradually addressed our previous oversimplified assumptions, such as equating the end goal of socialism with the task currently at hand, focusing only on

* A social system established on the principles of scientific socialism, after the class of industrial workers - under the leadership of the Communist Party - took over the government and built a material and technical foundation of the new society, with a superstructure of politics, ideology and culture.

1. *Ibid.*, Vol.60, p.78.

2. The Communist Party of Vietnam (2011), *Documents of the 11th Party Congress*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, p.70.

production and equal distribution without fully realizing the need to develop the rewards-based productive forces in the transitional period, without recognizing the existence of other economic sectors, equating market economy with capitalism, and equating a law-governed state with a capitalist state, just to name a few.

As of today, while there remain areas for further study, we have established an overarching understanding: *The socialist society that the Vietnamese people are striving to build is a society of a prosperous people and a strong, democratic, equitable, and advanced nation; with the people being firmly in control (làm chủ); and a highly developed economy with a modern productive workforce and progressive industrial relations. Vietnam enjoys a modern culture deeply imbued with its national identity. The people are entitled to well-being, freedom and happiness, blessed with opportunities for comprehensive development. Ethnic groups in the Vietnamese community are equal, united, respectful and supportive of each other to develop together. It is a socialist law-governed State of the people, by the people and for the people under the leadership of the Communist Party. And it maintains friendship and cooperation with all countries around the world.*

To achieve this goal, we must step up industrialization and modernization and develop a knowledge-based economy. We must develop a socialist-oriented market economy, build an advanced culture deeply imbued with national identity, boost human resources development, improve the people's living standards, and ensure social progress and equity. We must safeguard national defense and security as well as social order and safety, and implement our foreign policy of national independence, autonomy, multilateralism, diversification, peace, friendship, cooperation and development, and actively engage in international organizations. We must build a socialist democracy, harnessing the will and strength of national

unity and international opportunities. We must build a socialist law-governed State that is of the people, by the people and for the people, and a pure and strong Party and government in every respect.

The further our Party delves into practical guidance, the more we realize that the transition to socialism is *a long-term, very challenging and complex task*, because it must bring about profound improvements across all fields of social life. Vietnam embarked on its journey towards socialism from its starting point as an underdeveloped agricultural country, bypassing the stage of capitalism and with a very limited productive force. Our country was further weakened by decades of wars resulting in severe devastation, and by the constant subversive attempts of hostile forces. These factors have hindered Vietnam's path to socialism. *As such, it inevitably requires a protracted transition* that involves various stages and forms of socio-economic development, with a struggle to balance between the old and the new.

"Bypassing the stage of capitalism" means *bypassing a capitalist regime of oppression, inequality and exploitation, harmful practices, and political institutions and regimes unsuitable in a socialist system*. It does not mean rejecting the accomplishments and values of civilization that humanity has achieved throughout the development of capitalism. Naturally, these achievements must be selectively absorbed through the lens of science and development.

The concept of developing a socialist-oriented market economy is *a particularly fundamental and creative theoretical breakthrough of our Party*. It is an important theoretical achievement gained through 35 years of implementing the renewal, stemming from Vietnam's reality and selective absorption of experiences around the world. Our understanding is that a socialist-oriented market economy is a modern market economy well integrated with the world. It is an economy that operates fully and cohesively in line with the laws of a

market economy. It is governed by a socialist law-governed State under the leadership of the Communist Party of Vietnam. It upholds a socialist orientation towards the goals of “a prosperous people and a strong, democratic, equitable, and advanced country.”

This is a *new form of market economy* in the historic evolution of this economic model. It is a type of economic organization that abides by the laws of a market economy, but is also built on and guided by the principles and nature of socialism. This is reflected in all three aspects, namely *ownership, organization of governance, and distribution*. This is not a capitalist market economy, and has yet to become a full-fledged socialist market economy, since our country is still undergoing the transitional period.

A socialist-oriented market economy encompasses multiple forms of ownership and multiple economic sectors. Economic sectors operating in compliance with the law are important components of the economy. They are equal under the law in the interest of long-term development, cooperation and healthy competition. In this system, the State economy plays a key role; the collective economy is constantly consolidated and developed; the private sector is an important engine of the economy; the foreign direct investment (FDI) sector is encouraged to develop consistently with the socio-economic development strategy and planning. Distribution of wealth must ensure fairness and create momentum for growth. Distribution is to be conducted primarily on the basis of labor outcomes, economic efficiency, and capital and resource investments. It should also be implemented through the system of social security and social welfare. The State governs the economy via the law, strategies, planning, policies and material resources so as to direct, regulate and stimulate socio-economic development.

A core characteristic and important feature of the socialist orientation in the market economy in Vietnam is to combine the economic with the social. That is, to unify economic and social policies, and to combine economic growth with social progress and equity in each step and each policy throughout the development process. It means that we would not wait until the economy reaches a high level of development to materialize social progress and equity. Furthermore, we will not “sacrifice” social progress and equity just to pursue economic growth. On the contrary, each economic policy should aim at social development, and each social policy should aim at creating a driving force for economic development and for social progress and equity. We need to encourage lawful individual wealth-building, and at the same time, to ensure social security, eradication of hunger and poverty reduction. We must take care of people who have contributed to the country and those with difficult living situations. This is a principle-based requirement to ensure a healthy and sustainable development with a socialist orientation.

We consider culture as the spiritual foundation of society, an intrinsic strength, an engine for national development and defense. We regard a holistic development of culture in harmony with economic growth, social progress and equity as a fundamental direction for the process of socialist development in Vietnam. The culture that we are building is a modern culture deeply imbued with national identity. It is a culture of unity in diversity based on progressive and humane values, with Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Thought playing a primary role in our spiritual and social life.

The Vietnamese culture inherits and promotes fine traditional values imbued with identities of all national ethnicities. We learn fine aspects from other cultures in the world and strive to build a civilized and healthy society to serve the people’s legitimate interests and human dignity,

with increasing levels of knowledge, morality, physical health, lifestyles and aesthetics.

We place people at the heart of our development strategies. *Developing culture and building good people (xây dựng con người)* are both a goal and a driving force of the renewal. The development of education and training, science and technology is our top national policy. Protecting the environment is one of the critical issues for survival and a criterion for sustainable development. Building happy and progressive families to serve as healthy and strong elements of the society, and working towards gender equality are the criteria for progress and civilization.*

The socialist society we are building is a society striving for progressive and humane values, *based on the harmony between the common interests of the entire society and legitimate interests of individuals. Its characteristics are completely different than those of a competitive society where competing interests among individuals and groups serve individual benefits.* Therefore, we need and we do have conditions to build a social harmony rather than social opposition and division.

In the political system of a socialist society, the relationship among the Party, the State and the people is a unified one in terms of goals and interests. The Party's directions and the State's policies, laws and activities *aim to serve the interests and well-being of the people.* The political model and the general operational mechanism are *leadership by the Party, governance by the State and ownership by the people.*

Democracy is the inherent nature of a socialist system. It is both a goal and a driving force for the cause of socialist construction. Building a socialist democracy that truly ensures the power belongs

* Build and train people to have the morals, qualities and capabilities to contribute and serve the country; at the core is building the contingent of Party members and government officials.

to the people is an ultimate and long-term mandate of Vietnam's revolution. We aim to continually promote democracy and build a socialist law-governed State that is truly of the people, for the people and by the people, founded on the alliance between workers, farmers, and intellectuals under the leadership of the Communist Party of Vietnam. The State represents the people's right to ownership of the country, and organizes the implementation of the Party's guidelines. There are mechanisms in place to allow the people to exercise their right to direct ownership and representative democracy in all areas of society, and to take part in the governance of society.

We are aware that a socialist law-governed State, *by nature*, is different from a capitalist rule-of-law state. Rule of law under a capitalist regime is essentially an instrument to protect and serve the interests of the wealthy class. By contrast, the rule of law under socialism is a tool to reflect and exercise the people's right to ownership of the country, to ensure and protect the interests of the majority of the people. Through law enforcement, the State ensures conditions for the people to truly hold political power, and uses state power to address all actions that violate the interests of the country and the people. At the same time, we consider national unity to be a source of strength and a decisive factor for the lasting victory of Vietnam's revolution. Equality and unity among all our ethnic groups and religions are constantly promoted.

Being deeply aware that the Communist Party's leadership is a factor that decides the success of the renewal cause and ensures our country's development in line with the socialist orientation, we *pay special attention to Party building and rectifying. This task is critical to the survival of the Party and the socialist system.* The Communist Party of Vietnam is the vanguard of the Vietnamese working class. The founding, existence and development of the Party all aim to serve the interest of the working class, the working people, and the entire nation.

As the Party rules and leads the nation, it is recognized as the pioneering leader by the people, the working class, the working people, and the entire nation. This is not meant to downplay the class nature of the Party, but rather to reflect a deeper and more complete understanding of this class nature, because the interests of the working class are aligned with those of the working people and the entire nation.

Our Party is determined to pursue Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Thought as the foundation and beacon for the revolution, and holds democratic centralism as a fundamental organizing principle. The Party asserts its leadership through its platforms, strategies, and major guidelines and policies; through communication, persuasion, mobilization, organization, inspection and supervision; and through exemplary role of Party members and a unified leadership in personnel work. Understanding the risks of a ruling party including corruption, bureaucratic red-tape and moral degeneration, especially in the context of a market economy, the Communist Party of Vietnam requires regular self-renewal and self-rectifying, and constant combat against opportunism, individualism, corruption, bureaucratic red-tape, wastefulness and moral degeneration within the Party and the entire political system.

The renewal, including the development of the socialist-oriented market economy, has truly brought about enormous and positive changes to our country over the past 35 years. In the period prior to the renewal in 1986, Vietnam was a poor, war-torn country, with serious consequences in terms of human lives, infrastructure, and the environment. For instance, to date, millions of people fall victim to life-threatening diseases, and hundreds of thousands of children are born with birth defects and disabilities due to

the “Agent Orange” toxin that was used by the U.S. Army during the war. According to experts, it would take another 100 years or more for Vietnam to fully remove the remaining post-war unexploded ordnance (UXOs).

After the war, the U.S. and the West imposed economic sanctions on Vietnam for nearly 20 years. That period also saw difficulties for the region and the world, putting us at a major disadvantage. There was a severe shortage of food and essential goods. Our people lived under great hardship, with three-quarters of the population living under the poverty line.

Thanks to the renewal, our economy has been thriving in the last 35 years with a relatively high growth rate at around 7% per year. Our GDP continues to grow, reaching US\$342.7 billion in 2020, as we became the 4th-largest economy in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Per-capita income has increased seventeen-fold to US\$3,512. Vietnam has no longer been a low-income country since 2008.

From a country that once faced constant food shortages, Vietnam is currently not only able to ensure food security, but also has become one of the leading exporters of rice and various agricultural products to the world. Our industries are flourishing. The shares of industry and services in our GDP are constantly rising, and today account for 85% of total GDP. Our foreign trade turnover is growing dramatically, exceeding US\$540 billion in 2020, in which exports have reached over US\$280 billion. Our foreign exchange reserves jumped to US\$100 billion in 2020. Foreign direct investment (FDI) is also rapidly expanding, with a total registered capital of nearly US\$395 billion by late 2020. With regard to our economic structure in terms of ownership, the government sector

accounts for only 27% of Vietnam's total GDP. The collective economy is 4%, the household economy is 30%, the domestic private sector is 10%, and the FDI sector is 20%.

Vietnam today has a population of over 97 million people across all 54 ethnic communities, 60% of whom residing in rural areas. Economic development has helped the country overcome the socio-economic crisis of the 1980s and remarkably improved the people's living standards. The percentage of poor households falls 1.5% every year on average, from 58% in 1993 to 5.8% in 2016 according to official statistics on poverty, and to less than 3% in 2020 according to the multi-dimensional poverty index (whose standards are much higher than the previous ones). Today, more than 60% of communities have met the standards of "new rural" (*nông thôn mới*)*. Most of them enjoy paved roads to urban centers, access to national electric power-lines, primary and secondary schools, health clinics, and telephone services.

While we are yet able to provide free education for all at all levels, Vietnam has been focusing its efforts on eliminating illiteracy. We achieved universal primary education in 2000 and universal secondary education in 2010. The number of university and college students has increased nearly 17-fold over the last 35 years. Currently, 95% of Vietnamese adults are literate.

While we have yet to achieve universal health coverage, we are focusing on enhancing preventive healthcare, epidemic prevention and control, and providing support for disadvantaged people.

* Rural areas with modern socio-economic infrastructure; suitable economic structure and forms of production organization; democratic and stable society, rich in national cultural identity; material and spiritual life is enhanced; ecological environment is protected; and law and order are maintained.

Many once-prevalent diseases have been successfully curbed. The poor, children under 6, and the elderly are provided with free health insurance. Childhood malnutrition and infant mortality have been slashed about three-fold. Average life expectancy has gone up from 62 years in 1990 to 73.7 years in 2020. Thanks to economic progress, we have also been able to take better care of our veterans who have served in the revolution and our Vietnamese Heroic Mothers, and tend to the graves of martyrs who paid the ultimate sacrifice for our country.

Our cultural life has also been significantly enriched by a diverse and growing range of cultural activities. Seventy percent of the population now have internet access and Vietnam is among the world's fastest-developing information technology countries. The United Nations has recognized Vietnam as one of the leading countries in reaching the Millennium Development Goals. In 2019, Vietnam's Human Development Index (HDI) attained 0.704, putting the country in the high human development category of the world. This is a commendable achievement, especially when compared to countries at a similar level of development.

Thus, we can say that the implementation of the renewal has delivered concrete, profound and positive transformations for Vietnam. The economy is booming and productive forces are strengthened. Poverty is rapidly and constantly falling. The people's living standards have improved and many social issues have been addressed. There is political and social stability. National defense and security provide safety for our people. We enjoy increasingly broader external relations and more extensive international cooperation. Our national standing and power are both growing and the people's trust in the Party's leadership is bolstered.

In the review after 20 years of renewal, the 10th National Party Congress (2006) noted that the renewal process has garnered “immense historic achievements.” Indeed, in many respects, the Vietnamese people nowadays enjoy living standards higher than ever before. It is one of the reasons that the renewal, initiated and led by the Communist Party of Vietnam, receives such support, and that it is supported and actively applied by the Vietnamese people. The successes of the renewal have proved *that socialist-oriented development is not only economically effective, but also capable of better addressing social problems in comparison with capitalist countries with the same level of economic development*. In addition, the extraordinary results and accomplishments of Vietnam amidst the COVID-19 pandemic and global recession since early 2020 have been recognized and commended by international partners and peoples, thus demonstrating the greatness of the socialist system of our country.

Recently, the 13th National Party Congress once again asserted and emphasized: “*After 35 years’ implementation of renewal process and 30 years’ implementation of the Political Platform on National Construction in the Period of Transition to Socialism*, the theories on renewal guideline, on socialism and the path to socialism for Vietnam have increasingly improved and gradually materialized. The country *has attained great achievements of historic significance*, and developed more strongly and comprehensively when compared to the years before the renewal.

With all due modesty, we can say that *our country has never enjoyed such fortunes, potentials, and international status and prestige as they are today*. Such great achievements crystallize the creativity of our Party, people and armed forces, and continue to affirm that our path to socialism was the right one and compatible with the laws of

nature, Vietnam's reality and development trends; that our Party's renewal policy was judicious and creative, and its leadership was the primary reason for all successes of our revolutionary cause. Our Political Platform continues to serve as the ideological banner that leads our nation to firmly strengthen the comprehensive and holistic renewal. It serves as the foundation for our Party to improve its guidelines for building and defending our Socialist Republic of Vietnam in the new era."¹

However, besides many achievements with positive impacts, there are considerable drawbacks and limitations, in addition to the emerging challenges that we must face in our national development. Economically, Vietnam's quality of growth and competitiveness still remains low and not sustainable. Infrastructure lacks asynchrony, and the effectiveness and capability of many businesses, including State-owned enterprises, are limited. Many areas suffer from environmental pollution. Administration and regulation of the market still exhibit many shortcomings. Meanwhile, competition is growing increasingly fierce in the process of globalization and international integration.

Socially, the wealth gap is on the rise, while the quality of education, healthcare and other public services still leaves much to be desired. Our culture and social morality show signs of decay in certain aspects, and crime and other social evils continue to cause difficulties. Most alarmingly, corruption, wastefulness, degradation in political ideology, morality and lifestyle can be observed among some Party members and government officials. At the same time, hostile forces are trying by all means to intervene, subvert, cause

1. The Communist Party of Vietnam (2021), *Documents of the 13th Party Congress* (English version), National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, pp. 72-74.

instability and attempt a “peaceful evolution” scheme aiming to undermine socialism in Vietnam.

Our Party recognizes that Vietnam is in a transitional period towards socialism. During this transition, socialist elements are taking shape, intertwined and competing against non-socialist elements, including capitalist elements in a number of areas. This overlap and competition become even more complex and intense against the backdrop of the market economy, door-open policy, and international integration. Besides the achievements and positive developments, there will always be negative aspects and challenges that demand rational consideration and prompt and effective resolution. This is an intense and difficult struggle that requires a new vision, new courage and new drive for innovation.

Advancing towards socialism requires a period of constantly developing, strengthening and harnessing socialist elements so that they would become more influential and dominant, and ultimately triumph. Success or failure depends, first and foremost, on the effectiveness of Party guidelines and its political competence (*bản lĩnh chính trị*)*, leadership capacity, and the resiliency.

Currently, we are continuing to accelerate the transformation of our growth model and economic restructuring with greater focus on quality and sustainability. In this connection, we have identified the following breakthroughs: the synchronous improvement of development institutions, with priority given to the socialist-oriented market economy; the development of human resources, particularly

* The determination, courage and ability to independently think, decide and act; to be firm in one’s stance and viewpoint, with the ability to overcome difficulties, challenges and pressures to realize the targeted goals.

high-quality human resources; and the development of synchronized and modern infrastructure, both economically and socially.¹

With regard to social development, we continue to promote sustainable poverty reduction, improve the quality of healthcare, education and other public services, and further enhance people's cultural life. We are making every effort to learn from the role model of President Ho Chi Minh and his thoughts, morality and style, with the determination to prevent and push back the degeneration in political ideology, morality and lifestyle among a segment of Party members and government officials, particularly strategic-level officials and heads of units at all levels. It is necessary to better implement the principles of Party building, in order to ensure the Party organizations and the State apparatus will become more ethical and stronger, and maintain the Party's revolutionary ideals and improve its leadership capacity and resiliency.

Both theory and reality have shown that building socialism means creating a new type of society in terms of quality, which is by no means a simple or easy task. *This is a major and innovative endeavor that is full of challenges and adversities. It is a self-driven, continuous, long-term and goal-oriented cause that cannot be rushed.* Therefore, in addition to charting the right Party's directions and guidelines and ensuring its leadership role, we must actively harness the people's creativity, their support and their willingness to actively participate. The people will welcome, support and enthusiastically participate in the implementation of the Party's guidelines since they see that such guidelines are in their interests and live up to their aspirations. The

1. The Communist Party of Vietnam (2021), *Documents of the 13th Party Congress* (Vietnamese version), National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. II, pp. 337-338.

ultimate victory and development are deeply rooted in the strength of the Vietnamese people.

At the same time, the Party's leadership, in shaping the political line and making decisions, should not refer only to the realities of our own country. It must also study and learn from the experiences of the world and contemporary circumstances. In today's globalized world, the development of each nation cannot stand alone and be separated from the impacts of the contemporary world, ignoring the context and the dynamics. Therefore, we must actively engage in global integration, implement a foreign policy of independence, autonomy, peace, cooperation and development, and multilateralization and diversification of international relations, on the basis of respect for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of each other's borders, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit.

And it is of great importance to *remain steadfast and firm on the theoretical foundation of Marxism-Leninism - the scientific and revolutionary doctrine of the class of industrial workers and the working people*. The scientific and uncompromising revolutionary ideals of Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Thought are long-standing values that have been pursued and implemented by generations of revolutionaries. This will continue to develop and show its strength in the reality of both scientific development and the revolutionary movement. We need to be open-minded and ready to make improvements when necessary, being critical and creative in using the latest ideological and scientific achievements, so that our theory is always up-to-date and revitalized in order to be able to adapt to a rapidly changing world and not being stagnated and obsolete.

ADVANCING TOWARDS SOCIALISM: FULFILLING PRESIDENT HO CHI MINH'S WISHES AND NATIONAL ASPIRATION*

Distinguished Presidium of the Congress,

Distinguished guests,

Distinguished delegates to the Congress,

The 13th National Party Congress is an important political moment for our Party, our country and our people. It has important significance in the process of continued renewal, national development and international integration comprehensively and simultaneously (*đồng bộ*)** . Our government officials, Party members and people have been looking forward to it, as they have placed their confidence and high expectations for the right, strong and thoughtful policy decisions by the Congress.

* The report of the 12th Party's Central Committee on the documents to be submitted to the 13th National Party Congress was presented by General Secretary, President Nguyen Phu Trong, who is also head of the Subcommittee on Documents, on January 26, 2021.

** Simultaneous and consistent among ministries, levels, sectors and localities.

Under the theme: *Redoubling efforts to build and rectify the Party and the political system to be pure and strong; fostering the aspirations for national development, promoting the will and strength of national unity in combination with international opportunities; continuing the renewal process comprehensively and simultaneously; building and firmly defending our Homeland, maintaining a peaceful and stable environment; and striving for Vietnam to become a socialist-oriented developed country by the mid-21st century*, the 13th Party Congress will review the implementation of the Resolution of the 12th Party Congress in combination with the assessment of 35 years of renewal, 30 years of enacting the 1991 *Political Platform*, 10 years' implementation of the *Political Platform (amended and revised in 2011)*, and the 2011-2020 *Strategy on Socio-Economic Development*.

The 13th Party Congress will work on the five-year objectives and tasks of socio-economic development for 2021-2025 in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of liberating the South and national reunification; determine the goals and orientations to 2030 in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the Party's founding; and work toward the vision of national development to 2045 in commemoration of the 100th founding anniversary of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, now the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. These are the vital landmarks in the process of the development of our Party, our people and our country. They have significance in the strategic orientations and vision for national development of the new era.

Distinguished delegates,

The text of the Report has been sent to the delegates of Congress. Now, on behalf of the 12th-tenure Party's Central Committee, I present the *Report on the documents to be submitted to the 13th Party Congress*, focusing on general and fundamental issues,

clarifying the main contents and important highlights for Congress' consideration and discussion towards a decision.

I- ON THE PROCESS OF PREPARING DOCUMENTS

Being well aware of the significance and importance of the 13th Party Congress, the Political Bureau of the Party's Central Committee had mapped out, very early, the requirements and the plan for the 13th Party Congress. Right from the 8th Plenum of the Party's Central Committee, the 12th tenure (October 2018), the sub-committees were established to compile the documents and prepare personnel work, including the Sub-committee on Documents headed by General Secretary and President Nguyen Phu Trong; the Socio-Economic Sub-committee headed by Politburo member, Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc; Sub-committee for the Party Statutes headed by Pham Minh Chinh, Politburo member, Secretary of Party's Central Committee, and Chairman of the Commission for Organization under the Party's Central Committee.

To support the sub-committees, the Secretariat decided to set up an editorial team and an assistance team. After their establishment, under the guidance of the Political Bureau, these sub-committees were active and prompt in building the working program and plan. They started the theoretical study, reviewed the realities and surveyed the facts.

Over the past two years, the sub-committees had closely coordinated with the study agencies, ministries, sectors at the Central level and at the all-level Party committees and government offices in organizing nearly 60 conferences, seminars, discussion panels and 50 missions for survey work. They also consulted the former senior leaders of State and Party and experts; organized a number of discussion panels with the World Bank and some

international organizations; organized two delegations to survey and study the experiences in foreign countries. The theoretical and scientific research agencies had sent about 80 consulting reports to the sub-committees. Many dedicated veterans and scientists had also sent their letters with suggestions. The reports had been studied and refined. All the reasonable and expert opinions were accepted and put into the draft documents.

The sub-committees held 20 meetings to discuss and approve the outline and draft documents. At the same time, they coordinated regularly with the sub-committees and the editorial team so as to ensure consistent content between the documents, in which the Political Report was to be the centerpiece. The Political Bureau had many meetings to improve the platform and the draft documents for submission to the Party's Central Committee at the 10th, 11th, 14th and 15th Plenums.

All draft reports underwent many revisions, with the Political Report being revised 30 times. They were distributed to the National Assembly, the Vietnam Fatherland Front, many agencies, entities and mass organizations for comments and suggestions. To receive the people's opinions, the Political Bureau decided to publish the full text of the *draft reports* in the press. Feedback from millions had contributed to further revisions of the draft documents that were then sent to the Central Committee. Opinions from Party units at grassroots to central levels, from the National Assembly, the Vietnam Fatherland Front, socio-political groups, mass organizations, government officials, Party members and the people, both domestic and abroad, had been collected. All input was gathered in 1,410 pages, and the general report was nearly 200 pages in length.

In the process of drafting the documents, the Political Bureau and the Secretariat paid close attention and provided careful guidance

to ensure the timing, accuracy and new information in light of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. As well, it advanced democracy through the widespread participation of our Party, people and armed forces to accumulate their wisdom and ensure a scientific approach. In particular, the General Secretary, the President and the head of the Sub-committee on Documents has all issued important writings and speeches to guide the overall compilation of documents for submission to the 13th Party Congress.

The compilation of documents to the 13th Party Congress was carried out in a very elaborate, careful and methodical manner, with gradual improvement to make important changes in content and methodology. Ensuring the principles of combining *theory and practice, commitment (kiên định)* and renewal (đổi mới), tradition and modernization* and promoting widespread democracy, the *draft documents* truly solidified the wisdom of our Party, people and armed forces, which reflected the unity of “*the Party’s will and the people’s heart*” (*ý Đảng, lòng dân*), *merging with the nation’s will and determination to build and defend the socialist country of Vietnam*. The thoughtful feedback, opinions and ideas had crystalized our intellect, expertise and creativity, which had been carefully studied, refined and selected. From this formal forum, our Congress would like to express our sincere thanks to the precious contributions of our associates and compatriots, which reflect a strong sense of responsibility to our Party, people and country, and a wish for our

* Four commitments include (1) to Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Thought and creatively apply them to Vietnam’s reality, (2) to the goals of national independence and socialism, (3) to the renewal directions of the Party, and (4) to the principles of Party building to build and defend the socialist Vietnamese Homeland.

Party to be purer and stronger, for our country to be more prosperous and developed, for our people to be richer and happier, and for our nation to be more affluent and everlasting.

II- ON REVIEWING THE WORK ACCOMPLISHED IN THE 12th PARTY CONGRESS AND 35 YEARS OF RENEWAL

Over the past five years, we seized the opportunities and overcame the difficulties and challenges, particularly the serious impacts of diseases and natural disasters, by cultivating the patriotic spirit and unity, will and determination, creativity and efforts to *attain many important achievements and create remarkable milestones*. Our country has developed rapidly and sustainably, and we have consolidated and raised the people's confidence in the Party, the State and the socialist system.

Our economy has maintained a relatively high average growth rate, approximately 6% per year. We have overcome the difficulties, challenges, limitations and weaknesses of previous years to achieve early progress. We have improved the quality of growth, maintained macro-economic stability, controlled inflation to low levels, continued to ensure important economic balance with development; and enhanced budgetary discipline. As well, we have mobilized to increase investment capital dramatically and its effectiveness, and we improved trade balance and increased exports.

We have combined economic restructuring with a shift in the economic growth model, and our implementation of three strategic breakthroughs has reaped major results. The investment and business climate, and the potential, scope and competitiveness of the economy continue to improve. The political and social environment are stable. The people's living standards are notably improved. Many positive changes have been seen in social security, health care, education and

training, science and technology, environmental protection, cultural development and nurturing of the Vietnamese people.

We have paid special attention to building and rectifying the Party and the political system in the political, ideological, moral, and organizational and personnel aspects comprehensively, simultaneously and effectively. Many complex problems were solved in the previous years with limited effectiveness, but in this term, there have been positive changes. The monitoring, supervision and fighting against corruption, wastefulness and negative practices have been carried out decisively, systematically and in depth, achieving breakthroughs with remarkable, concrete results. Many corruption cases have been discovered, investigated, prosecuted, and tried strictly, serving as a strong deterrent and wake-up call for many. The anti-corruption work was commended, highly valued and fully supported by government officials, Party members and the people. The situation of corruption, negative practices, degeneration, “self-evolution” and “self-transformation” in the Party and the political system has been kept in check, step by step.

In a fast-changing and complex regional and global environment, we have placed high importance to consolidating and strengthening national defense and security, and being proactive in handling situations successfully, avoiding surprises. Politics, economy, culture and social security, social order and safety have been firmly maintained. Foreign relations activities and global integration have been enhanced and expanded widely and deeply. We have been determined and persistent in protecting our independence, sovereignty, unification, territorial integrity and national interests. We have maintained a peaceful and stable environment for national development, while actively and responsibly contributing to global and regional peace, cooperation

and development, for which we receive support and high regard from the international community. The prestige and status of the Party and the State, and the potentials and strength of the country have reached new heights in the international arena.

In 2020, despite heavy socio-economic losses inflicted by the severe impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, our country achieved more results than in previous years thanks to our great efforts. When the world's economy was in recession and fell nearly 4%, our economy still reached a growth rate of 2.91%, which is among the economies with highest growth rates in the world. By promoting the strength of national unity and the greatness of our socialist system, and with a strong and prudent leadership of the Party, firm and timely guidance and governance of our Government, the synchronous and active participation of our political system, and the strong support and response of our compatriots at home and overseas, we have controlled and prevented the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic in the community in a timely manner, minimized the losses and damage caused by the disease, and ensured the social security and social welfare for the people. Step by step, we have restored production and commerce, and made efforts to fulfill the tasks of socio-economic development in 2020 and the 2016-2020 period at the highest level. Vietnam has been acknowledged by the world and considered a success story in fulfilling the "dual goal" of preventing the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic and recovering and developing the economy in order to ensure the people's livelihoods and personal safety.

We can affirm that the achievements of the 12th Party Congress have had important significance not only in terms of achieving remarkable results, but also helping consolidate the people's confidence and create a new driving force and new impetus to

overcome difficulties and challenges, using the external advantages and the right timing to take our country to a new development period.

There are many reasons for these results, but the most important ones are our high level of determination and efforts to unite and work together, the prudent and highly unified leadership of the Party's Central Committee, the Politburo, the Secretariat and the Party committees at all levels to comprehensively implement the 12th Party Congress Resolution, in a timely and effectively manner, dealing with many new problems arising from reality, particularly important matters. This was implemented by the sharp, determined and effective governance and administration of the government at the Central and local levels; the right reforms of the National Assembly and People's Council at all levels and the organizations in the political system; the efforts of government officials and Party members; active, diligent, creative and responsible hard work of the people; and the agreement and support of the international community.

*Distinguished fellows,
Congressional participants,*

Throughout the 35-year implementation of the renewal process, the 30-year implementation of the Political Platform on National Construction in the Period of Transition to Socialism, the theories on renewal guideline, on socialism and our path to socialism have been increasingly improved and gradually materialized. We have recorded great achievements of historic significance, developed more strongly and comprehensively when compared to the years before the renewal. With all due modesty, we can say our country has never enjoyed such fortunes, potentials and international status and prestige as they are today.

These achievements are the outcomes of our crystallized creativity, of the process of striving persistently and continuously

through many tenures of our Party, our people and armed forces. They continue to affirm that our path to socialism was the right one and compatible with the laws of nature, Vietnam's reality and development trends of the era, and that our Party's renewal guideline was effective and creative, and its leadership was the primary reason for all successes of our revolutionary cause. Our Political Platform continues to be the banner of ideology and theory that has led our nation to firmly continue to enhance the renewal comprehensively and simultaneously, and to be the foundation for our Party to further improve the direction on building and defending our socialist country of Vietnam in the new era.

From the reality of the renewal process, particularly after five years of implementing the 12th Party Congress Resolution, we have drawn *a number of precious lessons*:

First, the task of building and rectifying the Party must be deployed decisively, comprehensively, synchronously, frequently and effectively in terms of politics, ideology, morality, organization and personnel, with a determination in creatively applying and developing Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Thought. We need to improve the Party's leadership capacity, governance and resiliency, to constantly consolidate and enhance the unity in the Party and the political system, and to strictly implement the principles of Party building, along with regularly updating the Party's leadership methods. We must build the State and the political system to be pure and strong in all respects, improve the system of checks and balances, strictly prevent and persistently fight moral degeneration, "self-evolution" and "self-transformation" from within, and further the fight against corruption and wastefulness.

Personnel selection must truly be "the key of all keys," focusing on developing a contingent of government officials at various levels. Particularly, officials at the strategic level and senior leaders must be

sufficiently qualified, capable and respectable, on par with their tasks. We need to give government officials and Party members the responsibility of being role models, consistent with the motto “*the higher the position, the better the example that must be set,*” especially members of Politburo, Secretariat and Party’s Central Committee.

Second, in all affairs of the Party and the State, we must always have the thorough viewpoint that “the people are the roots” (*dân là gốc*), truly trust, respect and promote the people’s right to ownership of the country, and consistently implement the motto that “the people know, the people discuss, the people do, the people check, the people supervise and the people benefit.” The people are at the center, the driving force of the process of renewal and building and defending the nation. All directions and policies must truly reflect people’s lives, aspirations, legitimate rights and interests, thus we must strive for the ultimate goal of their happiness and well-being. We need to strengthen the close relationship between the Party and the people, as we rely on the people to build the Party, and to enhance their trust in the Party, the State and the socialist system.

Third, in the tasks of leadership, guidance, administration and organization of the implementation, we need to be highly determined, to make great efforts and to act decisively, dynamically, innovatively and positively. We need to follow appropriate steps, effectively use available resources with relevant driving forces and the greatness of the socialist system, and quickly remove any bottlenecks. We must uphold the responsibility of leaders, enhance the synergy of our political system, promote *democracy* along with firmly maintaining *order*, place importance on the reality and theory, effectively coordinate leadership, governance and administration, focus on quality and efficiency, and create breakthroughs necessary for development.

Fourth, we must prioritize the task of building institutions simultaneously, ensuring harmony between *commitment* and *renewal*, between *tradition* and *modernization*, between economic renewal and political, cultural and social change, between complying with market laws and ensuring the socialist orientation, between economic growth and cultural and human development, resolution of social problems, and protection of natural resources and the environment, between socio-economic development and ensured national defense and security, between national independence and autonomy and international integration. We must truly place importance on the role of the people, culture, education and training, science and technology as driving forces for national development.

Fifth, we must be proactive in researching, understanding and properly predicting situations to avoid surprises. We are determined to protect independence, sovereignty, unification and territorial integrity of our country while firmly preserving a peaceful and stable environment, security and safety for national development. We must proactively and actively undertake comprehensive, intensive and extensive international integration on the basis of firmly maintaining independence, autonomy, self-reliance and self-resilience. We need to properly and effectively handle our relations with major powers and neighboring countries, and accurately assess global tendencies and timely seize the opportunities. We must effectively promote our national strength combining with international opportunities, effectively mobilize and utilize all available resources to meet the requirements of building, developing and defending our country in the new era.

The lessons learned from experiences above are the important basis for our Party to continue to creatively apply, promote and

develop the leadership and guidance. They help us to be determined, firm and confident in overcoming new difficulties and challenges and carrying out heavier tasks when entering the 13th-tenure Party Congress.

III- ON THE ORIENTATION AND TASKS OF THE 13TH PARTY CONGRESS TENURE AND THE COMING YEARS

In the coming years, it is forecasted that our world and our region will continue to experience very rapid, complex and unpredictable changes. Peace, cooperation and development would remain the major trends, but filled with multiple hurdles and difficulties. Globalization and international integration will move on, but being defied by the rise of extreme nationalism and strategic competition, economic rivalry, and fierce trade wars. Impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, the world has been falling into a serious, multi-faceted crisis. The Fourth Industrial Revolution has developed vigorously, creating breakthroughs in various fields, bringing about both opportunities and challenges to all countries. Thus, they have adjusted their strategies and modes of development in order to adapt to the new situation.

The Asia-Pacific region continues to have a more important strategic position. In Southeast Asia, complex security and sovereignty disputes on the East Sea still emerge. Climate change, natural calamities, epidemics and other non-traditional security problems, particularly cybersecurity, have caused more intense and multi-faceted impacts, seriously threatening the stable and sustainable development of our world, our region and our country.

In this context, although our country has recorded very important, pride-worthy achievements, *it has still faced many difficulties, challenges and limitations*. Economic growth is yet to

reflect our true potential. The first four years of the tenure have seen continuous growth, but in 2020, it has sharply declined due to the heavy impacts of continuous epidemics and natural disasters, droughts and floods. The autonomy and resilience of the economy is yet to be high. The collective and cooperative economies are largely on a small scale, and their internal strength is still limited. The operational efficiencies of many state-owned enterprises are still low. The domestic private economy, the FDI economy have developed rapidly, but they are yet to be sustainable.

There are still many inadequacies in leadership, governance, human security, social order and safety, the use of natural resources and environmental protection. Hostile forces have been sabotaging more fiercely. There are still many challenges in protecting national sovereignty and territorial integrity. Vietnamese historical values and cultural traditions have not yet been fully promoted. The capacity of organizing the implementation is still limited. The quality of law and policy in some areas is still low. Leadership capacity and resiliency of many Party organizations and Party members are yet to be on par with their tasks. The system of checks and balances in the Party and the State is yet to be sufficient and synchronous, and its efficiency and effectiveness are yet to be high. The institutionalization and realization of some of the Party's resolutions still remain slow, and the organization of implementation remains a weak point. The difficulties, limitations and shortcomings require us to have higher determination, greater efforts and more decisive actions in order to overcome them by all means. We must not be unprepared, complacent and blind-sided.

To continue to implement the renewal in the new era, we should thoroughly appreciate the *fundamental guiding viewpoint* both in understanding and practical application as follows:

(1) Our *thorough guiding viewpoint* is to be determined in creatively applying and developing Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Thought, in the goals of national independence and socialism, in the Party's guideline of renewal, and in Party building principles. We need to ensure the highest level of the national interest on the basis of the fundamental principles of international law, equality, cooperation and mutual benefits to firmly build and defend our socialist Vietnamese Homeland. *This is a matter of principle, of vital significance for our system, our Party's firm foundation, and no one should waver or hesitate.*

(2) Our *overall national development strategy* is to comprehensively and simultaneously accelerate the renewal process and to develop our country rapidly and sustainably. We need to ensure close connection and simultaneous deployment of all tasks, in which socio-economic development is the centerpiece, Party building is the key, cultural development is the society's spiritual foundation, and national defense and security are vital and of permanent importance.

(3) *The important driving force and resources for national development* is our patriotism, our will and self-resilience, our strength of national unity and aspiration for national development to achieve prosperity and happiness. We need to promote the collective synergy of our political system and of the Vietnamese culture and people; to accelerate creativity and innovation, strong application of science and technology, particularly the advantages of the Fourth Industrial Revolution; to combine national strength with international opportunities; and to maximize internal resources while soliciting external resources. Internal resources, particularly human resources, are most important.

(4) *The decisive element for the success of building and defending our country is to further Party building and rectifying; to promote the Party's leadership capacity, governance and resiliency; to build the Party and the political system to be pure and strong; to build a streamlined state with efficient and effective operations; to develop a contingent of government officials and Party member, particularly officials at the strategic level and senior leaders who must be ethical, qualified, capable and respectable, on par with their tasks.*

With a genuine, pure and strong Party that has the courage, intellect, experience and prestige of the leadership as entrusted and supported wholeheartedly by the people, we will have *the great strength to overcome all difficulties and challenges, and no force can prevent* our people from moving forward and achieving new successes in the cause of building and developing our country.

(5) In the 2021-2025 tenure and in the upcoming years, *our overall development objectives are:* To enhance our Party's leadership capacity, governance and resiliency; to build the Party and the political system to be pure and strong in all respects; to consolidate the people's trust in the Party, the State and the socialist system; to foster aspirations for national development to achieve prosperity and happiness, by promoting the will and strength of national unity combined with international opportunities; to accelerate the cause of renewal, industrialization and modernization in a comprehensive and simultaneous manner; to build and defend our Homeland and firmly maintain a peaceful and stable environment; and to strive *for Vietnam to become a developed, socialist-oriented country by the mid-21st century.*

With the principles of combining scientific theories with practical applications, using existing knowledge and adding new ones that are consistent with changes in each stage of national

development, and learning from the experiences of other countries and the common development paradigms in the world, we have determined *the specific goals* for the 13th Party Congress and the important milestones of national development for the coming decades:

- *By 2025*: To become a developing country with an industry moving toward modernity and having passed the lower middle-income level.

- *By 2030*: To become a developing country with a modern industry and an upper middle-income level.

- *By 2045*: To become a developed, high-income country.

To implement the above objectives, based on the reality and national and international development trends, the *Political Report* has mapped out *12 strategic orientations* for national development in the 2021-2030 period, with concrete details provided in the *thematic reports*. The major orientations include important development issues in the next 10 years, in which *there are many new, notable issues* as follows:

- To continue to dynamically innovate ways of thinking, to establish and improve institutions for national sustainable development; to improve comprehensively and concertedly institutions of the socialist-oriented market economy; to renew vigorously the growth model, restructure the national economy, accelerate industrialization and modernization; to pay attention to innovation, enhancing *the national digital transformation* and developing *the digital economy* and *the digital society*.

- To create breakthroughs in radically and comprehensively innovating education and training, science and technology, to develop high-quality human resources, attract and retain talent, and to effectively apply the Fourth Industrial Revolution's achievements.

- To comprehensively “build good people” and cultivate an advanced Vietnamese culture that is deeply imbued with national identity; to effectively and strictly manage social development to ensure social security and human security; to be proactive in adapting effectively to climate change and reducing impacts of natural disasters, preventing and fighting against diseases to protect people’s health; to sustainably manage, extract and utilize natural resources, paying attention to protecting the environment and ensuring sustainable development.

- To be proactive in preventing the likelihood of wars and conflicts early and from afar (*từ sớm, từ xa*), resolutely and persistently protect the independence, sovereignty, unification and territorial integrity of our Homeland; to ensure national security, social order and safety; to carry out foreign policy of independence, autonomy, multilateralization and diversification; and to be proactive and active in international integration in a comprehensive, extensive and efficient manner.

- To extensively practice and promote our socialist democracy, the people’s right to ownership of the country and their role being the driving force; to consolidate and improve people’s trust and to enhance social harmony.

- To build and improve the socialist law-governed State, and to build our political system to be pure, strong, streamlined, efficient and effective, continuously further the fight against corruption, wastefulness, bureaucratic red-tape and negative practices.

- To continue to comprehensively build and rectify the Party, together with the innovation of the Party’s methods of leadership and governance.

To implement the above directions, we need to continue to fully grasp and effectively address *the following major relationships: those between stability, renewal and development; between economic renewal*

and political renewal; between complying with market laws and ensuring socialist orientation; between developing forces of production and building and gradual improving the socialist relations of production; between the State, the market and society; between economic growth and cultural development, social progress and equity, and environmental protection; between the building and defense of our socialist Vietnamese Homeland; between national independence and autonomy and international integration; between the Party's leadership, the State's governance and the people's right to ownership of the country; and especially the relationships which have been recently added are between democratic practice and enhanced legislation and ensured social order.

The above major relationships reflect dialectical laws and core theoretical issues on the Party's guideline of renewal. They need to be continuously updated, improved and developed to be suitable to the changing realities. They require us to have full and comprehensive understanding and effective implementation. We must not be extreme and one-sided.

Distinguished delegates,

The 13th Congress tenure is a milestone, an extremely important development, serving as the premise for the following tenures in order to successfully implement *the strategic goals of national development to 2030, with the vision to 2045*. To promote the drive and the strength of our nation, the unification between “the Party's will and the people's heart,” we are determined to implement the *tasks and solutions* that have been discussed in the documents submitted to the 13th Party Congress for a new development stage with the following important points:

(1) *To continue to enhance Party building and rectifying, and to build the socialist law-governed State and the political system to be pure and strong. We need:*

- To combine *Party building with Party rectifying, Party building with Party protection* harmoniously, closely and efficiently;
- To continuously improve the capacity and innovate the Party's methods of leadership and governance to be suitable to the new conditions;
- To enhance Party building *in political terms*; to place the greatest importance on Party building *in ideological terms*;
- To be committed to Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Thought and also constantly and creatively update to be suitable to Vietnam's reality, in the goals of national independence and socialism, and in the directions of renewal, and in strictly implementing the Party's principles of organization and operation;
- To enhance the teaching of cultural and historical traditions and the glorious revolution of our Party and our country, and to continuously improve the knowledge of political theory for government officials and Party members; and
- To continuously prevent and fight against plots of sabotage by hostile forces; and to combat and refute antagonistic viewpoints and defend the Party's ideological foundation.

We need to focus on Party building *in moral terms*, to actively fight against bureaucratic red-tape, corruption, wastefulness and negative practices; to effectively push back the degeneration of political ideology, morality, lifestyle, the manifestations of “self-evolution,” “self-transformation” from within. At the same time, we need to enhance the learning and following of Ho Chi Minh Thought, morality and style, and to promote role models among government officials and Party members in accordance with the motto: *the higher the position, the better the example that must be set.*

We need to renew and improve the organization of our political system to be streamlined, efficient and effective together with improving the quality of *grassroots Party organizations and Party members*. We need:

- To place special importance on improving the quality and efficiency in *personnel selection* - the key content of Party building work;
- To focus on building the contingent of government officials at all levels, particularly strategic-level ones, and to ensure that leaders of organizations possess sufficient skills and experience necessary for their tasks; and
- To have appropriate policies and mechanisms to encourage and protect government officials and Party members who are brave and exemplary in implementing the Party's principles and the State's law, who are willing to try and shoulder responsibility, to pursue innovation and ready to deal with difficulties and challenges, and to be determined to work for the common good.

We need to *raise the State's operational capacity and efficiency* in the institutionalization, organization and implementation of Party's directives and resolutions. We need:

- To firmly maintain discipline and order, and at the same time, overcome weaknesses and slowness in leadership, administration and implementation of guidelines, laws, policies and public work;
- To *enhance decentralization (phân cấp, phân quyền) together with checks and balances*, and improve the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of Party scrutinization, supervision and discipline; and
- To continue to implement the strategy of judicial reform, and to enhance the prestige and effectiveness of judicial activities.

We need to renew the organization, system, and operations of *the Fatherland Front and socio-political organizations* under the motto

of strongly focusing on the grassroots and the people, effectively fulfilling the role of social advocacy to protect the lawful and legitimate rights and interests of their members and the people, serving as an important bridge between the Party and the people. We must consolidate and enhance people's confidence and their relationship with the Party, the State and the socialist system.

(2) We need to dynamically and effectively innovate *the growth model and economic restructuring*, accelerate industrialization and modernization using science and technology, creativity and high-quality human resources. We must *build and improve institutions for the socialist-oriented market economy* to be comprehensive, modern and globally integrated.

We must build strong and modern national industries, including *basic industry* and *key industry* in combination with *smart technology*:

- To encourage Vietnamese enterprises to participate in developing new, modern industries;
- To enhance *agricultural restructuring, developing a rural economy in combination with building the new rural*, towards the model of *ecological agriculture, modern rural areas and advanced farmers*;
- To develop commodity-specializing, large-scale and modern-oriented agriculture, using *new technologies with high-added value*;
- To effectively implement *the Strategy on sustainable development of marine economy*, together with safeguarding our sovereignty over the seas, islands, marine resources and environment;
- To develop and improve the quality of *service sectors*, with priority on sectors with high potential, competitive advantage, and new services with high efficiency, paying attention to services supporting industrial and agricultural development; and

- To continue to enhance and effectively restructure State budgets and safe management of public debts, and *restructure public investment, credit organizations and State-owned enterprises* to ensure macro-economic stability.

We need to focus on implementing solutions to *improve institutions* for the socialist-oriented market economy simultaneously:

- To enhance the State's efficiency and effectiveness in macro-economic management and administration, and its capacity to serve and support development;
- To build better relationships *between the State, market and society; between the State, businesses and the people*; and
- To unblock the bottlenecks obstructing national development, particularly in institutions and policies.

We must simultaneously develop and build close and effective linkages *between regions and areas, economic sectors and forms of production and business*:

- To accelerate the *zoning and planning to develop the country, regions and sectors consistent with the comparative advantage of each locality and with our country's realities*, and to enhance autonomy, adaptability and resilience of the economy; and
- To enhance *sector, intra-regional and inter-regional alignment, and to intensify our participation in global production networks and value chains, thus opening up new development spaces*.

We need to continue to promote the role of *State-owned enterprises in establishing and expanding networks of production, supply and value chains*, particularly in *key sectors and areas that the State needs to hold*. We need:

- *To enable the private sector to rapidly and sustainably develop, to grow in size and improve in quality*;

- To innovate and increase the effectiveness of *collective and cooperative economic organizations*, with cooperatives are at the center, and to support the development of the *household economy and linkages with households*; and

- To shift the policies of attracting *foreign direct investment from quantity to quality*, with priority given to *projects with advanced and high value-added technologies and modern governance models* that have spillover effects and linkages with domestic economic zones.

We need to effectively mobilize, distribute and use our resources to create a motivation for rapid and sustainable economic development:

- *To accelerate the research, transfer and application of scientific and technological advancements*, innovation and creativity, with particular focus on the achievements of the Fourth Industrial Revolution so that *science and technology can really become the main driving force of economic growth*; and

- To strongly enhance national digital transformation, to develop *the digital economy and digital society* so as to create breakthroughs in increasing productivity, quality, efficiency and competitiveness of the economy.

(3) *To foster the spirit, the will and determination to develop a prosperous and happy country, a strong and everlasting people, and to promote our cultural values and the strength of the Vietnamese people in building and defending our nation.*

We need to focus on fostering patriotism, national pride and resilience, compassion, unity, social harmony and aspirations for national development:

- To build the mechanisms and policies *to promote the dedication for the country in each and every Vietnamese*;

- To focus on the people at the highest level, and to take people as the center, the driving force, the key resource and the intended beneficiaries of development;

- To comprehensively develop the Vietnamese people, and to build a strong and harmonious connection between *traditional and modern values*; and

- To comprehensively and simultaneously develop *cultural fields, cultural environment and cultural life* to be diverse, civilized and healthy; in so doing, to promote fine national values, and at the same time, absorb the cultural quintessence of humanity so that our culture can truly become our spiritual foundation, internal strength and the driving force for breakthroughs towards socio-economic development and international integration.

We need to effectively implement *social policies* and ensure social security and social welfare and personal security towards significant transformation in the management of social development, achieving social progress and equity and raising people's quality of life and happiness. We need:

- To continue to simultaneously implement solutions for poverty reduction that are *multidimensional, inclusive and sustainable*;

- To develop a social insurance system that is flexible, diverse, multi-layered and modern;

- To ensure the availability of basic social services and people's access to these services, especially the poor and the disadvantaged in society, and to pay attention to, care for and protect people's health;

- To improve the quality of our population, effectively taking advantage of the opportunities of our "golden population structure," and proactively adapting to the trend of population aging; and

- To create an environment and the conditions to develop a simultaneous, modern, flexible, integrated and efficient labor market.

(4) *We must firmly defend our independence and autonomy, enhance our capability of national defense and security, improve the quality and efficiency of diplomatic activities and international integration, be determined and persistent in defending national sovereignty, unification, territorial integrity over our seas, islands and airspace, and firmly maintain a peaceful and stable environment for national development. We need:*

- To firmly connect socio-economic development with strengthening national defense and security;

- To continue to build our People's Army and People's Public Security to become revolutionary, regular, elite and gradually modernized forces, with several services, arms, and forces advancing straight to modernity;

- To build elite, compact and strong armed forces by 2025 as a solid foundation to build our People's Army and People's Public Security to be revolutionary, regular, elite and modern by 2030;

- To build up "relative combat power from mobilizing people's hearts-and-minds" (*thế trận lòng dân*), "relative combat power from mobilizing the entire people to defend the country" (*thế trận quốc phòng toàn dân*), and "relative combat power from mobilizing the people to protect national security" (*thế trận an ninh nhân dân*) as a foundation for the cause of defending our Homeland;

- To increase international cooperation in national defense and security; and

- To build powerful reserves and militia throughout the country that are strong in politics, ideology and organization, with high resiliency.

We must be proactive to discover and handle early enough all complex cases related to order and security to avoid the rise of “hot spots.” We must effectively fight and push back all kinds of crimes in a timely fashion, particularly organized crime, transnational crime, high-tech crime and drug cartels.

We need to strengthen and improve *foreign relations and international integration*, and we must:

- Combine the Party external relations, State diplomacy and people-to-people external relations closely and effectively;
- Enhance the capacity for international integration, particularly *at the grassroots levels and for enterprises*, and to take advantage of the opportunities from the process of international integration, especially the free trade agreements (FTAs);
- Build *a modern diplomacy*, paying special attention to enhancing diplomacy for national defense and security to defend our country *early and from afar*;
- Strengthen *economic diplomacy for development*, focusing to serve our people and enterprises; and
- Expand and improve the effectiveness of *cultural diplomacy*, making a practical contribution to promoting our national image and brand and enhancing our national strength.

(5) *We need to promote the strength of national unity, socialist democracy, people’s rights to ownership of the country, and to enhance legislation and ensure social order. We must:*

- Effectively manage different interests among social strata;
- Ensure equality, unity, mutual respect and assistance among ethnic groups, and help each other to develop;
- Focus on improving and implementing policies related to ethnic groups and religion, to have specific policies to support

minority ethnic groups to overcome difficulties, and implement *religious unity and national unity* effectively; and

- Strictly punish plots and acts aimed at dividing and sabotaging our national unity, and obstructing our national development.

We will uphold *the role of being driving force and the central position of the people in the strategy of national development*. We need:

- To promote positive aspects of socio-politics and people's rights and responsibilities to take part in building and rectifying the Party, in building the socialist law-governed State, the Fatherland Front, socio-political organizations, the contingent of government officials, Party members and public servants, with mechanisms to unleash their potentials, strength and creativity, and to mobilize the people to participate in economic development and in the management of social development;

- To ensure *open and transparent information, and people's right to be informed and to access information*;

- To implement properly and effectively direct democracy, representative democracy, particularly grassroots democracy; and

- To protect against all manifestations of extreme and superficial democracy.

We need to develop a unified, simultaneous, modern, feasible, open, transparent, stable, accessible and internationally competitive legal system, to ensure the people's lawful and legitimate rights and interests, and to promote innovation and creativity so as to meet the requirements of sustainable socio-economic development, national defense and security in the new era.

(6) *We need to firmly manage and effectively use our land and natural resources, to protect and improve the environment, and to*

proactively and actively implement solutions for mitigating and adapting to climate change. We need:

- To build a strategy and improve *the mechanism of efficient management and use of natural resources, with land, water and minerals as most important;*

- To build a system of laws, policies and mechanisms to monitor our natural resources, the environment and climate change, and to forecast and give early warnings of natural disasters, pollution, environmental calamities and epidemics;

- To prevent and strictly handle violations of natural resources and the environment; and

- To be proactive and active in international cooperation related to information sharing, research collaboration, and effective and sustainable management of the extraction and use of natural resources, thus ensuring ecological, environmental, water, food and energy security.

We need to balance economic development and environmental protection:

- To develop a *green economy, reduce waste and greenhouse gas emissions, lower carbon use*, and to encourage the development of a circular economy to effectively use the output of the production process; and

- To improve *resilience and adaptability* to climate change for our infrastructure system and our economy, and implement *smart solutions* to adapt to climate change in the agricultural, forestry, fishery industries and other sectors of the economy.

In the process of implementing the above important tasks and solutions, we need to focus on *investing resources and especially on leadership and administration, in order to create changes in quality for implementing three strategic breakthroughs defined by the 11th and 12th*

Party Congresses and supplemented by this Congress to be suitable with the new stage of development. Specifically:

(1) *To improve simultaneously institutions for development*, first of all, the institutions for a socialist-oriented market economy. Priority will focus on improving a high-quality legal system simultaneously and organizing its proper implementation so as to create an enabling, healthy and fair business investment environment and to promote innovation and creativity. We need to effectively mobilize, manage and utilize our resources for development, particularly land and finances, and to promote decentralization appropriately and effectively, as well as to enhance effectively the system of checks and balances.

(2) *We need to develop human resources, particularly high-quality human resources*, with priority given to human resources in leadership, management and in key areas by raising quality of education and training to create fundamental and comprehensive transformation, together with mechanisms to attract, use and compensate talent appropriately. We need to accelerate research, transfer, application and development of science and technology. As well, we need to promote the aspiration for developing a prosperous and happy country and the will to strive for excellence, and to develop Vietnamese cultural values and the people's strength in building and defending our Homeland.

(3) *We need to build infrastructure system that is synchronous*, modern for both the economy and society, as well as for the environment and national defense and security, with priority given to the development of key national communications projects to adapt to climate change. We need to pay attention to developing information and telecommunications networks, laying a foundation of national digital transformation and gradual development of a digital economy and a digital society.

*Distinguished colleagues,
Distinguished Congress,*

With the motto *Unity - Democracy - Discipline - Creativity - Development*, we need to discuss in detail the documents of the Congress in order to reach a high level of unanimity and vote to pass them. We need to ensure the success of the Congress so as to create a foundation for understanding and implementing its Resolution, and to accomplish our mission and achieve our goals successfully.

Our rich and diverse reality, our major achievements of historical significance and profound experiences and lessons learned over 35 years of renewal, particularly the five years of implementing the 12th Party Congress Resolution, our spirit of unity and unanimity in the political system, and our people's trust and support are the strong foundation for our Party to issue *strong messages and appropriate and effective policy decisions to continue to further the renewal, international integration and national development comprehensively, simultaneously and effectively* in the new period.

We need to deeply engrave in our minds Uncle Ho's teachings: *"The Party Congress has a very close relationship with the revolutionary future of our Party and our people. The Congress will make our united Party become more united, our unanimous thoughts and actions become more unanimous."*¹ With an appropriate direction consistent with historical development, with our Party's will and our people's heart in harmony, with high aspiration to strive for excellence and with strong political competence, our Party, people and armed forces will certainly make new achievements towards *a prosperous people and a strong, democratic, equitable, and advanced country*, firmly advancing

1. Ho Chi Minh (2021), *Complete Collection*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 12, p. 545.

towards socialism and successfully fulfilling the wish of our great President Ho Chi Minh and the yearning of the whole nation.

I would like to extend my wishes to the 13th National Party Congress the best of success. I wish our distinguished guests and delegates in the Congress health and happiness.

Thank you, with high regards!

CLOSING SPEECH AT THE 13TH NATIONAL PARTY CONGRESS*

*Esteemed Members of the Congressional Presidium,
Distinguished guests,
Fellow delegates to the Congress,*

After more than seven days of intensive and serious work in the spirit of “Unity - Democracy - Discipline - Creativity - Development,” and with a strong sense of accountability to the Party, the people and the country, the 13th Party National Congress has recorded much splendid success. We have accomplished all the items in the agenda, and concluded nearly two days ahead of schedule.

The Congress had enthusiastic, straightforward and democratic discussions, and adopted important documents with great unanimity:

- The Political Report;
- The Summary Report on the 10 years’ implementation of Socio-Economic Development Strategy, 2011-2020, and Elaboration of the 10-year Socio-Economic Development Strategy, 2021-2030;
- The Assessment Report on the implementation of the five-year Socio-Economic Development Tasks, 2016-2020, and five-year Socio-Economic Development Orientations and Tasks, 2021-2025;

* On February 1, 2021.

- The Review Report on Party Building and the Observance of Party Statutes, the 12th tenure; and

- The Review Report on the 12th-tenure Central Committee's Leadership and Direction.

The Congress has elected the 13th-tenure Central Committee, composed of 200 individuals representing over 5 million Party members, who are qualified in terms of integrity, ethics, competence and knowledge to shoulder the heavy responsibilities entrusted by the Party and the people.

Delegates to the Congress,

The documents adopted at this Congress have been crafted on the basis of profound reviews of theories and realities, crystallizing the wisdom, determination and aspiration of our Party, people and armed forces. They summarize and describe the implementation of the 12th Party Congress Resolution, and connect with the review of 35-year renewal and 30-year implementation of the 1991 Political Platform. They assess the 10-year implementation of the Political Platform (amended and revised in 2011) and the Socio-Economic Development Strategy, 2011-2020. They set forth the goals and tasks for socio-economic development in the 2021-2025 period, and determine the objectives and orientations towards 2030 and vision for development towards 2045.

The Congress has shown our unanimous will and strong determination to achieve effectively the overall development objectives in the new period, set forth in the Political Report:

- To enhance leadership capacity, governance and resiliency of our Party;

- To build our Party and political system to be comprehensively pure and strong;

- To strengthen and promote people's trust in the Party, the State and the socialist system;
- To foster aspirations to develop our country to become prosperous and happy, and to promote the will and strength of national unity in combination with international opportunities;
- To further the cause of renewal, industrialization and modernization comprehensively and synchronously;
- To build and strongly defend our Homeland, and firmly maintain a peaceful and stable environment; and
- To strive for our nation to become *a socialist-oriented developed country* by the mid-21st century.

The Congress has discussed and adopted important directives and policy decisions to provide judicious and comprehensive direction, leadership and guidance so as to implement the tasks for sustainable and rapid development and national building and defense.

The Congress has affirmed that our Party will continue to pursue Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Thought, and:

- To continuously apply and creatively develop them in ways that are consistent with the reality of Vietnam at each stage; and
- To be committed to the goals of national independence and socialism, and the guideline of renewal towards the goal of *a prosperous people and a strong, democratic, equitable, and advanced country*.

At the same time, the Congress has emphasized that the Party must build and rectify itself, and that the political system must be pure and strong, and with that:

- To continue raising its courage, leadership capacity and governance in planning and implementing guidelines and policies consistent with the reality of Vietnam and global trends;
- To timely institutionalize and provide concrete details, properly and effectively implement the Party's directions and

guidelines, the State's policies and laws, and to overcome the weaknesses in leadership, guideline and implementation;

- To enhance political stand and competence, knowledge, wisdom and resiliency of Party committees and Party organizations and of each government official and Party member, starting with key leaders and managers at all levels and especially strategic-level officials; and

- To firmly preserve the Party's working-class nature, to strictly implement Party principles, mechanisms and stipulations, and practice democracy together with enhancing Party discipline and order.

Delegates to the Congress,

We at the Congress would like to express our sincere thanks and high appreciation to our fellow members of the Party's Central Committee, the Political Bureau and the Secretariat of the 12th tenure, who did not run for election for the 13th-tenure Central Committee, for their great contributions and dedication. May we wish them good health and happiness, and look forward to their continued contribution, devotion, skills and experience to the glorious cause of our Party and our nation.

Congressional delegates have seriously selected and elected fully qualified and well-deserved members to the 13th-tenure Central Committee, in keeping with the Party Statutes. The delegates have entrusted the 13th-tenure Central Committee with the heavy responsibility for leading our Party, people and armed forces to successfully implement the Resolution of the Congress.

Fully understanding the great duty for the Party, the people and the country, the 13th-tenure Central Committee pledges itself to be strongly united, to devote all its heart and mind to serve our

Homeland and people, to engage constantly in self-improvement, to enhance its capacity, knowledge, political competence and moral qualities by following the example of President Ho Chi Minh, and to develop our knowledge and strive to successfully accomplish important objectives and tasks defined by the Congress.

Dear Colleagues,

At this moment, we are happy to report that *the 13th National Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam has been crowned with splendid success!*

The delegates express their warm appreciation and sincere thanks to Party committees and Party organizations, revolutionary veterans, National Assembly deputies, the Fatherland Front, socio-political mass organizations, government officials and Party members, academics, intellectuals, the people throughout the country as well as compatriots overseas, for their enthusiastic and responsible participation and valuable inputs to draft Congressional documents, thereby making a significant contribution to the success of the Congress.

The delegates of the Congress wish to convey their sincere and profound thanks to foreign political parties, organizations and international friends for their participation in the opening and closing sessions, and for their greetings to the Congress, showing us their friendship and solidarity with our Party, our people and our country.

The Congressional delegates warmly appreciate and sincerely thank the Vietnamese and foreign press for their presence and timely coverage of the Congress.

The Congressional delegates commend and thank the Preparatory Sub-Commission and Organizational Sub-Commission and related sectors, agencies and units at various levels, as well as

government officials, public servants, civil servants, officers and soldiers of the armed forces for their devoted and active service, which made a practical contribution to the success of the Congress.

Delegates to the Congress,

The splendid success of the 13th National Party Congress truly inspires us to continue overcoming all difficulties and challenges, to take advantage of opportunities and favorable conditions, and to strive for our nation to soon become *a developed, high-income and socialist-oriented country*. I would like to propose that right after the Congress, all Party committees and Party organizations focus on disseminating the outcomes of Congress, and study the Resolution of the Congress and other documents to fully understand them. And, we need to build and plan action programs as soon as possible, launch a patriotic campaign across the country, promote innovation and creativity, overcome difficulties and challenges, so as to bring the Resolution into our lives soon and turn the decisions by Congress into our lively reality.

The delegates of Congress call upon our Party, people and armed forces, and compatriots at home and abroad to act on our patriotism and self-reliance, our strength of national unity, and strive to successfully implement the Congressional Resolution in the spirit that *every year is to be better than the previous one, and the 13th tenure is to be better than the 12th*.

Delegates to the Congress,

As we are about to celebrate the 91st founding anniversary of our Communist Party of Vietnam (February 3, 1930 - February 3, 2021) and welcome the upcoming Spring of Tan Suu (Year of the Ox) which brings splendid things, we take pride and have

profound confidence in the strength, courage, wisdom and will of our Party and our nation toward the bright future of our country.

Eternal glory to our long-standing civilization and heroic Vietnamese nation!

Long live the glorious Communist Party of Vietnam!

Long live the Socialist Republic of Vietnam!

Great President Ho Chi Minh shall live forever in our cause!

Thank you all sincerely.

IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY IN THE NEW ERA: BUILDING ON PAST SUCCESSES AND TRADITIONS*

*Distinguished National Assembly members,
Honored leaders of the Party, the State, and the Vietnam
Fatherland Front,*

*Esteemed revolutionary veterans, distinguished guests,
Compatriots and soldiers across the country,*

Our country is delighted and excited with the splendid success of the 13th National Party Congress and the final results of the election of the 15th National Assembly and the People's Council at all levels for the 2021-2026 term. Despite the difficulties caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, we have made great efforts to overcome it and actively implemented the 13th Party Congress Resolution. Today, in the capital city of Hanoi, the 15th National Assembly holds its first session. This opens up a new era filled with great hopes for the National Assembly.

First of all, on behalf of the Party and State leaders, I would like to warmly welcome our distinguished delegates, guests, compatriots and soldiers.

* The speech was delivered on July 20, 2021 at the first session of the 15th National Assembly.

I would especially like to welcome our new deputies who have been elected to serve in the 15th National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

Distinguished colleagues and guests,

As we all know, more than 75 years ago, only a few months after gaining our independence and facing numerous difficulties, our people, regardless of wealth, nationality, class, religion, gender or political opinion, answered the call of President Ho Chi Minh and voted in a general election to elect Vietnam's first National Assembly in accordance with the principles of the secrecy of the ballot with free, fair and direct democratic elections.

This important moment has become a glorious milestone in our national history, marking a big leap towards building democratic institutions and opening up a new period of development for our country.

For the first time in history, our country was not only independent but also had a government with the full legal basis and status to represent our people's will, aspirations and rights. The government makes decisions on important national issues on behalf of the people.

The success of gaining our independence and establishing our government was due to our Party's appropriate and creative direction, our policy of national unity, and Ho Chi Minh Thought on building the State that is governed by the rule of law. This outcome demonstrated our people's patriotism, strong will and absolute confidence in the leadership of the Party and President Ho Chi Minh.

With 14 tenures over 75 years, our National Assembly has always been on the same journey with the country. It has always

advanced its role and position as the highest representative entity of the people and the body of highest State power of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, now the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. It has effectively implemented the functions and tasks stipulated by the Constitution and by law, and made great and important contributions to our struggle for national liberation and reunification and for building and defending our Homeland.

Right after its birth, the 1st National Assembly at the first session in March 1946 played an extremely important role in establishing the Coalition Government for the Resistance. The government was constitutional, lawful and led by President Ho Chi Minh to govern the country. At the second session on November 9, 1946, the National Assembly approved the 1946 Constitution, Vietnam's first Constitution in its history. It was a political and legal document that showed humanity, democracy and progress, and marked an important beginning of the process of building the rule of law for our country.

By 1960, together with our entire people, the National Assembly carried out the revolution of national liberation, and gradually reformed our democracy. We secured a victory in the protracted war of resistance against the French colonialists [1946-1954], followed by economic rebuilding and socialist reform in the North and a continued struggle for independence in the South towards national reunification.

In the 2nd to the 5th legislatures from 1960 to 1976, when our country implemented two strategic tasks of building socialism in the North and struggle for liberation in the South, our National Assembly greatly contributed to building economic and technical infrastructure for socialism in the North, and achieving victory over the American intervention, followed by national reunification.

Since the 6th legislature, our National Assembly has served in a reunified Vietnam. Following the results of the general election on April 25, 1976, the National Assembly was active in building the legal system, while making decisions on many important issues regarding socialist construction and national defense.

From the 7th to the 14th legislatures, our National Assembly continued to build on the achievements and experiences from previous legislatures. It was increasingly more proactive, innovative and creative, and has made important progress in its organization and operations to promote the strength of national unity and to build democracy and a socialist law-governed State. The National Assembly has made worthwhile contributions to our great achievements in the renewal process to accelerate industrialization and modernization and to actively participate in international integration, with the goal of a prosperous people and a strong, democratic, equitable, and advanced country towards socialism.

Generally, we find that each legislature has left its own imprints and fulfilled important responsibilities entrusted by the people in accordance with its constitutional and legal functions, including ultimate oversight and decision-making on important issues facing the country.

In terms of constitutional activities, since its founding, the National Assembly has passed and amended the Constitution five times: the Constitution of 1946, the Constitution of 1959, the Constitution of 1980, the Constitution of 1992, and the Constitution of 2013. These are the supreme laws of the country, creating a political and legal foundation for a stable and sustainable development of our country. They stipulate:

- The most important matters on the State's power;
- The political, economic, cultural and social systems, national defense and security, and foreign relations;

- The organizational structure and procedural methods of the state apparatus; and

- The basic rights and obligations of citizens.

Legislative activities have been enhanced with much progress in terms of both quality and quantity, in order to:

- Institutionalize the Party's directions and guidelines and gradually improve the legal system to meet the requirements for national independence, building and defending the country;

- Develop the economy and society, enhance industrialization and modernization, promote social progress and equity, and improve people's lives;

- Maintain political stability, ensure national defense and security, and be proactive in international integration; and

- Build a socialist law-governed State that is of the people, by the people and for the people.

Governance activities have been continuously strengthened and reformed. Its content has focused on major issues facing the country, the inadequacies and pressing concerns in everyday life which reflect people's needs and desires. The process and methods of governance have been greatly improved, particularly in question-and-answer debates and in subject-based activities. These activities of the National Assembly have contributed to encouraging State agencies to enhance their strengths and overcome their weaknesses, and to improving the quality and effectiveness of operations for the successful implementation of political tasks.

Decision-making on crucial matters by the National Assembly has been successful and increasingly become more practical. Resolutions on socio-economic development plans, monetary policies and State budgets, decisions on investment to build vital

national projects, policies on ethnicities, religions, national defense and security, foreign relations, ratification of international treaties, among others, are consistent with the Party's directions and guidelines as well as the people's will and aspirations.

The National Assembly's activities on foreign relations have increasingly been strengthened and expanded both bilaterally and multilaterally. They have deepened parliamentary diplomacy and helped peoples around the world and our international friends to better understand the country, people and culture of Vietnam. They have leveraged our foreign partners' support and enhanced Vietnam's role and status in general and those of Vietnam's National Assembly in particular in the international arena.

The National Assembly's organizational structure and operations have also been constantly improved. The National Assembly's Standing Committee, the Council on Ethnic Affairs, the Commissions and its delegations, deputies and advisory and supporting agencies have been gradually reformed. The National Assembly's activities have been more frequent, and its discussions and debates have been more democratic, open, practical and responsible. All this progress and transformation are the result of requirements of reality, and at the same time, the demands for the National Assembly to always be aware of the need to innovate in order to improve itself.

The achievements of the National Assembly in the past 75 years have come from the Party's effective leadership. This was the decisive factor for the Assembly in fulfilling its important responsibilities entrusted by the people. The National Assembly always has a strong grasp of the Party's directions, viewpoints and policies in order to institutionalize them into laws and properly apply them in its activities.

These were results of the National Assembly's close relationship with the people. It fully understands the people's needs and desires, it listens to and receives voters' ideas and suggestions, and it supervises the process of responding to these suggestions. Therefore, the National Assembly is truly the highest body that represents the people's will and aspirations.

At the same time, the achievements were also a result of the National Assembly's continuous renewal of organization and operations, and the competence of its deputies and agencies. It was done in close coordination with the President, the Government, the Supreme People's Court, the Supreme People's Procuracy, the Vietnam Fatherland Front and other relevant agencies to fulfill common responsibilities, and done with the support, cooperation and assistance of governments and peoples around the world.

Distinguished delegates and colleagues,

The requirements of the renewal, industrialization, modernization, building and defending the country in the new era, in the spirit of the Political Platform, the Socio-Economic Development Strategy, the Political Report, together with other important documents recently adopted by the 13th Party Congress, have given us heavy and honored responsibilities.

Beside the core benefits brought about by the achievements of the 35 years of renewal, our country is facing many difficulties and challenges ahead due to unfavorable external conditions and internal weaknesses and limitations. Therefore, we need to be more determined, make greater efforts, and be further united in order to successfully implement the 13th Party Congress Resolution.

As the highest representative body of the people and the body of the highest State power of our Socialist Republic, the National

Assembly must build on the achievements and experiences of the past 75 years, continuing to innovate and further improve its operational quality and effectiveness in order to fully meet the political requirements and tasks of the country in the new era. To this end, it is necessary to have a full and deep awareness of the Assembly's role, position and responsibility in our country's political system led by the Communist Party of Vietnam, so that it continues to modify legislative operations in order to perform its functions and tasks as stipulated by the Constitution and by the law, timely institutionalizing the Party's guidelines and directions, thus responding to the reality and the people's aspirations.

Specifically, the National Assembly must continue to further enhance its role and position in establishing a legal framework of the country's activities for socio-economic development, national defense and security and foreign relations, and:

- To accelerate and improve the quality of promulgating our laws, and to build a full-fledged, simultaneous legal system as early as possible to ensure quality and meeting the requirements of reality;
- To prioritize the development and modification of our laws in the main areas of key significance with high feasibility in order to create breakthroughs in socio-economic development;
- To continue the renewal, improve the efficiency and effectiveness of supervisory activities, particularly subject-based supervision and question-and-answer debates in order to promote democracy, enhance discussions and in-depth analysis, examine strengths and weaknesses, identify problems and shortcomings in order to find the causes and suggest satisfactory and feasible solutions;
- To pay attention to the implementation of resolutions and recommendations after supervision;

- To improve the quality of decision-making on important national issues to be more accurate and more practical, especially decisions regarding the State budget, socio-economic issues, the organization of the State apparatus and vital national projects; and
- To strengthen foreign relations activities, to be proactive and active in international integration and cooperation, and to implement the Party's and the State's directions of open, multilateral and diversified foreign relations.

In the short term, we need to focus on institutionalizing and solidifying important policy decisions affirmed at the 13th National Party Congress, and to thoroughly prepare and ensure the activities of the 15th legislature of the National Assembly to have higher quality, in order to fulfill our mission and respond to the people's will and aspirations of the new era.

To this end, a crucial issue of decisive importance that I want to further emphasize is that all deputies to the National Assembly in this legislature should continue to raise their spirit of responsibility, their commitment to serve our country and our people, by continuously improving themselves and upholding their integrity and morality, by enhancing their skills and competence, by being close to the people and listening to their opinions, and by effectively implementing the tasks assigned by voters and by the people.

We believe that under the strong and experienced leadership of the Communist Party of Vietnam, with our commitment to continue on the path taken by the Party, Uncle Ho and the people, and with:

- The efforts and high determination of the deputies to the Assembly, the Assembly's agencies and the delegations;
- The close and effective coordination of the agencies in the political system, the state apparatus, the Vietnam Fatherland Front and mass organizations;

- The support and supervision of the people; and
- The cooperation and support of international allies.

Our National Assembly will certainly build on the results, experiences and glorious traditions of the past 75 years to continue to improve its organization and operations so as to achieve many important results, making greater contributions to the cause of renewal, pushing forward industrialization and modernization, and gradually advancing our country towards socialism. It is the reward of being the highest representative body of the people, and the body of highest State power of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

I would like to wish that the first session of the 15th legislature of the National Assembly be crowned with success!

I would like to wish the deputies and colleagues the best of health, happiness and success!

Thank you all, with high regards!

NEW GOVERNMENT: NEW ENTHUSIASM, NEW EFFORTS TO REACH NEW HEIGHTS*

*Distinguished leaders of the Party, the State and the Vietnam
Fatherland Front,*

Distinguished delegates,

*Distinguished colleagues attending the Conference at the National
Convention Centre and local venues,*

Today, I am very delighted to attend the first session of the 2021-2026 tenure of the Government. This session has important significance and has been properly prepared to plan for the implementation of the Resolution of the 13th National Party Congress. First of all, on behalf of the Party and State leaders, and from my heart, I would like to express my warm greetings to all delegates and colleagues attending the Conference. Especially, I would like to extend my warm congratulations to Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh for being elected, and to members of the Government for being endorsed by the National Assembly with votes of very high confidence.

Our Conference is held at the time when there are many great events taking place in the country, reflecting a harmonious and close

* The speech was delivered on August 11, 2021 at the first meeting of the Government for the term 2021-2026.

coordination of our political system, our strong unity and our systematic and scientific methods in the spirit of “When the front calls, the back cheers,” “One calls, one hundred respond,” “One common heart from top to bottom,” “Smoothness flows both vertically and horizontally.” I can confidently say so and would like to prove it below.

In the context that our country and the world are facing many difficulties and challenges, particularly the COVID-19 pandemic, in January 2021, we have successfully organized Party congresses at all levels, then the 13th National Party Congress. Subsequently, we organized three Plenums of the Party’s Central Committee, and continued to successfully hold the elections of deputies to the 15th National Assembly and of representatives of the People’s Councils at all levels for the 2021-2026 tenure, at much higher scale than before, in May 2021. In July 2021, we held the first session of the 15th National Assembly in order to strengthen our organizational and personnel systems, and to plan for the implementation of resolutions and decisions of the 13th Party Congress and of the Party’s Central Committee’s Plenums.

All levels and sectors have swiftly and timely planned for the implementation of the directions, resolutions and decisions of the Central Committee with high consensus, thus attracting interest from the international community. The Government’s Conference today is being held only a few days after the first session of the 15th National Assembly. As I know, the Vietnam Fatherland Front is now actively and quickly preparing for its National Conference on the implementation of the 13th Party Congress Resolution after this Conference. Clearly, this harmonious and methodical coordination is needed, and the reality shows that our way of doing things is logical and has provided good results.

As we know, our political system comprises of three parts: *leadership by the Party, governance by the State, and ownership by the people*. “Leadership by the Party” means that the Party maps out the course of action, guidelines and directions for national building, developing and defending our country, and for expanding international relations. “Governance by the State,” including the National Assembly, the Government and judiciary agencies, means that the State organizes and implements the Party’s directions and guidelines effectively in order to turn them into reality. “Ownership by the people,” through the Front and its mass organizations, means that the people are the actors who implement the Party’s directions and guidelines, and the State’s policies and laws, and then enjoy the benefits of the fruits of their own work.

Regarding State agencies, the National Assembly is the constitutional and legislative body in charge of institutionalizing the Party’s directions and guidelines, while the Government is the executive body in charge of organizing the implementation by turning the State’s laws, which are also the Party’s directions, into reality. The aim is to create material wealth, to manage society and to bring about desirable benefits to the people and the country. Judiciary agencies, including people’s courts and people’s procuracy, protect the laws and ensure social order and safety for the people.

Speaking at the Government’s Conference now, I would like to refer only to the Government and its operational principles, contents and mechanisms, placed in relation to State agencies and the political system, so that we can have an overview of the Party’s leadership, the State’s governance responsibility and the people’s role of being the driving force, heading towards the common goals of a prosperous people and a strong, democratic,

equitable, and advanced country in order to move forward step by step towards socialism.

Distinguished colleagues,

As we all know, after the successful August Revolution, on August 28, 1945, President Ho Chi Minh announced to our people and to the world the formation of the provisional Government of Vietnam. On September 2, 1945, he read the *Declaration of Independence*, giving birth to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. Right after the founding of the First National Assembly in March 1946, the Coalition Government for Resistance led by President Ho Chi Minh was constitutionally and lawfully established to govern the country.

Since then, after more than 75 years, 15 legislatures in operation and under various names, the former Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam as well as the current Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam have always been side by side with our nation. It has continuously developed its role and position as the highest State administrative body and exercised its executive power to effectively carry out its functions and tasks. Using its management role to administer socio-economic and cultural development and to ensure national defense, security and foreign relations as stipulated by the Constitution and law, it has made great and important contributions to the struggle for national liberation and reunification, as well as to building and defending our country.

In the period from 1945 to 1960, the Government, together with the people, implemented the revolution of national liberation, reformed democracy step by step, successfully carried out the long-term war of resistance against French colonialists. We simultaneously pursued economic recovery and development, reform of socialism in

the North, and we continued the struggle for liberation of the South to achieve national reunification.

From 1960 to 1975, when our country had two strategic tasks of building socialism in the North and struggling for liberation in the South, the Government made important contribution to building material and technical infrastructure for socialism in the North, and carrying out the resistance against American intervention in order to achieve a final victory for national reunification.

Since 1976, the Government has been one for the reunified Vietnam. It has continued to build on and further develop the achievements and experiences of previous tenures. From 1976 to 1985, it has become more proactive and active in the post-war socio-economic recovery and development. Since 1986, it has been dynamic and creative in implementing the renewal process initiated and led by our Party. Together with the Party, the people and armed forces, the Government has made worthy contributions to the great achievements of historic significance of the 35-year renewal. The results have further promoted our industrialization, modernization and international integration towards our goals of a prosperous people and a strong, democratic, equitable, and advanced country. This has further developed our country which has never enjoyed such fortunes, potentials, and international status and prestige as they are today.

Especially, over the past five years, while taking advantage of the opportunities to overcome many difficulties and challenges, particularly the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and frequent natural disasters, the Government, together with the Party, the people and the armed forces, has worked to promote patriotism, unity and determination, and had the courage to innovate and be creative. The efforts have led to important and comprehensive

results, and created impressive achievements. Our country has experienced rapid and sustainable development, which has further contributed to strengthening and enhancing the people's trust in the Party, the State and the socialist system.

From a broad perspective, each Government tenure has made its own achievements and has fulfilled the important responsibilities assigned by the Party, the State and the people. Each performed its functions and tasks as stipulated in Law on Organization of the Government in the implementation of the Constitution and the law. This includes planning policy and submitting law and ordinance projects; governing the State in guiding and administering socio-economic development; managing natural resources, environmental protection and response to climate change; developing culture, health care, education and training, science and technology, information and communications; implementing policies on society, ethnicities, beliefs, religions; ensuring national defense and security, social order and safety; and enhancing external relations activities and international integration.

The Government's achievements in the past 75 years started with our Party's effective leadership, which is the decisive factor for the Government in fulfilling important responsibilities entrusted by the Party, the State and the people. The Governments of different tenures have always understood well the Party's directions, viewpoints and policies so as to translate and institutionalize them into laws, and apply them to the Government's activities appropriately.

These are the results of a close connection of the Party, the National Assembly, and the Government with the people of all social levels, through a good understanding of the reality and of the people's needs and aspirations, and by listening to the people's

opinions and legitimate recommendations in order to improve institutions of the socialist-oriented market economy.

At the same time, these are also the results of the process of continuous innovation of organizational system and operational methods, and the improvement of the capacity, quality, efficiency and effectiveness of the government from the Central to local levels. It is also thanks to the support, the close coordination and the common responsibilities of the National Assembly, the State President, the Vietnam Fatherland Front and other relevant agencies.

Distinguished colleagues,

The 13th National Party Congress has been successful. With a high level of consensus, it has adopted the *Strategy on National Construction, Development and Defense*, including the *10-year Socio-Economic Development Strategy for the 2021-2030 period* with a vision towards 2045, taking our nation to becoming a developed, high-income country and the *five-year Socio-Economic Development Orientations and Tasks, 2021-2025*. The recent 3rd Plenum has improved one step further regarding key personnel in our political system. It has issued the *Conclusion on Socio-Economic Development, National Finances and the five-year Medium-Term Public Investments, 2021-2025*, which was unanimously approved by the 15th National Assembly and institutionalized at the recent first session.

We are swiftly and actively planning for the implementation of the 13th Party Congress Resolution and the conclusions and guiding decisions of the Party's Central Committee within the context of many difficulties and challenges which are bigger, fiercer and more unpredictable. Since the early part of this year, our country has been still striving to fight resolutely against the COVID-19 pandemic.

The fourth outbreak of the epidemic has spread so fast. It is extremely dangerous, complex and hard to control, and likely to prolong continually, with the imminent danger of breaking out a new wave.

Although our economy and society continue to develop and have achieved many positive results compared to the same period in 2020, they are still lower than the planned target. Production, business and people's lives, particularly in the epidemic-hit areas, and sectors and fields under direct influence of the pandemic, have faced many difficulties and challenges. The world's economy has seen signs of recovery and growth again, but they are not really firm. International trade and investment have declined; public debt has highly increased globally, the global financial and monetary markets have high risks and are still in danger of falling into a crisis.

The COVID-19 pandemic is likely to become more complex and difficult to control, which causes negative and prolonged impacts in the global and regional economy, including the Southeast Asian region and our country. It has deeply changed the economic order and structure, modes of governance and the organization of economic activities and social life globally, forcing many countries to change their directions and strategies for economic development towards raising their internal strength, paying attention to developing the domestic market, the digital economy and the digital society.

To successfully meet the targets and complete the tasks mapped out by the 13th Party Congress, the 3rd Plenum and the First Session of the 15th National Assembly, the Government of the 2021-2026 tenure must continue to build on previous achievements and traditions, and on precious lessons learned from previous tenures. It should strive harder on the path of renovation to

improve the quality, efficiency, effectiveness of its operation in the new development stage. It should focus on prioritizing the six key tasks and three strategic breakthroughs, to completely resolve the “bottlenecks,” the impediments and shortcomings in order to achieve more rapid and national sustainable development on the basis of enhancing macro-economic stability, developing science and technology, innovation and creativity, maximizing the country’s potential and advantages.

We need: (1) to restructure the economy combined with innovating the growth model, and to increase the economy’s productivity, quality, effectiveness and competitiveness; (2) to synchronously implement effective solutions to overcome the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, and quickly recover and develop our economy; (3) to strongly promote our cultural values, the strength of Vietnamese people and individual creativity; (4) to gradually build a society of order, discipline, safety, health, democracy, equality and civilization; (5) to ensure a peaceful and happy life for our people; (6) to pay attention to environmental protection and response to climate change; (7) to enhance national defense and security, to be determined and persistent in defending our national independence, sovereignty, unification and territorial integrity while maintaining a peaceful and stable environment for national development; and (8) to be proactive and active in international integration, and improve the effectiveness of foreign relations and Vietnam’s status and prestige in the international arena.

In this process, we need to pay attention to research and have a clear understanding of the theoretical and practical issues with important principles which are included in the Political Platform and the Party’s directions. In particular, we should place emphasis on the following issues:

First, on economic development: The economic model we have built is the socialist-oriented market economy. This is a fundamental and creative theoretical breakthrough of the Party. It is an important theoretical outcome of 35 years of implementing the renewal, based on Vietnam's reality and lessons learned from international experience. Accordingly, a socialist-oriented market economy is a modern economy with international integration, operating under the laws of the market economy and governed by the socialist law-governed State under the leadership of the Communist Party of Vietnam. It is to ensure a socialist orientation with the goals of a prosperous people and a strong, democratic, equitable, and advanced country.

In a socialist-oriented market economy, there are many forms of ownership and economic sectors. All economic sectors operate according to the law and are important components of the economy. They are equal before the law and develop together in the long term with healthy cooperation and competition. In particular, the State-run sector plays a key role, while the collective sector has been continuously improved and developed. The private sector is one of the important driving forces of the economy, and the mixed and co-ownership sector, particularly the joint stock enterprises, has been further developed. The State-run and the collective sectors together have become a strong foundation of the national economy.

The distribution of benefits has ensured equity and created a driving force for development. The distribution system has been carried out essentially according to labor productivity, economic efficiency, contribution of capital and other resources, through a system of social security and social welfare. The State governs the economy using the law, strategy, planning, policy and resources to provide directions, regulate and promote socio-economic development, and implements its functions and tasks

comprehensively and effectively in the socialist-oriented market economy.

Second, on socio-cultural development: A core characteristic and important feature of the socialist orientation in the market economy in Vietnam is to combine the economic with the social. That is, to unify economic and social policies, and to combine economic growth with social progress and equity in each step and each policy throughout the development process. It means that we would not wait until the economy reaches a high level of development to materialize social progress and equity. Furthermore, we will not “sacrifice” social progress and equity just to pursue economic growth. On the contrary, each economic policy should aim at social development, and each social policy should aim at creating a driving force for economic development and for social progress and equity. We need to encourage lawful individual wealth-building, and at the same time, to ensure social security, eradication of hunger and poverty reduction. We must take care of people who have contributed to the country and those with difficult living situations. This is a requirement of principle to ensure a healthy and sustainable development with a socialist orientation.

We consider culture as the *spiritual* foundation of society. We regard a holistic development of culture in harmony with economic growth, social progress and equity is a fundamental direction for the process of socialist development in Vietnam. The culture that we are building is a modern culture deeply imbued with national identity. It is a culture of unity in diversity based on progressive and humane values. The Vietnamese culture inherits and promotes fine traditional values imbued with identities of all ethnic groups. We learn fine aspects from other cultures in the world and strive to build a civilized and healthy society to serve people’s legitimate interests

and human dignity, with increasing levels of knowledge, morality, physical health, lifestyles and aesthetics.

We place people at the heart of our development strategy. Developing culture and building good people are both a goal and a driving force of the renewal process. The development of education and training, science and technology is the top national policy. Protecting the environment is one of the critical issues for survival and a criterion for sustainable development. Building happy and progressive families to serve as healthy and strong elements of the society, and working towards gender equality are the criteria for progress and civilization.

The *socialist society* we are building is a society striving for progressive and humane values, based on the common interests of the entire society. Its characteristics are completely different than those of a competitive society where competing interests among individuals and groups serve individual benefits. Therefore, we need and we do have conditions to build social harmony rather than social opposition and division. In the political system of a socialist society, the relationship among the Party, the State and the people is a unified one in terms of goals and interests. The Party's directions and the State's policies, laws and activities aim to serve the interests and well-being of the people. As mentioned above, the political model and the general operational mechanism are *leadership by the Party, governance by the State and ownership by the people*.

Third, on strengthening national defense, security and foreign relations: The global and domestic situations are constantly changing and complex. This requires us to always pay attention to: (1) maintaining our independence and autonomy; (2) increasing our national defense and security potentials; (3) improving the quality

and effectiveness of foreign relations and international integration; (4) firmly protecting independence, sovereignty, unification and territorial integrity, peace over our seas, islands and airspace; and (5) maintaining a peaceful and stable environment for building and developing our country.

We need to closely combine socio-economic development with strengthening national defense and security under the motto “socio-economic development being the centerpiece, and strengthening of national defense and security being of vital and permanent importance.” In socio-economic development strategies, planning and organizing, we need to always pay attention to national defense and security. We need: (1) to solidify and meet the goals early of building the People’s Army and People’s Public Security as revolutionary, regular, elite and gradually modernized forces; (2) to build an elite, compact and strong Army by 2025, with several services, corps, and forces advancing straight to modernity by 2030, while striving to become a modern Army by 2030; and (3) by 2030, to build an elite and modern People’s Public Security.

We need to build up relative combat power from mobilizing people’s hearts-and-minds, relative combat power from mobilizing the entire people to defend the country, and relative combat power from mobilizing the people to protect national security as a foundation for the cause of defending our Homeland. The Army and Public Security must coordinate closely and harmoniously as two wings of a bird in the cause of protecting independence and maintaining order and security for our Homeland.

We need to timely and proactively identify and handle complex incidents concerning security and order in order to prevent “hot spots,” while taking into consideration the complex situation of the pandemic. We need to effectively and timely fight against crimes,

particularly organized crimes, transnational crimes, high-tech crimes, drug trafficking, and so on.

We need: (1) to continue to improve the effectiveness of foreign relations and international integration on a wider and deeper scale; (2) to coordinate closely and effectively the Party external relations with the State diplomacy and people-to-people external relations; (3) to improve the capacity of integration, especially at the regional and local levels and for enterprises, to fully take advantage of the opportunities from the process of integration, particularly the opportunities from the next-generation free trade agreements we have signed; (4) to build a *modern diplomacy*, with special attention toward enhancing national defense and security diplomacy so as to defend our Homeland early and from afar, and to protect our country early when there is not yet any danger; (5) to strengthen *economic diplomacy* to serve national development, putting the people and enterprises at the center; and (6) to deepen and improve the efficiency of *cultural diplomacy*, people-to-people external relations, making a contribution to promoting national image and brand, and to enhancing our collective synergy.

Fourth, on the building of our organization, apparatus and personnel: This is a very fundamental and important issue of decisive significance for all government activities. Therefore, I propose that the Government, its organs and local levels should pay greater attention and do this work more effectively. You need to seriously implement the Law on Organization of the Government, the Law on Organization of Local Government and other relevant laws in order to build our organization, apparatus and government officials to be pure and strong, with courage, intellect, political competence and moral qualities, pure lifestyles and strong professionalism. It is necessary to avoid merely focusing on professionalism.

At the same time, we must continue to renew our leadership methods and working styles of organizations in compliance with the Constitution and law, particularly the heads, in order to “play the right role, perform the right task,” as I have often said. We need: (1) to pay greater attention to administrative reform and to apply information technology in administration and operations; (2) to improve operational capability, efficiency and effectiveness of our organizational apparatus and government officials; and (3) to scientifically build and effectively plan for the implementation of programs and plans, and take the time to research and examine the related socio-economic concerns in order to effectively deal with key issues rather than being superficial, avoiding the work or shifting the responsibility to others.

Especially, it is necessary to renew and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of power decentralization, assignment and coordination, combining with enhanced monitoring and supervision among the Government’s organs and units and government offices at all levels, and between these and those of the Party, the National Assembly, the People’s Councils at all levels, the system of judicial agencies, the Vietnam Fatherland Front and the socio-political organizations. It is to ensure that the entire organizational apparatus always operates in a synchronous and unified way, avoiding situations where “the drum and the horn beating in opposite directions” (*trống đánh xuôi, kèn thổi ngược*), or where it’s “your power versus my power” (*quyền anh, quyền tôi*), “crabs rely on their claws, fish rely on their fins” (*cua cạy càng, cá cạy vây*) in carrying out responsibilities and tasks.

At the same time, we need to continue to seriously implement the Resolution of the 4th Plenum, the 11th and the 12th tenures, on strengthening and improving the Party building, and on preventing

and pushing back the degeneration of political ideology, morality, lifestyles, and the manifestations of “self-evolution” and “self-transformation.” This is to be done in combination with the active implementation of Directive No. 05-CT/TW of May 15, 2016 of the Political Bureau on promoting the learning and following of Ho Chi Minh Thought, morality and style according to Conclusion No. 01-KL/TW of May 18, 2021 of the Political Bureau.

We need: (1) to deploy the implementation of the Resolution of the 6th Plenum, the 12th tenure, on continuing to renew and rearrange the apparatus of the political system to be streamlined, efficient and effective, and to reform organizational and managerial apparatus towards improving the operational quality and effectiveness of public non-business units; (2) to carry out personnel work more effectively, particularly the management and evaluation of government officials in order to select and hire the right people with skills and integrity, who are “hard working, thrifty, honest and upright” (*cần, kiệm, liêm, chính*), “public-spirited and selfless” (*chí công vô tư*)* and devoted to the country and the people, putting them into leadership positions of the government.

Don’t “confuse chicken with bird” (*nhìn gà hoá cuốc*), “don’t assume a fruit turning red is ripe” (*đừng thấy đỏ tưởng là chín*), and don’t succumb to the temptation of immoral, shameless actions. We need: (1) to firmly fight to remove a few bad apples that are spoiled and degenerated in political ideology, morality and lifestyle, and fight against the practices of power-seeking, narrow-mindedness, bribery, cronyism (*chạy chức, chạy quyền*) and nepotism in recruiting unqualified family members; (2) to promote democracy, enhance

* President Ho Chi Minh’s teaching for Party members and government officials.

a sense of responsibility, promote role models, and uphold the spirit of serving the people among government officials, public servants and civil servants; and (3) to study and promptly enact mechanisms and policies that encourage and protect organizations and individuals who have the courage to innovate, those who dare to think, to do and to accept responsibility for their actions.

Good and reasonable proposals for reform must be carefully discussed and examined by Party committees and government offices at all levels, then experimented according to their capacity. Good innovation must be protected and continued to be used, while wrong suggestions should be swiftly and properly corrected to provide lessons. “Right and wrong must be clear” (*Phải trái phân minh*) while “always keeping good relationships” (*nghĩa tình trọn vẹn*), as we must not “let the wrong be right just for the sake of harmony” (*dĩ hòa vi quý*).

We need: (1) to tighten administrative discipline, regularly scrutinize and supervise in order to create major changes in doing public work, and to improve morality, culture and professionalism of government officials, public servants and civil servants; and (2) to firmly and persistently fight against corruption, wastefulness and negative practices, and to build and improve anti-corruption laws, mechanisms and policies so that “no one can, no one dares to, no one wants to, and no one needs to be corrupt.”

At the same time, we need to clearly combat the *argument against anti-corruption*, which uses the pretext that fighting against corruption and negative practices would obstruct development. This argument dampens the will to fight against corruption, thus causing some people to “fight perfunctorily,” to “be on the defensive,” to “shield corrupted ones” and to “stay safe” among some

government officials and public servants, particularly officials in leadership and managerial positions at various levels.

I have said many times and now I would like to repeat: those who favor this argument need to step aside and let other people do the anti-corruption work! What is the point of having a lot of money, as you can't take it with you when you die? Honor, on the other hand, is the most sacred and noblest thing!

Distinguished colleagues,

We strongly believe that under the prudent and experienced leadership of the Communist Party of Vietnam and our consistency in following the path taken by the Party, Uncle Ho and our people, and with: (1) great effort, endeavor and determination of the Government, the Prime Minister, Governmental members, ministries, sectors, localities and agencies under the Government; (2) close coordination of agencies in the state apparatus, the Vietnam Fatherland Front and socio-political organizations; (3) the support and supervision of the people; and (4) the cooperation and assistance of international friends, the Government of the 2021-2026 tenure will definitely build on the results, experience and excellent tradition of the past 75 years, and continue to innovate more dynamically its organization and operations in order to achieve many important outcomes, further contributing to the renewal process, industrialization and modernization to advance the country step-by-step transitionally towards socialism, and be worthy of its role and position as the highest State administrative body exercising executive power of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. The Government is the agency that directly organizes, manages, and implements effectively all directions and guidelines of the Communist Party of Vietnam, by turning the Party's guidelines and directions, the State's laws into

vivid realities, bringing about prosperity, freedom and happiness to the people, glorifying our nation and our citizens.

I wish the Government of the 2021-2026 tenure new enthusiasm, new endeavor, with the determination to strive for new achievements and successful completion of the assigned tasks, to be worthy of the trust, affection and expectation of the Party, the State and the people!

Thank you, with high regards!

**IMPLEMENTING THE RESOLUTIONS
OF THE 13TH PARTY CONGRESS:
DEVELOPING THE TRADITION OF UNITY AND
TAPPING INTO THE STRENGTH OF THE COUNTRY***

*Distinguished Presidium of the Central Committee of the Vietnam
Fatherland Front,*

Distinguished seniors and guests,

Dear colleagues,

Today, I am delighted to attend the Conference of the Vietnam Fatherland Front and its member organizations to deploy the Action Program to implement the Resolution of the 13th National Party Congress. This is a very important Conference that happens at a time of great significance: (1) our Party, our people and our armed forces are actively and urgently deploying the implementation of the important resolutions, conclusions and decisions of the Plenums of the Party's Central Committee; (2) the First Session of the National Assembly, 15th legislature, has just concluded and was crowned with success; and (3) the Government has also had its first meeting with a

* The speech was delivered on August 16, 2021 at the National Conference to deploy the Action Program of the Vietnam Fatherland Front to implement the Resolution of the 13th National Party Congress.

new enthusiasm, endeavor and determination toward implementing successfully the Resolution of the 13th Party Congress. The entire country is now pooling its efforts with millions of people acting as one, focusing their energy to combat fiercely against the COVID-19 pandemic, while at the same time accelerating the activities of socio-economic development, national building and defense as well as foreign relations work.

On behalf of the leaders of the Party and the State, and on my behalf, I would like to send the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Vietnam Fatherland Front, seniors, delegates and colleagues attending the Conference my cordial greetings, sincere regards and warmest congratulations. I would like to wish the Conference the best of success.

Dear delegates and colleagues,

As we all know, the 13th National Party Congress is an important political event for our Party, our people and our country. The Congress has determined the directions, tasks and goals of general development of our country not only for the immediate years, but also for the long term to the year 2045 when we celebrate the 100th founding anniversary of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, now the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. Specifically, Vietnam aims to become a developing country with industry moving toward modernity and having passed the lower middle-income level by 2025, to become a developing country with a modern industry and an upper middle-income level by 2030, and to become a developed, high-income country by 2045.

The Congress has become a point of convergence of history and of the Party's prestige. It is the vision and aspiration of our nation and our people's confidence. It has important significance in

the process of continuing to accelerate the renovation comprehensively. The Resolution by the Congress and other documents are a profound review of theory and practice, and crystalize our intellect, our will and aspirations.

To implement these fundamental and important directions, tasks and goals, we must (1) promote our strength of national unity together with international opportunities, under the Party's appropriate and effective leadership; (2) accelerate the renewal, industrialization and modernization comprehensively and simultaneously; and (3) build and defend our Homeland and firmly maintain a peaceful and stable environment.

However, as I have emphasized in my speech at the closing ceremony of the 13th Party Congress: "Things are not over when the Congress concludes. This is only the beginning. Whether we can turn the Resolution into vivid realities, create wealth, bring about prosperity to the country and happiness to the people that will determine the practical success of the Congress." Therefore, following the success of the Congress, it is extremely necessary and important to study, learn, thoroughly understand and deploy the implementation of the Resolution of the 13th Party Congress, which must be carried out seriously, resolutely, methodically and scientifically throughout the term.

The role, position and operation of the Vietnam Fatherland Front and its member organizations are very important. I warmly welcome and sincerely thank the Vietnam Fatherland Front and its member organizations for being proactive in studying and building the Action Program for its organization, and for coordinating the Conference today to deploy the Action Program for the entire system. This is very practical work, showing your determination to

manifest and bring the Resolution of the 13th National Congress of the Party soon to life.

Therefore, we need to have a deep understanding and answer the following question: What is the position and role of the Vietnam Fatherland Front and its member organizations in the current period? How should the Vietnam Fatherland Front and its member organizations thoroughly understand their objective, operational guidelines and tasks in order to contribute to the successful implementation of the goals of building and developing our country, as mapped out by the Resolution of the 13th National Congress of the Party?

I have studied the materials and reports of the Standing Committee of the Central Committee of the Vietnam Fatherland Front, and I have read the opinions of member organizations and the localities. I commend your work and agree with it in general. I just would like to further discuss, emphasize and analyze some of the issues, hoping that you would pay attention to them so as to achieve unanimity in your understanding and implementation.

Dear delegates and colleagues,

As we all know, unity is an extremely precious tradition and experience of the Vietnamese people. It has been forged through thousands of years of building and defending our country. “One tree cannot make a hill, but three trees grouped together can form a high mountain” (*Một cây làm chẳng nên non, ba cây chụm lại lên hòn núi cao*); “Unity is alive, division is dead!” (*Đoàn kết thì sống, chia rẽ thì chết*). Since its birth and throughout the process of leading the revolution, our Party has always determined that “unity” is the core value, and that “great national unity” (*đại đoàn kết toàn dân tộc*) is

our strategic direction, source of strength, and driving force of our Vietnamese revolution. Unity is also the cross-cutting and consistent ideology in the theoretical mindset and practical activities of President Ho Chi Minh. It has become our Party's revolutionary strategy and a strong motivation that led to our victories. He has affirmed: "Unity, unity, great unity. Success, success, great success!"¹

Here, the Front has a very important position and role. It is not a coincidence that soon after the Communist Party of Vietnam was established, on November 18, 1930, the Standing Committee of the Party's Central Committee issued a directive to establish the Anti-Imperialist Alliance, the first organizational form of the Vietnam National United Front. Over the past 90 years, under the Party's leadership, the Vietnam National United Front has been operating in all forms and by all measures; it has promoted patriotism and national unity together with international opportunities, and joined hands by taking the Vietnamese revolutionary ship to overcome the storms and win one victory after another.

During the period of the struggle for national independence (1930-1945), the Front had mobilized and organized the people from all walks of life to unite and rise up in the August Revolution of 1945 to gain national independence and establish the government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the first people's democratic state in Southeast Asia.

Entering a prolonged resistance war against the French colonialists [1946-1954], the Front had united all patriotic people from various stations in life, using the alliance of workers, peasants

1. Ho Chi Minh (2011), *Complete Collection*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 13, p. 119.

and intellectuals as the foundation, combining true patriotism with the pure proletarian international spirit, rallying the strength of the entire people to bring our resistance war and national development to absolute victory.

During the resistance war to defend our country against the United States [1955-1975], in the North, the Vietnam Fatherland Front had a broad unity of all classes, strata, parties, ethnicities, religions, and of patriotic and progressive intellectuals. The Front mobilized all forces in the whole country to build the socialist North to become a strong base for the brave front in the South. In the South, on December 20, 1960, the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam was established, announcing the 10-point Action Program with the aim to overthrow the Ngo Dinh Diem dictatorial regime - the American puppets - and to build an independent, democratic, peaceful and neutral South Vietnam toward achieving peace and reunification for our Homeland.

On January 20, 1968, the Alliance of national, democratic and peaceful forces of Vietnam was set up with a greater size for a broader mobilization and unity of different strata among South Vietnamese people, in order to fight the United States and protect our country. Under the Party's effective and capable leadership and the Front's banner of unity, the entire country rallied with one common heart and mobilized all efforts to launch the General Offensive and Uprising in the Spring of 1975. The historic Ho Chi Minh Campaign successfully liberated the South completely, reunified our country and brought the whole country to advance towards socialism.

In the cause of renewal, building and defending our Homeland, the Vietnam Fatherland Front and its member organizations have

assumed an increasingly important role with many practical and enriched activities. They have actively made a contribution to:

- Consolidating, expanding and promoting our national unity, enhancing our social harmony and providing good support for people's lives;
- Encouraging people to promote innovation and creativity and to actively participate in the patriotic emulation movements; and
- Participating in the building of our Party and government, and in expanding the friendly relations between our Vietnamese people and the peoples of the world.

The Vietnam Fatherland Front and its member organizations have paid attention to renewing their programs and operations, implementing their activities more intensively and extensively, and improving the quality of patriotic emulation movements and other campaigns. It has attracted trade union members, members of associations and people from all walks of life to promote creativity and emulation, and to mobilize available resources to participate in successfully meeting the targets of building, developing and defending our Homeland. The Front has:

- Closely coordinated with organizations in our political system to disseminate information, mobilize and rally the people of all strata, and created good social harmony and consensus;
- Actively participated in shaping laws and provided feedback to relevant draft documents, and participated in preparing and organizing Party congresses at the national and local levels;
- Provided important comments and suggestions to the Party and the State, contributing to planning the Party's directions and policies and the State's laws;

- Made great efforts to renew and diversify the methods for mobilizing people, enhanced the practice of democracy at the grassroots levels, implemented social supervision and debates, participated in preventing and combating corruption and negative practices, contributing to building the Party and the political system to be purer and stronger.

Recently, the Vietnam Fatherland Front and its member organizations have effectively exercised its rights and responsibilities in actively participating in organizing and mobilizing people to successfully implement the election of the 15th National Assembly, and the election of People's Councils at various levels for the 2021-2026 tenure. When the COVID-19 pandemic broke out across our country, the Vietnam Fatherland Front and its member organizations were proactive and creative to assume their crucial role in coordinating with State agencies to appeal, mobilize and promote our strength of national unity, and raise the spirit of mutual support. As a result, people have volunteered and donated money to support the front line to prevent and combat the pandemic, and added to government funding to purchase COVID-19 vaccines, thus contributing to preventing and controlling the spread of the virus and pushing back the pandemic.

Dear delegates and colleagues,

The viewpoints of the 13th Party Congress on strengthening socialist democracy and on building and promoting our national unity have built on, improved and further developed the viewpoints which our Party has built during the period of leading the revolution, in which there are many new important points.

The overarching objective of the Documents affirms the following: “To consolidate and enhance the people’s trust in the Party, the State and the socialist system; to induce aspirations for

developing the country's prosperity and well-being, and promote the will and strength of the great national unity in combination with international opportunities.”¹ Once again, the Documents of the 13th Party Congress have affirmed it, with added content and motto that “the people know, the people discuss, the people do, the people check, the people supervise and the people benefit,” determined more clearly that “The Party to exercise leadership, the State to assume governance, and the Fatherland Front and socio-political organizations to act as the core for the people's execution of their right to ownership.”²

The Party and the State have mapped out the directions, policies and laws to create the political and legal foundation to respect, ensure and protect the people's rights to ownership of the country, and affirmed “the role of being driving force and the central position” of the people in the process of building, developing and defending our Homeland. The building and promotion of the strength of our national unity must always be placed under the Party's leadership, which is the banner combining the full strength of our national unity to strive for the goals of “a prosperous people and a strong, democratic, equitable, and advanced country.”

The Congressional Documents have also pointed out the role and responsibility of Party committees at all levels in setting good examples of building and strengthening our national unity. The Documents clearly required that: “The Party committees, the Party organizations, the organizations of the political system, the contingent of Party members, government officials, public servants

1. The Communist Party of Vietnam (2021), *Documents of the 13th Party Congress* (English version), National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, p. 235.

2. *Ibid.*, p.158.

and civil servants have to set good examples in exercising democracy, abiding by the law and upholding social morality”¹ in exercising democracy and implementing political tasks. At the same time, they need to “timely and seriously handle the organizations and individuals who have manipulated democracy to cause domestic chaos or socio-political instability or violate democratic norms, thus harming to the people’s right to ownership of the country.”²

Together with promoting socialist democracy, strengthening the fight against corruption and negative practices has also been determined by the Party as the basis to build social harmony and the consensus between the State and the people, through which national unity will be enhanced. The Documents of the 13th Party Congress have affirmed that “it is necessary to struggle to prevent and push back corruption and negative practices with higher political determination and with stronger, more thorough and more effective action,” and at the same time to combine the fight against corruption and negative practices with “building and rectifying the Party, building and consolidating the political system to be pure and strong, and strengthening the national unity.”³

The Congressional Documents have also mapped out the requirements for “the renewal of the apparatus organization,” the programs and operations, and the building of human resources of the Fatherland Front and socio-political organizations to be competent on par with their tasks, especially the government officials at the grassroots levels and residential areas. The Documents added a major campaign to the center of the Front: The entire people unite to build

1. *Ibid.*, p. 158.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 159.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 183.

new rural and civilized urban (*đô thị văn minh*), and to fulfill the responsibilities of building up relative combat power from mobilizing people's hearts-and-minds, promoting the strength of unity and harmony of the people at home and abroad in order to build and defend our Homeland.¹

Dear delegates and colleagues,

In the coming years, the global situation will continue to experience complex developments. Peace, cooperation and development will remain the major trends, but filled with multiple hurdles and difficulties. Strategic competition among major powers and local conflicts will continue in various forms and become more complex and intense, thus increasing the risks for the economic, political and international security environment. The COVID-19 pandemic will likely to continue and become more complex, and difficult to control. This will lead to negative and prolonged effects on the economy of the world and the region, including our country.

At home, we continue to accelerate the renewal comprehensively and simultaneously, enhance the building and rectification of the Party and the political system to be pure and strong, promote democracy and the strength of national unity, develop the economy rapidly and sustainably, improve the people's material and spiritual life, firmly maintain socio-political stability, strengthen foreign relations activities, firmly maintain a peaceful environment, strongly protect our national independence and sovereignty, and strive to become a socialist-oriented developed country by the mid-21st century.

However, we also met with many difficulties and challenges, particularly by the impacts of economic and financial recessions, the

1. *Ibid.*, p. 157.

negative practices and social ills, and the challenges of protecting our sovereignty over the seas and islands. These events might have some influence on the thoughts and daily lives of many people.

Faced with the requirements of the renewal, industrialization, modernization, building and defending our country in the spirit of the Political Platform, the important documents decided by the 13th Party Congress set out heavy but meaningful tasks for the Party, the people and the armed forces. Therefore, we must have higher determination, make greater efforts and become more unified in order to successfully implement the Resolution of the 13th Party Congress. Under the role of the people's representative organization, an important aspect of our country's political system, the Vietnam Fatherland Front and its member organizations should work more effectively in their key role politically, with an important responsibility of building national unity, rallying and mobilizing the people to accelerate the patriotic emulation movements and practice democracy, building social harmony in order to contribute in meeting political targets in the new period. The three points - the Party leads, the State governs and the people are the owners - must be a firm trivet for our cause of building and defending our Homeland.

With that spirit in mind, I would like to propose that the Vietnam Fatherland Front and its member organizations should continue to reflect on all their experiences to draw lessons and to do further research to find new solutions for the following required tasks:

First, the Front needs to continue to strengthen national unity and promote creativity among all people in building and defending our Homeland.

Specifically, it is important to have a thorough understanding of our national viewpoint: The revolution is the cause of the people, by the people and for the people. It is our people who have worked to achieve great victories of historical significance. Therefore, one of the overarching and top tasks of the Vietnam Fatherland Front is to continue to build and consolidate our national unity, to rally the majority of the people of all strata, to ensure high unanimity in terms of awareness, thoughts and action, to be committed to the goals of national independence and socialism, to be determined in defending and firmly maintaining national independence and sovereignty, to ensure socio-political stability for our country to be stronger and modern and for our people to be more prosperous and happier.

The Front and its member organizations should be more effective in disseminating information, educating and mobilizing the people so that they fully understand and effectively implement the Party's directions and guidelines, the State's laws and policies. The Front should be at the center in defending the Party's ideological foundation, in preventing and combating "peaceful evolution" plots and operations by hostile forces. It must be resolute in refuting wrong, reactionary viewpoints and those of political opportunists. The Front needs to enhance the dissemination of information more deeply and broadly so that all people can clearly understand the evil manipulation of hostile forces in distorting history, the Party's viewpoints and directions, and the State's laws and policies on ethnicities and religions, aiming to divide and sabotage our national unity.

Second, the Front needs to promote the strength of innovation among all people, union members and members of associations in

order to contribute to meeting our targets of socio-economic development.

The vital driving force and resources for our national development are our patriotism and self-reliance, our strength of national unity and aspirations for national development in order to become a prosperous and happy country. To reach this goal, the Front should fulfill its central role more effectively in moderating discussions (*chủ trì hiệp thương*) and coordination with its member organizations and government offices at all levels to mobilize and unite all social groups, and in enhancing the appeal of well-known individuals to people with different backgrounds, ethnicities and religious groups, and overseas Vietnamese. The Front needs to pay attention to the needs, aspirations and practical interests of people in each stratum, to create every favorable condition, mobilize and attract people so that they can actively participate in emulation movements and campaigns launched by the Front and its member organizations. It needs to develop available resources and creative capacities in order to actively contribute to our common cause.

The Front needs to pay attention to developing the working class, both in terms of quality and quantity, and to enhance political competence, educational levels and professional experience, professional work behavior (*tác phong công nghiệp*)* and discipline in order to be adaptable to the Fourth Industrial Revolution, and:

- To promote the key role of farmers in the process of agricultural development, rural economic development and building the new rural;

* Work behavior required in a fast-paced industrial environment, as opposed to backward work behavior such as tardiness, not following workplace rules and regulations, and not striving to complete one's task.

- To build a strong contingent of high-quality intellectuals to meet the requirements of national development in the new period;
- To develop a contingent of businesspeople to be strong, in both quality and quantity, with dedication to the country, cultured lifestyle, moral qualities and high-level business management skills;
- To further educate the young generation on revolutionary ideals, morality, cultured lifestyle; on developing patriotism, national pride and self-respect; on nurturing ambitions and aspirations to stride forward, and to create motivation for learning, creativity, start-up and career development, and to create every condition to comprehensively build good people in terms of intellect, physical health and aesthetics;
- To improve the quality of female personnel to meet the requirements of national sustainable development;
- To promote positive influence, politically and socially, of war veterans and retired public security officers in building and protecting the Party, the State, the people and the socialist system; and
- To promote the wisdom, life, work and learning experiences of senior citizens in our society, communities and families.

As well, the Front needs to ensure equality, unity and respect among ethnicities, and mutual support for mutual development, and must:

- Pay attention to the characteristics of each ethnic region in planning and organizing the implementation of policies on ethnicities;
- Fight against attitudes of discrimination, extremism and selfishness in terms of ethnicity, and strictly punish plots and actions aimed at dividing and sabotaging our national unity;

- Continue to mobilize, unite and rally religious organizations, leaders and followers to have “a good life with a beautiful religion” (*tốt đời đẹp đạo*) actively contributing to building and defending our Homeland;

- Develop cultural values, good morality and religious resources for the cause of national development; and

- Support overseas Vietnamese to acquire firm legal status, improving livelihoods and integrating them into the society of their current countries; to improve the effectiveness of citizen protection; to maintain national cultural identity, and raise national pride and self-respect; to encourage compatriots to think of their home country, actively contributing to the cause of building and defending our Homeland.

The current situation of the COVID-19 pandemic is still very complex, as it spreads very fast and causes great losses to human health and lives, thus making a serious impact on the economy and society in all aspects of life. With the spirit of “fighting the epidemic is comparable to fighting the invaders,” and protecting health and human lives above all else, I propose that the Vietnam Fatherland Front and its member organizations, together with all the people, should be united in the highest union and take part in the prevention and battle against the epidemic with the spirit that we have made great efforts and now must make greater efforts; we have united and now must be united further; and we have been determined and now must be more determined; so that millions of people across the country have a common heart. Together with the Party and the government offices at all levels and all sectors, the Front must find ways and means to prevent and push back the pandemic at all costs. We are determined not to let the epidemic spread and break out in

communities in order to protect people's health and lives and actively support their livelihoods.

Third, the Vietnam Fatherland Front and its member organizations should further promote its vanguard role in ensuring people's rights to ownership of the country, and to participate in building the Party and the State to be stronger.

In order to build and promote the strength of national unity, it is necessary to practice and develop socialist democracy and the people's rights to ownership, to properly and effectively implement direct democracy, representative democracy, and especially the grassroots democracy, and to effectively follow the motto: "the people know, the people discuss, the people do, the people check, the people supervise, and the people benefit." The Fatherland Front and the socio-political organizations should promote and effectively fulfill their central role in ensuring that the people are the masters.

The Vietnam Fatherland Front should be more effective in fulfilling its role of social supervision and debates in the spirit of the 2013 Constitution, the Law of the Vietnam Fatherland Front and the stipulations of the Party and the State. It needs to enhance supervision in order to create social harmony, unanimity and stability for a comprehensive and sustainable development of the country. The Front should continue to effectively fulfill its role of moderating discussions and coordination among the member organizations in implementing social supervision and debates. It needs to fully use the intellect of scientists and experts with their participation in building laws, developing debates, and giving opinions to improve breakthroughs in the institutions for national development and for strongly promoting the people's right to ownership of the country, the directions and policies of the Party, the State, Party committees and government offices at all levels,

particularly issues of national strategy for people's livelihoods that directly relate to the legal rights and interests of the people.

The Front needs to actively continue to participate more deeply, comprehensively and effectively, and encourage the people to participate in the fight against corruption and negative practices, and to practice thrift and prevent wastefulness. It needs to develop an active role in participating in checks and balances to manage our society openly and transparently. It also needs to coordinate the formation and building of appropriate mechanisms to reach out to Party committees and governments offices at all levels, and directly fight against bureaucratic red-tape, corruption and wastefulness right in each residential area, organization and unit.

The Front also needs to effectively fulfill its role in rallying and listening to people's opinions so as to reflect them to the agencies of the Party and the State at the central and local levels. It needs to be proactive in coordinating with government offices at all levels to settle effectively urgent social problems right at the grassroots, helping to ensure the legal and legitimate rights and interests of the people. It needs to always have dialogues with the people, to listen to their opinions and learn from them, to resolve difficulties, problems and legitimate requests from the people, and to trust and respect the people.

Fourth, on building internal organizational structure, the Vietnam Fatherland Front and its member organizations should continue to improve its organizational mechanism and update the organization, programs and operations in order to meet the requirements and tasks in the new period.

The Front needs to update its apparatus organization, programs and operations, to enhance the responsibilities and quality

of officials at the Front and socio-political organizations, strongly focusing on the grassroots and residential areas, to keep close contacts with the people in a very practical and effective manner, as instructed by President Ho Chi Minh at the Unified Viet Minh-Lien Viet Congress (1951): “The activities of the Front should focus on the main point so as to avoid doing everything but few were done well.”¹ It needs:

- To enhance the core political role and responsibilities of the Fatherland Front and the socio-political organizations in building the national unity, rallying and mobilizing the people to accelerate the patriotic emulation movements, promoting the campaign “The entire people unite to build new rural and civilized urban,” practicing democracy, and enhancing social harmony;

- To effectively implement the role of social supervision and debates, of being the representative to protect the legal and legitimate rights and interests of their union members and members of associations, to actively participate in building the Party and the State, and to enhance people-to-people external relations;

- To build up a strong relative combat power from mobilizing people’s hearts-and-minds, and to promote the strength of unity and harmony of the people at home and abroad in order to build and defend our Homeland; and

- To place importance on multiplying good role models, to be critical when things need improvement, and to overcome superficiality.

To achieve the above, we need to make timely proposals, remove difficulties, problems and inadequacies in institutions,

1. Ho Chi Minh (2011), *Complete Collection*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 7, p. 48.

organizational models, operational mechanisms, and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the operation of the Front and mass organizations. The Front needs:

- To effectively promote its role of moderating discussions in coordinating to unifying actions with its member organizations. The Front and its member organizations should pay attention to coordinating with the government with the mechanisms, programs and specific plans in order to create the strength of the whole political system to implement common tasks;

- To enhance digital transformation and application of information technology in operations, dissemination of information, mobilization, and in getting information on union members, members of associations and all people in order to meet the requirements in the new period;

- To focus on improving the quality, training and developing a contingent of officials at the Front and mass organizations who are dedicated, responsible and committed to their work, who have a creative mindset and the courage to innovate, who dare to think, to do and to accept responsibility for their actions, to cope with challenges and difficulties for the common development of the country. Especially, officials who have specific functions at local levels should be passionate about their work and make great efforts in learning, training, and improving their knowledge in all areas, be the role models and good examples so as to be loved, respected and trusted by the people; and

- To rally and promote at the highest level the role and contributions of scientists, experts, well-known individuals among people of all strata, ethnicities, religions and among overseas Vietnamese.

Fifth, we need to continue to renovate and enhance the Party's leadership, the coordination of State agencies and organizations relating to the activities of the Front.

Building national unity is the task of the entire Party and people. Therefore, it is necessary to continue to strongly renovate the Party's leadership towards the Fatherland Front and its member organizations. Our Party is both the leader and a member of the Front: the Party leads the Front through developing the role as the Front's member, not standing outside or standing above to lead the Front. President Ho Chi Minh instructed: "The Party cannot demand the Front to recognize its leadership power, but rather it has to demonstrate that it is the most loyal, truthful and active organization. Only with the struggle and daily work, when the masses recognize the effective policy and leadership capacity of the Party, then the Party could win the leadership position."¹

Thus, what should the Central agencies, each local Party committee, each local government office do to implement the goals of building and firmly strengthening national unity as mapped out by the Resolution of the 13th Party Congress?

First, each local Party committee and local government office, and each government official and Party member should continue to thoroughly understand the role, position and importance of the Front's work in the new period, and emphasize the responsibility of the entire political system towards the activities of the Fatherland Front and socio-political organizations according to the mechanism: "The Party leads, the State governs, the people owns the country." Government officials, public servants and civil servants need to raise

1. *Ibid.*, Vol. 3, p.168.

their sense of responsibilities on methods of mass mobilization in accordance with the moral example of President Ho Chi Minh: “Respect the people, keep close contacts with the people, understand the people, learn from the people and be responsible for the people” and “Listen to what the people say, say what the people can understand, do what gains the people’s trust,” as we must truly serve the people for their interests. They need to deeply understand Uncle Ho’s teaching: “*We must be the servants of the people,*” “*Don’t be arrogant like a revolutionary mandarin.*”^{*} Don’t assume that with the word “communist” on your forehead, the people would hold you in respect.

To mobilize the people, first of all, each public servant and Party member must set an example in following the Party’s directions and guidelines and the State’s policies and laws, and be the first to participate in emulation movements and campaigns initiated by the Front and mass organizations, and in so doing, to approach the people. They should consider this as an opportunity to be closer to the people, to understand, respect and listen to their opinions. This is also an opportunity to verify if the Party’s directions and the State’s policies have reached the people, and if these directions and policies are agreeable to the people. Anyone who is not interested in activities of the Front and mass organizations is also out of touch with the masses. However, this does not mean depending on the people or keeping in touch with them in superficial ways, and all the more, it does not mean to be “on the tail” of the masses.

Second, Party committees from the Central to the grassroots levels should further strengthen the Party’s leadership on the work

^{*} That means, you are a revolutionary, not a mandarin in a feudal system.

of the Front and mass organizations. In the current, new situation, the task of mobilizing and uniting the people needs proper investment and to be based on new understanding. Based on the Resolution of the 13th Party Congress and the resolutions of the congresses of local Party committees, I propose that all local Party committees should re-examine the review and evaluation of the implementation of the resolutions, directives, and conclusions on building national unity and on the Front's work. As well, I propose that all advisory units should do research to make proposals towards an assessment and summary of the 20 years since the implementation of Resolution No. 23-NQ/TW on March 12, 2003, the 7th Plenum of the Party's Central Committee, the 9th tenure, on promoting the strength of national unity for the goals of a prosperous people, a strong country, and an equitable, democratic, and civilized society. From the assessment and summary, we can build a strategy for national unity in the new period.

Third, to ensure a close coordination and create favorable conditions for the Front and its member organizations to effectively implement their roles, State agencies should pay attention to learning and improving institutions, mechanisms, policies and laws, and create every condition for the people to promote their rights to ownership of the country, to effectively participate in State management and social management, and improve the legal basis for the activities of the Front and its member organizations.

We need to enhance this legal basis in order to develop the people's role in self-governing residential areas, villages and neighborhood groups. We need to recognize the people's effective contributions through self-governing models such as

“inter-family teams,” “COVID patient supporting community teams,” “green-area teams to prevent and fight the pandemic,” and so on. I propose that we continue to do research in order to improve the law on social supervision and debates, creating good conditions for promoting the role of supervision of the people, direct supervision, and supervision through the role of the Front and mass organizations.

On the other hand, State agencies from the Central to the local levels need to tie their own functions and responsibilities more closely and more harmoniously in joint coordination with the Fatherland Front and mass organizations. Through various mechanisms, such as joint resolutions, coordinated regulations and programs, we can enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of State management together with improved methods of mobilizing and rallying the people, in order to create total strength for effective solutions to meet the targets of socio-economic development in each locality, particularly the urgent tasks of poverty reduction, social security, building the new rural, fighting the pandemic, and so on. This will be beneficial to both the State and the Vietnam Fatherland Front in serving the people’s interests.

Distinguished seniors and colleagues,

Dear distinguished guests,

With our tradition of unity and responsibility, I am confident that the Vietnam Fatherland Front and its member organizations will deploy an effective implementation of the Action Program to carry out the Resolution of the 13th Party Congress, that the Front will continue to have more dynamic, creative, practical, innovative and effective activities in order to contribute to rallying more

people from all walks of life in our national unity, to enhance the close relations between the people, the Party and the government, creating a great and invincible strength to make our Homeland more powerful and thriving, our people happier, and our country more developed and prosperous. I wish all of you the best of health and happiness!

I wish the Conference great success!

**INTERNAL AFFAIRS BUREAUS:
“SHARP SWORDS” AND “SOLID SHIELDS”
TO DEFEND OUR COUNTRY
AND MAINTAIN LAW AND ORDER***

*Distinguished leaders of the Party, the State and the Vietnam
Fatherland Front,*

Dear delegates,

Dear Conference participants,

Today I am delighted to attend the National Conference of the Internal Affairs Bureaus to implement the Resolution of the 13th National Party Congress. I am told that this is the first time we have organized a national conference of all the agencies in charge of internal affairs (that is, it has rallied the whole internal affairs sector consisting of 9 agencies with the unprecedented scope and scale), right after the very successful first session of the 15th National Assembly. The Government of the new tenure has held its first meeting with very high and new determination. The Vietnam Fatherland Front and its member organizations also have just held its national conference to promote the strength of the national unity.

* The speech was delivered on September 15, 2021 at the National Conference of the Internal Affairs Bureaus to implement the Resolution of the 13th National Party Congress.

Therefore, this conference is of greater significance, reflecting the close and joint coordination, with the participation of the entire political system, the unanimity and high determination of the Party, the people and the armed forces to successfully implement the Resolution of the 13th Party Congress in order to translate it into reality.

This is a new, systematic and scientific method in the spirit of “When the front calls, the back cheers,” “One calls, one hundred respond,” “One common heart from top to bottom,” and “Smoothness flows both vertically and horizontally.” Therefore, we will definitely overcome all difficulties and challenges, and achieve many new victories.

On behalf of the Party and State’s leaders, and personally, I would like to send the leaders, government officials, public servants, civil servants and employees of the Internal affairs bureaus, delegates and participants in the Conference my cordial greetings, sincere regards and best congratulations. I wish the Conference great success.

Dear colleagues,

As we all know, for a family to be peaceful, harmonious and happy, we need not only education and guidance, but also family discipline, rules and order, as we say: “Respect the old, give way to the young.” We must avoid disrespect of the role and status of family members, as we avoid, “Up or down, it is still the same,” or what prominent poet Tu Xuong once criticized: “A family is indecent when a child disrespects the father, or a spouse insults the other,” which is an *unfortunate* family. Each village, commune and clan has its own rules and customs, and each office and organization must have its own rules and regulations.

Aside from education and moral guidance, a good country and society must also have national order. Strict laws protect the good and the right things, and deters and punishes the bad and the wrong that are detrimental to the people and the country. That is, we must live with rules and regulations; in other words, there must be *national law*. To this end, there must be the *internal affairs bureaus*.

Internal affairs bureau is the one operating in the domain of internal affairs, namely the Procuracy, the Court, the Justice, the Inspection, the Auditing, the Public Security, the Army, the Party's Inspection Committee and the Party's Commission for Internal Affairs. Activities of some agencies and organizations, such as the Lawyers' Organizations, the Customs Office, the Forest Rangers, the Fisheries Resources Surveillance, the Market Management, among others, are related to internal affairs.

Internal affairs bureaus have their position and role of great importance. They have their own functions and tasks, but their common and overarching tasks are to act as advisory agencies for the Party and State to lead, guide and organize the implementation of the tasks of:

- Protecting our independence, sovereignty, unification and territorial integrity of our Homeland;
- Protecting the people, Party, State and socialist system;
- Firmly maintaining national security and ensuring social order, discipline and safety;
- Combating crimes and violations of the law on security and order;
- Defending justice, human rights and civil rights;
- Protecting the interests of the State, and the lawful and legitimate rights and interests of organizations and individuals;

- Building the Party and the State pure and strong; and
- Acting as the key and loyal force, the “sharp swords” and the “solid shields” to defend our Homeland, to maintain law and order in society, and to protect the people, Party, State, and socialist system.

Dear colleagues,

Recently, particularly in the tenure of the 12th Party Congress, the internal affairs bureaus have made great efforts with high determination, and achieved many important and comprehensive results as below.

First, the internal affairs bureaus have well fulfilled their strategic advisory function and recommended to the Party and the State many important policies on internal affairs, the fight against corruption, and judiciary reform.

Especially, they have studied, offered advice on the construction of many new and strong strategies, directions, solutions and stipulations on the military, national defense and protection of our Homeland; on protecting national security and ensuring social order and safety; on fighting crimes, conducting investigations, supervision, disciplinary measures, inspection, auditing and socio-economic management, combating corruption, and judiciary reform, among others; on contributing to further improving our institutional system and our laws; on increasing discipline and order of the Party and the State apparatus, in order to meet the requirements of building and defending the country in the new situation.

Many stipulations and resolutions have been thoroughly understood and seriously implemented in real life, overcoming

previous problems of having proper resolutions in which implementation was ineffective. Theoretical research and practical review in the field of internal affairs, and law making and enforcement were carried out with special attention. In doing so, many valuable lessons were learned, thus providing the theoretical and practical basis so that many new directions, mechanisms, policies and solutions, particularly in the military, national defense, security and order, in the fight against corruption, law making, judiciary reform, and building of the Party and political system, have been recommended to the Party and State.

Second, the internal affairs bureaus have well fulfilled their role as a key force in protecting our independence, sovereignty, unification and territorial integrity of our Homeland, firmly maintaining political security and social order and safety, protecting a peaceful life for the people, and creating an environment of peace, stability, security, and safety for national development.

You have understood well the situation, firmly maintained your proactive position, effectively handled and advised on situations, timely resolved complex and challenging developments in the security-political situations in the world and the region, avoiding surprises. You have prevented the danger of conflicts, protected our national interests, and at the same time firmly maintained the sovereignty over the territories, the borderland, the sea and islands, thus firmly maintaining a peaceful and stable environment for national development. You have timely discovered and fought to prevent and foil the schemes and acts of sabotage, “peaceful evolution,” as well as subversive riots by hostile and reactionary circles. None of the opposing political organizations is able to be set up in the country. Social order and safety have been

ensured and crimes have been controlled step by step. You have taken the lead in preventing and combating natural disasters, conducting search and rescue, overcoming environmental incidents, preventing and combating epidemics, protecting the health, lives and property of the people.

Especially, since 2020, many important political events have taken place in Vietnam in the context of the very complex and severe COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, the key role as “solid shield” of the internal affairs bureaus has been promoted to the highest level. The bureaus have made an important contribution to the success of the Party congresses at all levels and the 13th National Party Congress, the election of the National Assembly, the 15th legislature, and of the representatives of the People’s Council at different levels for the 2021-2026 tenure. They have joined efforts with the health sector, local Party committees, government offices and the people across the country to push back the epidemic. The images of the “Uncle Ho’s Soldiers” and the “Police officers of the People’s Public Security Forces” taking the lead on all fronts continue to shine, and they have been loved, admired, and highly appreciated by the people.

Third, the examination, supervision, inspection, auditing, introduction of cases, investigation, prosecution, adjudication, and execution of sentences have been enhanced, making a contribution to improving discipline and order in the Party and the State apparatus, enhancing the role, efficiency and effectiveness of the Party’s leadership, the State’s governance and the people’s right to ownership of the country.

Examination, supervision and discipline of the Party have been directed resolutely, comprehensively, simultaneously, efficiently

and effectively. Inspection and auditing have been enhanced with the main points, obtaining many positive results. Judicial agencies have innovated in investigation, prosecution and adjudication; improved the quality and effectiveness in exercising prosecutor's rights and supervising activities of the judiciary; paid attention to updating trial activities, improving the quality of litigation at court trials; reduced the number of unjust cases and the state of allowing crimes and criminals to avoid the scope of a law; defended justice and the interests of the State, the lawful and legitimate rights and interests of organizations and individuals, human rights, civil rights, and strongly promoted the people's right to be masters of the nation. In the tenure of the 12th Party Congress, the Party committees and the inspection committees at all levels had disciplined over 1,300 Party organizations and 87,000 Party members.

The inspection and auditing sector, through its own activities, has proposed to indict financial cases and retrieved more than 580 trillion dongs and nearly 9,000 hectares of land, to deal with cases involving over 9,700 groups and individuals, and transferred over to the investigation units more than 480 criminal cases for indictment. The prosecution agencies nationwide have discovered and started to prosecute over 375,000 criminal cases, finished their inspection and issued indictments to be prosecuted and heard at trial courts over 300,000 criminal cases with over 500,000 defendants. The court sector has also settled and adjudicated more than 1,800,000 civil cases and 32,000 administrative cases.

Fourth, the internal affairs sector is active and proactive in giving effective advice to the Party to lead and guide, and at the same time it serves as the main force in timely discovering and effectively handling corruption cases and negative practices, contributing to realizing and

affirming the determination of the Party and State to combat corruption with the motto: “no forbidden zones, no exceptions, no tolerance” (không có vùng cấm, không có ngoại lệ, bất kể người đó là ai).

Preventing and combating corruption in recent times, particularly since the 12th Party Congress, have been strictly and resolutely instructed and made enormous progress, achieving many comprehensive and marked results, leaving good imprints and creating positive and strong spillover effects in society. Corruption has been, step by step, controlled and on the path to being diminished, contributing to firmly maintaining political stability, increasing socio-economic development, and consolidating the people’s confidence in the Party and the State.

The internal affairs bureaus, the main and pioneering force of the Party and the State in preventing and combating corruption and negative practices, have played the important and decisive role in these collective achievements. On the one hand, you have given advice and guidance to timely discovery and strict handling of many serious, complex corruption cases, including a backlog of court cases several years earlier and cases uncovered in such sectors as banking, finance, land, health and education to which our society and people have paid much attention. On the other hand, you are proactive in discovering and handling cases of corruption and negative practices right in your own offices. According to the Party’s viewpoint, “corruption must be combatted right in the agencies in charge of combating corruption.” This has earned the support and has been highly regarded by public opinion and by the people.

Fifth, the organization, apparatus and human resources of the internal affairs bureaus have been strengthened and improved, their

coordinating relationships have been enhanced, and their assigned functions and tasks have been satisfactorily fulfilled.

The organizational apparatus of the internal affairs bureaus has become ever more streamlined, efficient and effective. Government officials, soldiers and public servants in the internal affairs bureaus are active in training and developing their integrity, maintaining discipline and setting good examples to take the lead in implementing the Party's directions and resolutions and the State's policies and laws, increasing professional competence, ready to fight and sacrifice to effectively fulfill assigned duties, making an important contribution to our country today with such fortunes, potentials, international status and prestige.

Dear colleagues,

Such key achievements have been made thanks to the Party's judicious guidelines, the participation and determination of the political system, and the people's support, especially the hard work, the struggle and selfless sacrifice of many officers, soldiers and public servants of the internal affairs bureaus.

You are the core vanguard force, the strength and will to fight, ready to be anywhere, do anything, under any circumstances when the people need you, and when the Party assigns tasks, you have always effectively fulfilled your duties. You are the force of discipline, always loyal to our Homeland, our people and our Party, always protect the people, the Party, the State and the socialist system.

On behalf of the Party and State's leaders, I would like to acknowledge, commend and thank the officials of the internal affairs bureaus for your contributions, dedication and sacrifices. You have

forged the beautiful image of revolutionary officers and soldiers in the hearts of the people, contributing to consolidating and enhancing the people's confidence in the Party, the State and the system.

However, apart from the recorded great results, we can't deny that there are still a number of limitations and shortcomings in the operations of the internal affairs bureaus in recent times. They are:

Leadership capacity and resiliency of the organization and executives still remain limited and short of decisiveness in certain places at certain times. There remain situations of bias, eluding responsibility and unwillingness to handle violations. Internally, examining, discovering and handling violations have had some positive changes which are yet to be strong enough.

There remain the problems of corruption, wastefulness, negative practices, degeneration of political ideology, morality and lifestyle among those who are in charge of internal affairs work. Some officers have committed violations to such an extent that they must be disciplined and handled as criminal cases, including high-ranking officials and general-rank officers in our forces. In the judiciary operations, there are still cases of injustice or allowing crimes and criminals to avoid the scope of a law. The coordinating relationship of internal affairs bureaus at certain times and in certain places are yet to be close and timely.

These limitations and shortcomings require that the internal affairs bureaus carry out serious self-reflection with lessons learned, so as to have higher determination, greater efforts and firmer actions to overcome them at all costs in the coming time.

From the practical work and operation of the internal affairs bureaus in recent times, particularly in the past five years, we can see more *precious lessons of theoretical and practical significance*:

First, it is necessary to ensure an absolute and comprehensive leadership of the Party towards the internal affairs bureaus in general, to firmly maintain and enhance the Party's absolute and direct leadership in all aspects towards the armed forces in particular. This is the decisive factor to ensure the successful accomplishment of all assigned tasks. The internal affairs bureaus should always thoroughly understand the Party's directions and leadership, firmly maintain political orientations and be absolutely loyal to our Homeland, the people, the Party, the State and the system. They must see defending our Homeland, the people, the Party, the State and the system, and protecting justice, human rights and civil rights as their main goals and *raison d'être*.

Second, the internal affairs bureaus should have regular and close contact with the people, thoroughly understand the viewpoint that "the people are the roots" of their thoughts and actions, always determining that the people are at the center and the main force of our renewal, building and defending our Homeland, and see that the people's peaceful and happy lives are the goal to strive for and as much as their own source of joy.

Third, in internal affairs work, it is necessary to closely combine active prevention with proactive thrust, in which prevention is the main, fundamental, and long-term work, and the discovery, handling and action are breakthroughs and important steps; to defend our Homeland early and from afar; to timely discover and handle all plots and behaviors of violating national security; to strictly and resolutely handle, with "no forbidden zones, no exceptions," all behaviors of lawbreaking and committing of crimes, negative practices and corruption.

Fourth, there must be unity and close, joint coordination among internal affairs bureaus and with other related agencies and organizations in the implementation of the tasks on the basis of the stipulations of the Party and the State; to ensure to “play the right role, perform the right task,” and avoid the situations of “the drum and the horn beating in opposite directions,” or where it’s “your power versus my power,” “crabs rely on their claws, fish rely on their fins.”

Fifth, there must be frequent building and improving of the organizational apparatus and government officials in charge of internal affairs work, considering that as a key task. The bureaus must build a contingent of officials to have the strong competence, integrity, loyalty, excellent knowledge, professional skills, good understanding of the Party’s directions and guidelines, the State’s policies and laws, and good morality to accomplish the assigned tasks. They also need to pay attention to checks and balances and combating corruption, negative practices, degeneration of political ideology, morality and lifestyle, “self-evolution,” “self-transformation” right inside their agencies. At the same time, they need to promote proactive, dynamic and creative characteristics among officers, soldiers, and public servants of the internal affairs bureaus, with enthusiasm and dedication in implementing their tasks.

Dear colleagues,

In the coming time, with the overall objectives to raise the Party’s leadership capacity, governance and resiliency; to build the Party and political system comprehensively pure and strong; to consolidate and enhance the people’s trust in the Party, the State and the socialist system; to build and firmly defend our Homeland,

and solidly preserve a peaceful and stable environment; and to strive for ours to become a socialist-oriented developed country by the mid-21st century,¹ the 13th Party Congress has affirmed and added a number of major orientations for internal affairs work in the coming time:

- To resolutely and persistently struggle to firmly defend the Homeland's independence, sovereignty, unification and territorial integrity; and to defend the Party, the State, the people and the socialist system. To solidly maintain political security, ensure social order and safety, human security, economic security, and cybersecurity, and establish a society with order and discipline. To take the initiative in preventing the dangers of war and conflict at an early time and from a distance; to detect early and timely deal with adverse factors, particularly those factors and dangers with the potential of sudden changes; and to enhance combat to foil all schemes and acts of sabotage by hostile circles.²

- To build and further improve a socialist law-governed State that is pure, strong, streamlined, effective and efficient, in the service of the people and the country's development. To strengthen disclosure, transparency, accountability, and checks and balances in association with the tightening of discipline and order in the operation of the State as well as of government officials, public servants and civil servants. To continue intensifying the fight against corruption, wastefulness, bureaucratic, red-tape, crimes and social vices.³

1. The Communist Party of Vietnam (2021), *Documents of the 13th Party Congress* (Vietnamese version), National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. I, pp. 111-112.

2. *Ibid*, Vol. II, p. 331.

3. *Ibid*, Vol. II, p. 332.

- To raise the effectiveness and efficiency of Party scrutinization, supervision and discipline work, and checks and balances. To intensify the prevention and fight against corruption and wastefulness;¹ to resolutely and persistently struggle to stop and push back the degeneration of political ideology, morality, lifestyle, the manifestations of “self-evolution,” “self-transformation” from within.²

By thoroughly understanding these major goals and orientations, in the coming years, the internal affairs sector needs to continue to promote more strongly and better its fine tradition, great results and achievements and the precious lessons through the periods; to make greater efforts on the way of renewal, improve the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of its operation in the new development stage.

With that spirit in mind, our Conference has achieved high unanimity and unification in terms of key orientations, tasks and solutions in the coming time as pointed out in the Report as well as the opinions expressing the responsibilities and dedication of many delegates in their presentations. Let me emphasize and draw attention to some of the following issues:

First, the internal affairs bureaus should firmly and thoroughly grasp and appropriately carry out their functions and tasks, precisely forecast the situation and have advice for the Party and the State on timely directions and solutions, and to have specific, detailed, methodical and scientific action program.

The internal affairs bureaus have very important positions, roles and operational areas directly relating to most aspects of our social life. Therefore, we have to always firmly understand and properly

1. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 230.

2. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 229.

implement our own functions, tasks and authority to ensure to “play the right role, perform the right task” and truly understand and seriously implement the principles, laws, regulations and stipulations. Especially, we must be impartial, objective and pure, and we must use and control effectively the authority entrusted by the Party, the State and the people.

We must be proactive in forecasting early and correctly assessing the situation, clearly identify all dangers that can threaten our national interests, our people, political security and social order and safety, give timely advice to the Party and State on strategic directions, policies and solutions to defend our Homeland, ensure national security, social order and safety, build the Party and political system pure and strong, and prevent the emergence of “hot spots” and avoid surprises.

We must regularly renew and improve the quality of work, accelerate research and development of scientific and technological application to the operation of agencies and units, assign and organize work in concrete and scientific ways, build action program in order to timely provide concrete details, institutionalize and realize directions and guidelines of the Party and the State in the internal affairs area in a detailed, methodical and orderly manner. We should avoid doing things superficially, just to follow the “movement,” hit-or-miss, or be enthusiastic at the beginning but then later on deflating gradually as “an elephant’s big head but with a mouse’s small tail” (*đầu voi đuôi chuột*). We need to pay attention to reality sum-up, and complementing and improving the theory for each area of work of each internal affairs bureau.

Second, the internal affairs bureaus should strengthen national defense and security and be resolute and persistent in strongly defending

our independence, sovereignty, unification and territorial integrity of the Homeland; firmly maintain political security, ensure social order and safety, build the society of order and discipline; solidly maintain the environment of peace, stability, security and safety for national development.

The world and domestic situation has seen many rapid, complex and unpredictable developments, which required you to be highly vigilant, to be more alert and proactive in preparing all aspects, to increase your capacities of strategic predictions, firmly maintaining strategic proactive position, having plans ready to strongly protect our independence, sovereignty, unification and territorial integrity, and firmly maintaining national security, social order and safety in all situations.

We must firmly understand and effectively apply the lessons of our forefathers: “Building the country must go with defending it,” “defending the country before it is in danger,” we need to have strategies to prevent and remove dangers of war and conflict at an early time and from a distance, to detect early and timely deal with adverse factors, particularly those factors with the potential of sudden changes, and to enhance combat to foil all schemes and acts of sabotage by hostile, reactionary and politically opportunistic circles. We need to be proactive in timely and effectively handling complex issues on national security, social order and safety, and pressing, prolonged and complex social problems involving many people, and to quickly respond to non-traditional security threats and absolutely to avoid surprises.

We need to enhance our potentials for national defense and security in order to be fully capable of effectively mobilizing them to

handle situations that arise; to continue to deploy comprehensive and simultaneous implementation of national defense and security strategies; to build up and strongly promote “relative combat power from mobilizing the people’s hearts-and-minds,” “relative combat power from mobilizing the entire people to defend the country,” and “relative combat power from mobilizing the people to protect national security” as a foundation for the cause of defending our Homeland. We need to closely and effectively combine socio-economic development with strengthened national defense and security under the motto “socio-economic development as the center, and strengthening of national defense and security as the crucial and regular task.” We need to build and strengthen the land border of peace, friendship, cooperation and development, and to improve our forces’ abilities of enforcing the law at the border, on the sea and the islands.

We should mobilize the synergy of the political system and society to participate in preventing and combating crimes and ensuring security and order, step by step pushing back all types of crimes, particularly corruption, financial crimes, drug trafficking, environmental crimes, hi-tech crimes, organized crimes, and so on. In the current situation that the COVID-19 pandemic is increasingly complex, we need to focus on deploying plans and schemes to ensure security and order, to be proactive to prevent, discover and put an end to schemes, to avoid surprises, and not to allow “hot spots” to emerge in the areas of security and order.

Third, we need to further improve the quality and effectiveness of “joint tasks” among internal affairs bureaus and between internal affairs bureaus and other units at various levels and sectors, ensuring closeness, regularity, rhythm, timeliness and effectiveness.

Internal affairs work is very heavy, difficult and complex and involves many departments, organizations and individuals. It often deals with human beings and human interests, specifically “group interests.” These interests often entangle at many levels, across different sectors, thus it is very difficult and complex.

Therefore, bureaus and units in internal affairs sector must truly unite, be responsible, effectively coordinate with relevant agencies, organizations and units: between central and local agencies, between the public security and the army, between agencies in lawsuits; between internal affairs bureaus, the Party’s inspection, the State’s audit and the agencies of investigation, prosecution, trial and sentence execution; between the supervision of the Party and the supervision of the National Assembly, the Fatherland Front and its member organizations in order to strengthen the synergy and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the work and to avoid overlapping, repetition, waste of resources and ineffectiveness.

However, the close and joint coordination here does not mean “letting the wrong be right just for the sake of harmony”, concessions, unprincipled compromises, or passing over each other’s mistakes. The coordination must be connected with checks and balances to ensure legal compliance. We must be a strong collective unit with high unity, with close connection to each other as President Ho Chi Minh taught us: “*Unity is our strength. Our revolution relied on unity to achieve victory, and our resistance war relied on unity to be successful.*”¹

1. Ho Chi Minh (2011), *Complete Collection*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 11, p. 367.

In implementing the tasks, you should be exemplary, impartial, objective, confident, with pure motives, sincerity, comradeship and fraternal sentiment. You need to place national interests and the people's interests above all else. When there are different opinions on an issue, all agencies should discuss and find a united voice in order to deploy the implementation together. All problems must be discussed and resolved in a thorough, reasonable and fair manner, with persuasion, in comradeship and in the fraternal spirit that must comply with the law and stipulations of the Party.

If the discussions cannot come to a unanimity of views, then it is possible to apply the mechanism of coordination and solicit opinion from the competent agency in handling the legal cases as the Central Steering Committee on Anti-Corruption has been doing very effectively in recent times. At the same time, we should pay close attention to preventing hostile forces from taking advantage of stirring outrage, to divide and further complicate the problem, and to spread rumors of our internal division.

Fourth, we need to enhance the building and improving of institutions and laws and to organize effective implementation to ensure complete, timely, synchronous, unified, feasible, open, transparent, stable legal system, thus creating a new driving force for socio-economic development, and rapid and national sustainable development.

We are building a socialist law-governed State, the state that really constructs the framework of institutions and laws for the development of the country. Therefore, the legal system must be complete, timely, synchronous, unified, feasible, open, transparent and stable, ensuring smooth operations of the state apparatus, while receiving and developing the affirmed values of the civilization of humanity and making them suitable to the fine values of the culture

of Vietnam, to the requirements of our system, thus creating a new driving force for socio-economic development, and rapid and national sustainable development.

This is the very important matter of principle, one of the characteristics of the socialist law-governed State of Vietnam. More than anyone else, the internal affairs bureaus should be fully and deeply conscious of this issue, making it clear and, step by step, complementing and updating their knowledge on building and improving the legal system. In particular, they should focus on research and giving advice to the Party's Central Committee on the resolution regarding the strategy of building and improving the socialist law-governed State to the year 2030, with the orientation to the year 2045. At the same time, we need to always heighten our vigilance, not to let hostile forces take advantage by carrying out acts of sabotage against us by shifting our legal system toward another path, particularly where our country has implemented international integration more intensively and extensively today.

Together with effective implementation of building institutions and laws, organizing law enforcement is also an urgent issue today. Therefore, making law and organizing law enforcement must be closely connected. We have to focus on giving firm guidance, on making proper investment in the resources and the conditions for effective implementation of tasks in order to improve efficiency and effectiveness in organizing law enforcement; enhance inspection, supervision and handling of lawbreaking cases; ensure law abiding and respect for order and discipline to make it the standard behavior in social life and in the activities of agencies and organizations.

Especially, government officials, Party members, public servants, and civil servants need to further enhance their consciousness of abiding by the law and overcome parochialism, that is, “the king’s law must bow before the village’s rule” (*Phép vua thua lệ làng*). They need to overcome haphazard habits, bureaucracy, wanting to cause troubles for others, thus causing inconveniences for people and enterprises from doing their work.

You should focus on giving advice, inspecting and supervising the building, issuing and enforcing of the laws to determine if these laws have properly followed the Party’s directions and viewpoints, if they have been impacted and shifted to the plot of “freedom and democracy” by opposing, hostile forces. You must be the “eyes and ears” of the Party, the “gatekeeper” of the Party in this area, not allow anyone to go against the platforms, viewpoints, guidelines and directions of the Party. At the same time, you should be proactive in giving guidance, following, urging, examining and supervising local Party committees and Party organizations in implementing the Party’s directions and resolutions and the State’s policies and laws concerning internal affairs.

The activities of internal affairs, including judicial activities, should have the important responsibilities for protecting justice, human rights and civil rights, defending the socialist system, the State’s interests, the legal and legitimate rights and interests of organizations and individuals. Therefore, it is necessary to focus on building a professional, modern, equal, strict, incorruptible Vietnamese justice sector in service of our Homeland and our people.

We need to continue to improve the organization, the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of operation and the prestige of the people’s court, the people’s procuracy, the inspection office, the

sentencing office and the agencies and organizations that participate in the system of judiciary procedures; to timely and legally settle all types of disputes and claims in accordance with the laws; to effectively guard and fight against criminal acts and violations of law, preventing unjust cases or instances of allowing crimes and criminals avoid the scope of a law; and to enhance the control of the judiciary's power. We also need to improve the quality of public services in the judicial administrative area, the judiciary and legal assistance; and to enhance our capacities to settle international disputes.

Fifth, we need to further enhance the role, responsibility and effectiveness of the operation of internal affairs bureaus, to persistently fight and prevent corruption and negative practices with "no forbidden zones, no exceptions, no pressure by any organization or individual."

Corruption remains one of the dangers that threatens the existence of our Party and our system. Therefore, we need to continue to strengthen the fight against corruption and negative practices. *Active prevention and proactive discovery* must be closely connected, together with *timely and strict handling* of cases of corruption and negative practices. We need to handle simultaneously the Party's discipline and the administrative discipline, as well as apply the criminal law on violators, regardless of whom.

We must thoroughly understand and apply the motto: early prevention and early settlement, without letting minor violations to grow into major ones. That is, when there is a disease, we must treat it immediately, and not to let it fester into a misfortune. The anti-corruption struggle must be closely connected to the struggle against negative practices to prevent and push back the degeneration in political ideology, morality and lifestyles. At the same time, we need to be effective in disseminating information

and in education, to create high consciousness and unity in will and action among government officials, Party members and the people in preventing and combating corruption and negative practices, first and foremost among the heads of local Party committees, agencies, organizations, units and localities. We need to persistently educate and train the virtue of righteousness and honesty, to build a culture of thriftiness, without corruption and wastefulness, first and foremost among government officials, Party members, public servants and civil servants.

We must deploy resolutely, regularly, comprehensively and simultaneously the examination, supervision, inspection, auditing, investigation, prosecution, trial, sentence execution, early discovery and strict handling of all cases relating to corruption. At the same time, we need to be effective in receiving and listening to the people, settling the claims and accusations, to be resolute in retrieving corrupted assets, to timely handle and replace leaders and managers who show signs of corruption and negative practices, and to strictly handle officials who demand illegal money and cause troubles for the people and enterprises. We need to incrementally expand the scale of preventing and combating corruption to *non-State* areas, and to expand and improve the effectiveness of international cooperation in the fight against corruption.

Sixth, we need to respect the people, keep close touch with them, learn from them, to serve the people wholeheartedly with dedication, to accept the people's supervision; to promote the people's strength in the defense of our Homeland, to maintain security and order and to prevent and combat corruption and negative practices.

In all our work, we must truly understand President Ho Chi Minh's viewpoint: "The people are the roots," "we must keep close

touch with the people, help the people and learn from the people.” We should truly trust, respect and promote the people’s right to be owners of the country, persistently carrying out the motto: “The people know, the people discuss, the people do, the people check, the people supervise and the people benefit.” The internal affairs bureaus should always enhance their spirit of serving the people, create the most favorable conditions to meet the people’s requirements; build closer relationship with the people, listen to the people’s opinions and rely on the people, “Without the people, we can’t do it, even if it is ten times easier; but with the people’s help, we can overcome, even if it is ten thousand times more difficult” (*Dễ mười lần không dân cũng chịu, khó vạn lần dân liệu cũng xong*).

The attitude of indifference and insensitivity with the people’s urgent problems must be resolutely eliminated; as well as all behaviors of abusing and taking advantage of power to infringe on the people’s legal and legitimate interests. We will do with our greatest efforts what is beneficial to the people; and we must avoid at all costs what is detrimental to the people. We must love and respect the people, and then the people will love and respect us.

You should always remember that our Army is the People’s Army, the Public Security is the People’s Public Security, the Procuracy is the People’s Procuracy, the Court is the People’s Court, the Party leads, the State governs and the People are the masters; it means that all of us are *the public servants* of the people, from the people to come, for the people to serve. Therefore, we have to always be closely connected with the people, place the people’s interests first and above all else. What the people do not agree with, even hate it and oppose it, we have to avoid it and we must prevent it; anyone who violates that must be punished.

Seventh, we need to continue to improve the apparatus organization and build a contingent of government officials with sufficient qualities, capacities and reputation to serve our Homeland, our people and our country's development.

We must continue to improve the organization, to remove the intermediary and streamline the staff, to ensure *integrity and purity* and to improve the capacities and effectiveness in operation of internal affairs bureaus. We need to build and improve the regulations and stipulations to effectively prevent all negative, impure impacts on these bureaus, checks and balances, practice of integrity, and the fight against corruption and negative practices must be, first of all, carried out effectively right in the internal affairs bureaus.

We need to focus on building a contingent of government officials with sufficient qualities, capacities, knowledge and reputation to serve the people and national development, to enhance the discipline, to reform the salary and benefits policy, to enable working environment and conditions, to encourage and protect the officials who dare to think, to do and to accept responsibility for their actions, to cope with challenges and difficulties for the common development of the country.

At the same time, we must have the mechanism to sort out and swiftly replace those people who have not fulfilled their duties, who have violated the law, the public services morality, professional ethics, who have been disciplined and are no longer respected by the people. We need to simultaneously implement the solutions to build our People's Army and People's Public Security to become a revolutionary, regular, elite and gradually modernized force, with several services, corps, and forces advancing straight to modernity.

By 2025, fundamentally, we can build an elite, compact and strong Army and Public Security to create firm premises to strive by the year 2030 to build seasoned and modern Army and Public Security Forces. We need to build the powerful reserve force and the strong self-defense militia force which will expand to every corner of the country. We need to pay attention to training a contingent of judiciary officials, renewing the mechanism of recruiting, appointing the judicial titles in the spirit of judiciary reform, to enhance the material basis for the self-defense militia force and public security force at the communal level so as to be able to timely settle complex problems in terms of security and order right at the beginning and at the grassroots.

Internal affairs work has to regularly face challenges and negative practices in society and sensitive environments that can cause officials to be involved in bribery, corruption and sins. Therefore, the officials of the internal affairs agencies, *more than anyone else*, should be vigilant and on the alert, constantly improve themselves and train their political competence, moral qualities, working style and lifestyle. They should have the courage to defend the right things and to fight with integrity. They themselves have to be *righteous and pure*, to *protect their own morality* and to *be a good example*, to *have self-respect* to never succumb to impure pressures, temptation and bribery, and to be truly impartial, objective and selfless. They must be the “Bao Gong”^{*} of modern times.

They should have the devoted heart with a revolutionary passion, ready to act for the country and the people; they should have the courage, competence and intellect to overcome any difficulties, to win over any enemy; they have the strong feet and clean hands so as to stand firmly,

^{*} Bao Gong (999-1062): Chinese imperial general inspector known for his honesty and uprightness.

straightly and refute any inconsequential bribery and keep the honor of the officials of the internal affairs sector.

In any circumstances, they must always place national interests and the people's interests first and foremost. They have to be the vanguard force, ready to fight and sacrifice for independence and freedom of our Homeland, for our people's happiness with the spirit of "sacrificing for our country, wholeheartedly serving our people." They must be absolutely loyal to the Homeland, the people, the Party, the State and the system, as "Our Party still exists, we still exist." *They deserve to be the sharp "precious sword," the solid "steel shield" of the Party, the State and the people. This requires that each official of the internal affairs bureaus should constantly self-improve so that the "precious sword" will always be strong and sharp. You dare to brandish the sword and do it in the right time, and cut the right object without fearing that the sword could be indented, so that the "shield" will always be solid, none of the bullets or arrows could shoot through it, particularly the "sugar-coated" bullets and arrows.*

At the same time, we must be determined to fight against the thought of giving up, of working to "fight perfunctorily," to "be on the defensive," to "shield corrupted ones" and to "stay safe" among some government officials and public servants, particularly leaders and managers of the internal affairs bureaus at various levels. I have said many times and now I would like to repeat: *Those who favor this argument need to step aside and let other people do the work! We live only once, so we should lead a meaningful life, so that we will not be tormented for the shameless things we have done. What is the point of having a lot of money, as you can't take it with you when you die? Honor, on the other hand, is the most sacred and noblest thing!*

Internal affairs work is very important but also very difficult, complex and sensitive. I propose that all local Party committees and

Party organizations should constantly pay attention to the task of leading and guiding in order to improve the organization, apparatus and officials of the internal affairs sector, create every favorable condition so that this sector can fulfill its important responsibilities more effectively for the new requirements of the new period.

Dear colleagues,

I earnestly wish that after this Conference, the internal affairs work will see new, strong, essential, effective changes, marking a new milestone on our development path. Only in that way that our Conference will be of essential significance.

I believe that with the tradition of unity and responsibilities, the internal affairs bureaus will deploy the effective implementation of the Action Program to implement the Resolution of the 13th Party Congress, continue to actively renovate their organization and operations, thus achieving many important results. In so doing, the bureaus will make greater contributions to the renewal process, help accelerate industrialization and modernization, and take our beloved country to rapid and sustainable development so as to advance transitionally towards socialism.

You deserve to have the core role that takes the lead in defending our Homeland, protecting our people, Party, State and the socialist system. You will deploy the *effective implementation of the Party's directions and guidelines, turning them and the State's policies and laws into lively realities*, bringing about prosperity, freedom and happiness to our people, further glorifying our nation and people, creating great and invincible strength to build our ever more prosperous Homeland, our ever happier people and our ever more developed and stronger country.

Thank you, the Conference and colleagues, with high regards!

OUR EYES AND EARS ARE “PRECIOUS SWORDS” TO HEAL WOUNDS*

Dear colleagues,

Today I am delighted to attend the National Conference to review the Party’s inspection (*kiểm tra*), supervision (*giám sát*) and discipline (*kỷ luật*) work of the 12th Party Congress and to formulate the directions and tasks for the 13th Party Congress. The Conference is aimed at assessing and affirming the good work done and the work that needs improvement; exchanging the experiences among local Party committees, Party organizations, and inspection committees at various levels so that performance can improve in the future. Our conference takes place right at the time when the whole Party is focusing on the preparations for the 13th National Party Congress, so it is of greater significance. On behalf of the Party’s Central Committee, the Political Bureau, and the Secretariat, I would like to convey the warmest greetings and best wishes to the delegates, associates, and officials, public servants and employees of the inspection sector.

I am informed that you have made a very orderly, well-cared preparation for the Conference, particularly an elaborate report of

* The speech was delivered on November 27, 2020 at the Conference to review inspection and supervision work of the 12th Party Congress tenure.

high quality. I agree basically with the content of the report and highly value the opinions presented at the Conference. I found many opinions very dedicated, responsible, and practical. I propose that the Party’s Central Committee’s Inspection Committee should receive all the opinions at the Conference so as to improve the report and implement it in reality. Now I would like to offer some suggestions aiming to further emphasize them, and to exchange ideas.

Dear colleagues,

With the summary report and the opinions delivered at the Conference, with specific outcomes of our tasks and public opinion, we can affirm that in the past tenure, the inspection and supervision work of the Party in general, and of the inspection sector in particular, has made important contributions, specifically:

- to prevent and push back the degeneration of political ideology, morality, lifestyles, the manifestations of “self-evolution” and “self-transformation” from within, and to fight against corruption, wastefulness, and negative practices;
- to maintain the Party’s unity, unification, and purity;
- to firmly uphold the Party’s principles, order, and discipline; and
- to improve the Party’s leadership capacity and resiliency, and together with the entire country, to successfully implement the political tasks mapped out by the Resolution of the 12th Party Congress so as to make a great contribution to the common achievements of the country.

The Party’s inspection sector has closely followed its functions, duties and authority as stipulated in the Party Statutes, accomplished many tasks effectively and innovatively.

First, the Party committees, Party organizations and inspection committees at all levels have strictly followed the guidelines of the

Political Bureau and the Secretariat, focusing on the deployment and organization of studying and researching the Resolution of the 12th National Party Congress and the resolutions of local Party congresses. On that basis, the resolution of the Congress has been quickly adopted into action program to implement the inspection and supervision of committees, with a focus on renovating and enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of the inspection, supervision and discipline of the Party.

Second, there have been positive, proactive and timely changes in leading, guiding, and instructing the inspection and supervision of committees, closely following the practical situations and the Party building work. The Central Inspection Committee has given timely advice to help the Party's Central Committee, the Political Bureau and the Secretariat simultaneously amend, supplement, and promulgate stipulations, regulations, and instructions on the inspection, supervision and discipline of the Party. The Committee has proactively instructed and professionally trained the contingent of inspection officers at all levels to implement these documents.

Third, the Party's inspection sector has actively accomplished its tasks quite comprehensively on the inspection, supervision and discipline of the Party in accordance with the stipulations of the Party Statutes. The quantity of supervision and inspection activities of the current year is much higher than that of the preceding year and significantly increases when compared with the 11th Party Congress tenure. The work has focused on sensitive areas that could easily breed negative practices, and on pressing issues to which officials, Party members and the people have paid attention. The quality and effectiveness of the inspection and supervision have seen visible improvements. Strict discipline has been conducted in a timely fashion and its outcome has been made public in the press.

According to the Report of the Central Inspection Committee, in the past tenure, Party committees and Party organizations and inspection committees at all levels have inspected and supervised hundreds of thousands of Party organizations and millions of Party members. They disciplined more than 1,000 Party organizations and over 87,000 Party members, including senior leaders of the Party and the State, generals of the armed forces, both current and retired. This has affirmed the high political determination of the Party's Central Committee, the Political Bureau, and the Secretariat and the courage of the inspection sector in the cause of rectifying and building Party to be pure and strong. The Central Inspection Committee and committees at all levels have focused on effectively fulfilling the key tasks of inspecting Party organizations and Party members with signs of violations. They have judiciously selected the subjects under investigation, then resolutely conducted investigations before coming to clear conclusions regarding violations and wrongdoings, and at the same time recommended vetoes for unauthorized resolutions and decisions, thus creating stability for localities, agencies, and units.

Fourth, the inspection committees at all levels have played a very important role and made a positive contribution to the prevention and fight against corruption. Complying with the stipulations of the Political Bureau, they have made the fight against corruption one of the key tasks, and an important part of the inspection and supervision work. They have investigated and handled the officials and Party members who have committed acts of corruption, and have seriously punished Party organizations and Party members who have not complied with the regulations of the Party and the State on the fight against corruption. The Party's

Inspection Committee has coordinated more closely with the State's anti-corruption agencies in inspecting, supervising, unveiling, handling, and making public the outcomes regarding the organizations, officials and Party members who have committed acts of violation. Many of the accused have then been charged, investigated, prosecuted, and adjudicated by the legal system.

Fifth, Party committees and Party organizations have actively strengthened organizational capacity and built action programs and working regulations; proactively fulfilled the tasks as stipulated in the Party Statutes; satisfactorily resolved a number of outstanding issues, including very complex cases from the previous tenures; and maintained a methodical, disciplined, and improved working style. Additionally, they have further improved the personnel capacity at the Central and local levels and coordinated to address the issues relating to the personnel promotion and appointment. They have also offered advice and effectively strengthened the sector; trained and fostered inspectors at different levels; successfully accomplished the inspection and supervision in service of the personnel work for the all-level Party congresses and the personnel for the 13th National Party Congress; and immediately promulgated the personnel guiding documents for inspection committees at different levels.

Sixth, this tenure is partly illuminated by the contingent of inspectors, especially the members of the Central Inspection Committee, who are courageous, resolute, cautious, impartial, and unbiased in inspecting and verifying long-standing difficult cases. Their advice has helped the Party's Central Committee, the Political Bureau and the Secretariat to consider and carry out discipline reasonably in the spirit of punishing the few to save millions. How very humane!

It can be said that in this tenure, you have done many things with visible results recognized, welcomed, and commended by public opinion, contributing to restoring and consolidating the trust of the people in the Party, the State and our system. Under the motto “No forbidden zones, no exceptions,” the Central Inspection Committee has been proactive in discovering acts of violation and organized investigations of all levels, sectors, fields and localities when signs of violation were shown. A focus has been placed on certain challenging and thorny areas rarely inspected or yet to be inspected in the past, such as investigating the degeneration of political ideology, morality and lifestyle, “self-evolution,” “self-transformation,” through which a number of officials and Party members who spread information against the Party’s ideological foundation have been expelled from the Party after a mountain of evidence against them found.

Scrutinizing has been done in Party organizations in the State-run enterprises and the armed forces, in terms of personnel work, environmental protection and investments in the construction, finance and banking industries. Through scrutinization, a number of members of Party committees, heads of Party committees and government levels, even former senior leaders of the Party and State, many of whom were generals in the armed forces, have been strictly disciplined. You have always grasped thoroughly the issues, and ready to learn from and listen to the opinions of the people, the press, public opinion, among others. The courage and determination of the Central Inspection Committee have been exercised extensively on Party committees, inspection committees in localities and units, thus overcoming effectively the situation of “warm above, but cool below” (*trên nóng, dưới lạnh*) in the inspection, supervision, and discipline of the Party.

On this occasion, on behalf of the Party's Central Committee, the Political Bureau and the Secretariat, I warmly welcome and commend the achievements recorded by Party committees, Party organizations and inspection committees at all levels of the 12th Party Congress tenure. I would like to thank you, and share with you that all the difficulties and hardships you have suffered in silence have contributed greatly to the common achievements of our country.

Dear colleagues,

Apart from the recorded achievements, seriously and frankly speaking, we can see that the inspection, supervision and discipline of the Party have yet to keep pace with the demands and tasks in the current situation. Many localities, agencies, and units at certain times have yet to be proactive, consistent, persistent and resolute in leading the inspection work. Inspection and supervision have remained formalistic and perfunctory, leading to inefficiency, ineffectiveness and low deterrence. There was still the state of deference, dodging, buck-passing, and lack of strictness and proactivity in handling the unveiled violations and shortcomings. The results of inspection had yet to bear fruit. There was a clear-cut change at the Central level, the other levels in recent times are more active, but it is yet to be really visible. The inspection and supervision in the State agencies have yet to be given proper importance. They are still showing poor performance.

In some Party committees and Party organizations, their heads have not yet paid appropriate attention and given timely leadership and guidance to, and personally implemented the inspection and supervision tasks. Some committees have not yet attended to and created conditions for the inspection committees to fulfill their functions, tasks and powers as stipulated by the Party Statutes. The

inspection and supervision over members of the same levels, the heads and the persons with leadership positions and over the areas of ideology, press management, investigation, auditing, the fight against corruption, justice, and personnel organization are yet to be resolute. The self-inspection, self-discovery and handling of violations inside these agencies remain the weak link. Many shortcomings and wrongdoings of Party organizations and Party members are slow to be uncovered and unaddressed for a long time. The inspection committees at the same level are also yet to be brave enough and proactive in providing their advice and proposals to the Party committees to investigate suspected cases, even when the violation was quite clear.

The inspection and supervision contents of some Party committees and Party organizations have remained scattered and formalistic, and have not yet delved into the complex and sensitive areas which are easy to breed negative practices, or the issues which were upsetting localities, agencies, and units. In the localities, particularly at the district and the grassroots levels, the changes are not yet obvious, neither the important nor the typical cases. Some Party organizations remain cowardly, with the attitude of letting the wrong be the right just for the sake of harmony. In particular, there are certain instances of covering up the officials and Party members in power who have flouted the law. The coordination of work between the inspection committees and the relevant agencies - such as investigation (*thanh tra*), auditing, public security forces, procuracy, the courts, among others - at certain times and in certain aspects, runs short of closeness, regularity, and effectiveness.

Dear colleagues,

At present, our country is facing new demands and tasks, opportunities and advantages, intermingled with difficulties and

challenges. The cause of renewal, international integration and national development are shifting to the new stage, demanding us to go farther in depth with more difficulties and complexities than ever before. Domestic and international arenas have witnessed many changes with fast, complex, and unpredictable developments. New progress and breakthroughs with clear-cut results have been made in the activities of inspection, supervision and prevention against the degradation of political ideology, morality, lifestyle, “self-evolution,” “self-transformation,” corruption, group interests, wastefulness, and negative practices in the 12th Party Congress tenure, thus contributing to maintaining strict discipline and raising the Party’s prestige. However, we are absolutely not allowed to be off-guard and self-satisfied due to the fact that the situation still has complex and unpredictable developments. Our inspection and supervision remain limited and defective, as I have said.

In the current state of affairs, the shortcomings and violations of Party organizations and Party members may increase in quantity and grow more complex and serious in terms of scope, nature, size, and sophistication in the types of violation. Negative practices, corruption, wastefulness, “group interests,” “perfunctory achievements,” “tenure mindset,” “abuse of power,” infringement of the principles of the Party remain serious. That’s why the inspection, supervision and discipline of the Party must be carried out vigorously, regularly, continuously, and more effectively, without being self-satisfied with the recorded results. Together by thoroughly grasping and implementing the Resolution of the 13th Party Congress and the documents on the inspection, supervision and discipline of the Party, the orientations and tasks of the inspection and supervision work of the 13th Party Congress tenure, as defined in this Conference’s report, I would like to ask Party committees,

Party organizations and inspection committee at different levels to concentrate on fulfilling the activities as follows:

First, we must continue to be more deeply and fully aware of the position, role and importance of the inspection, supervision and discipline of the Party, and the functions, tasks and powers of the Central Inspection Committee and the inspection committees at all levels. Inspection and supervision are one of the Party’s methods of leadership, and a key component of the overall Party building work. Our Party affirms that inspection is the Party’s leadership function, and the task of the entire Party. Leading without inspection is to have no leadership at all. All Party organizations and Party members are equal before the Party’s discipline, and are subject to inspection, supervision and discipline of the Party. Inspection and supervision are the “precious sword” to heal wounds.

Second, we must continue to build and further improve the Party’s regulations, the State’s laws in the direction of enhancing responsibilities, innovating, improving the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of the Party’s inspection, supervision and discipline work, and to focus on improving the mechanism of inspecting and supervising the personnel work, the exercise of power by individuals in positions of power, the degeneration of political ideology, morality, lifestyle, and the fight against corruption, wastefulness, and “group interests.” We must encourage and protect the officials, Party members, and the heads who dare to think, to do and to accept responsibility for their actions in the work for national development. We must strengthen the coordination between the Party’s inspection and supervision and the State’s inspection, auditing, investigation, prosecution, and adjudication against the attitudes of “your power versus my power,” or “crabs rely on their claws, fish rely on their fins.” There should be a mechanism to promote the

role of the Fatherland Front, socio-political mass organizations, communications, the press, and the people for the inspection and supervision work.

Third, inspection and supervision should be enacted regularly, comprehensively, openly, democratically, cautiously, and closely, in which warning and prevention are the main things to do. It is imperative to maintain firmly the principles of the Party, to attach importance to evidence, without presumption, nuisance or prejudice, to realize the motto: “Proactiveness, steadfastness, education, effectiveness.” We must closely combine building and opposing - to build is the fundamental task and the long-term strategy, and to oppose is the key and urgent task. Not only should we promote the effectiveness of inspection activities when the signs of violation are uncovered, it is also necessary that we improve the quality of the inspection of compliance and supervision. This is the regular work of prevention, aiming to give timely reminders, readjustments, and deterrence against acts of breaking the Party’s directions and guidelines, the State’s policies and laws, and acts that lack of setting examples, thus “rehabilitating the wrongdoers” and retaining the officials in the pool.

In the last tenure, we have made efforts and effectively handled a number of Party organizations and Party members who have committed acts of violation, thus greatly contributing to the fight against corruption, wastefulness and negative practices. In the future, we will need to focus on inspection more comprehensively in such issues as the degeneration of political ideology, morality and lifestyle; on the compliance of organizational principles and actions of the Party, in economic-financial, administrative, and judicial areas; in the domains of health, education, media, the use of foreign aid, the settlement of accusations, and especially the inspection of

personnel and organization work. We must pay attention to the inspection and supervision of the officials who have shown signs of corruption, who have been reported and accused of committing corruption, including leaders and managers at all levels and officials planned for the leadership and managerial positions.

We must resolutely and strictly handle the individuals and organizations who have acts of violation in personnel work. We must focus on guiding the inspection of places with complex problems, drawing the attention of public opinion, and in the areas where negative practices and corruption easily flourish. When the signs of violation are exposed, we must deploy a timely investigation and a firm resolve; to have clear and clean conclusions; to address them with impartiality and objectivity; to strictly punish the acts of violation and make the punishment public through the press in order to contribute to public understanding, thus serving as a deterrent and warning, and minimizing the violations.

Fourth, Party committees, particularly the leaders, should organize the inspection, supervision and implementation of discipline of the Party, in accordance with their functions and tasks, and enhance the leadership and guidance of the lower committee and organization levels to implement the inspection and supervision. We must focus on leadership and guidance so as to create more vigorous and clearer changes in the inspection and supervision in our localities, agencies and units. We must overcome at all costs the attitudes of deference, dodging, fear of displeasing in investigation work. I propose that the Central Inspection Committee should actively exercise its direction to the lower inspection committees, avoiding a “wait-and-see” approach, a “light penalty for senior officials, but heavy penalty for junior ones,” or covering up the wrongdoings of localities, agencies and units.

Fifth, to accomplish the inspection and supervision in this context, the decisive factor is to continue improving the quality of inspectors, and to concentrate on building this pool to meet the requirements and tasks in the new situation. The inspection agencies together with the agencies of internal affairs, investigation, procuracy and adjudication should really serve as the sharp “precious sword” and be characterized by the ideal, ethical, upright, and brave fight against wrongdoings, “group interests” and self-interest.

The inspectors should be the courageous and steadfast fighters who have a good understanding of the mechanisms, policies, Party Statutes, regulations and stipulations of the Party and the State. Notably, they must have courage to fight, integrity, and more than anyone else, purity and morality. Without these moral qualities, their voices can be heard by no one, and they cannot inspect, supervise, and enact discipline against anyone else. It is essential to combat negative practices right inside the agencies and the officials in charge of combating negative practices. They must constantly improve their knowledge and skills, and make non-stop efforts and practice their work style, not being arrogant, preserving their qualities, morality, dedication, great determination and high responsibility in their profession. They must set bright examples in life and at work, be really impartial and objective, place the interests of the Party, the Homeland, and the people above all. They must be the “Bao Gong” in the new era.

The tasks of inspection and supervision in the coming time are extremely heavy. Inspectors must always confront and combat the wrongdoings and negative practices committed by their colleagues, teammates, and even their own beloved people. They must always struggle with themselves so as not to fall into the temptations of daily life. These are not the minor challenges. I share the difficulties and

challenges you are facing; but the Party and the people have confidence in the self-control and will of the inspectors, the soldiers who actively fight against the wrongdoings and negative practices within the Party.

Dear colleagues,

At present, the position, role and prestige of the inspection committees at all levels, particularly the Party’s Central Committee’s Inspection Committee, are being elevated and the authorities and responsibilities have been expanded. They have received special attention from the Party’s Central Committee, the Political Bureau, the Secretariat, and the Party committees. This has provided the crucial basis and premises for you to go into battle more powerfully, thus your performance will be far more efficient and effective. Realities are demanding us to act, “to walk the talk” (*nói đi đôi với làm*), instead of preaching general theories and morality.

President Ho Chi Minh, in his lifetime, had paid his special attention to the work of inspection and supervision, as he put it: “Inspection can help mobilize the active spirit and great force of the people, we can know well the abilities and shortcomings of officials, thus we can correct and give them a hand in time.”¹ “Nine-tenths of shortcomings in our work come from the shortage of inspection activities;”² inspection work “makes a contribution to strengthening the Party in terms of ideology and organization,”³ he added. To implement Uncle Ho’s teachings, together with the attention to leadership and guidance of the Party’s Central Committee, the

1. Ho Chi Minh (2011), *Complete Collection*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 5, p. 636.

2. *Ibid.*, Vol. 5, p. 637.

3. *Ibid.*, Vol. 14, p. 362.

Political Bureau, the Secretariat, the close coordination of the relevant agencies, the sympathy, support and help of officials, Party members and the people, I believe that the Central Inspection Committee and the inspection committees at various levels will confidently overcome all difficulties and obstacles to fulfill excellently the assigned tasks, meeting the requirements of the Party, the people, and the country.

Hopefully, in the 13th Party Congress tenure to come, the inspection work will make new, stronger, more resolute strides and achieve far more and better results.

May you all succeed.

BUILDING A MODERN VIETNAMESE CULTURE IMBUED WITH NATIONAL IDENTITY*

*Distinguished leaders and former leaders of the Party, the State,
and the Vietnam Fatherland Front,*

Dear delegates,

Dear colleagues,

Today, in the capital city of Hanoi, “where the soul of our thousand-year-old mountains and rivers is distilled,” “where the culture and civilization of our nation have converged, solidified, and shone,” at “the capital city of human conscience and dignity,” at “the city for peace,” at “the city of generosity and elegance,” at “the city of civilization and heroes,” we have solemnly gathered at the National Conference on Culture to deploy the implementation of Resolution of the 13th National Party Congress in the area of culture. This is a work of great significance in various aspects. I am very glad and enthusiastic to join this conference. The reason I say that is three-fold:

First, it is because of the important position and role of culture. Culture is the soul of a nation. It speaks about our national identity. Our culture will always be, our nation will always be.

* The speech was delivered on November 24, 2021 at the National Conference on Culture to deploy the implementation of the Resolution of the 13th National Party Congress.

Second, 75 years have passed since our last conference on culture on November 24, 1946, and today we have a national conference on culture with such a scope.

Third, this conference is held after the Party Congress, the sessions of National Assembly, the Government, the Fatherland Front, and Internal Affairs Bureaus. In the near future, there will be conferences on foreign affairs, and on Party building and rectifying. I have often said: “When the front calls, the back cheers,” “One calls, one hundred respond,” “One common heart from top to bottom,” “Smoothness flows both vertically and horizontally.”

First of all, I would like to convey to our delegates, our distinguished guests, and all our colleagues my cordial greetings, my intimate regards and my congratulations. I wish the conference the best of success.

Dear colleagues,

As we all know, culture (*văn hóa*) is a very broad category. It can be understood in various perspectives and approaches. Up to now, there are about 200 definitions of culture in the world. But on the whole, it can be understood by two meanings: the broad meaning and the narrow meaning.

In a broad sense, culture is the level of material (*vật chất*) and spiritual (*tinh thần*) development of humanity at specific historical periods such as the Stone Age, the Bronze Age, the Dong Son Culture, the Wet Rice Culture, and so on.

In a narrow sense, culture is the spiritual activities of a society, including education, science, literature, arts and morality, which includes way of life and way of treating others.

Culture includes the tangible such as historical relics, cultural works, cultural heritage, and cultural products such as pyramids, communal houses, pagodas and temples and the intangible such as folk verses, folk songs, shanties, festivals, customs and habits of different countries, regions, ethnic groups, and localities.

We discuss culture here mainly in its narrow sense.

But with either meaning, when speaking about culture, it means speaking about what we consider the best and finest, distilled and crystalized into values that are noble, humane, compassionate, benevolent, and progressive. We often speak of a cultured person, a cultured family, or a cultured people, which refer to those with healthy lifestyles, way of life, social behavior, and so on. On the other hand, what are bad, immoral and illegal are considered uncultured, or lack of culture. Happiness is not only about having a lot of money and properties, good food and beautiful clothes. It is also about having an enriched mind and living a life full of love, humanity, justice, and equality.

Vietnam, a country with thousands of years of history, has experienced many major changes and upheavals caused by nature and by humans. It has accumulated, created, and developed national identity and cultural values that form the soul of the nation. It has absorbed from the culture of humankind, and made its contributions as well.

Taking into consideration the position, role, significance, and importance of culture in the development of our country and our people, right from its first Political Platform in 1930, our Party set out to develop our national culture. In 1943, when our country was yet to gain independence, our Party mapped out the *Framework of Vietnamese Culture* (*Đề cương về văn hóa Việt Nam*), in which it pointed out: “The cultural front is one of the three fronts (economic,

political, and cultural)”¹ and advocated to develop culture in three directions: nation, science, and masses.

The guiding lines of thought and viewpoints of the Party in this important document created a new vitality to rally the contingent of intellectuals, writers, artists and the people to promote the role of culture, to unify the awareness, thoughts and organization, to awaken the aspiration of the nation in the struggle for national independence, to prepare our spirit and forces for the August Revolution to succeed, and to establish the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the first workers’ and peasants’ State in Southeast Asia in 1945.

In waging our nine-year resistance against the French, with the slogans “culturalize our revolution, revolutionize our culture” (*Văn hóa hóa kháng chiến, kháng chiến hóa văn hóa*) and “building a new lifestyle” (*xây dựng đời sống mới*), the Vietnamese culture truly became the motivating force to mobilize all resources for the resistance war, greatly contributing to the victory at the Battle of Dien Bien Phu “resounded throughout the five continents and was world-shaking” in 1954.

After this historic triumph, the whole country focused on implementing two strategic tasks: building socialism in the North, and liberating the South to reunify our country. Our Party constantly paid attention to cultural work; it mobilized and encouraged a contingent of writers and artists, and those who performed cultural tasks in order to promote their roles in building and developing a new culture with new people. The 3rd National Party Congress in 1960 determined the goals of the revolution in terms of culture, and applied this awareness toward building an advanced Vietnamese culture, in order to practically serve the cause

1. The Communist Party of Vietnam (2000), *Complete Party Documents*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 7, p. 316.

of revolution and continuously improve the people's material and spiritual life.

Our Party has placed emphasis on developing literature and the arts, the press, publishing, broadcasting, cinema, libraries, and museum conservation, together with enhancing the ability of these cultural works to provoke thoughts, raise the resiliency and reflect the reality of the masses. At the same time, our Party also paid special attention to the mass cultural work, including developing cultural activities and institutions at the grassroots level, raising people's knowledge, building a new cultural life, reforming old habits and lifestyles and building new ones.

The Party's leadership from 1960 to 1975 has contributed to promoting the role of the Vietnamese culture, carrying out the tasks of both building the country and fighting the resistance war, mobilizing troops and those doing cultural work to participate in the struggle against the United States to save the nation. The Great Spring Victory of 1975 reunified our country and restored our territorial integrity.

The profound and moving appeals of President Ho Chi Minh "We would rather sacrifice everything than lose our country, than return to slavery!"¹ "Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom!"² "The country of Vietnam is one, the people of Vietnam is one!"³ "Rivers can dry up and mountains can be worn down, but this truth will never change!"⁴ have become the *raison d'être* of every Vietnamese. They are the sacred soul of the

1. Ho Chi Minh (2011), *Complete Collection*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 4, p. 534.

2. *Ibid.*, Vol. 15, p. 130.

3. *Ibid.*, Vol. 14, p. 321.

4. *Ibid.*, Vol. 4, p. 280.

Vietnamese culture, merged with our tradition “when the invaders come to the house, even women have to fight!” and “if only a trouser hem left, we still fight!” (from the story of Ms. Ut Tich). At the same time, “After trampling the enemy down into the dirt/She put away her guns and swords and be gentle again!” (Poet Nguyen Dinh Thi).

The 4th National Party Congress highly regarded the contributions of the cultural and arts sector of Vietnam during the struggle against the United States and affirmed: “With the achievements recorded and reflected in the two great resistance wars of our nation, our country’s literature and arts deserve to stand among the vanguard of anti-imperialist literature and arts of modern times.”¹ President Ho Chi Minh was not only a genius leader, a great teacher of the Vietnamese revolution, and an outstanding fighter in the international communist movement, but also honored by UNESCO as “a Hero of National Liberation and Great Man of Culture.”*

From 1975 to 1985, this period shifted away from war to peace. Vietnam was still overcoming the aftermath of the war, restoring economic, cultural, and educational systems and unifying cultural institutions across the country. The entire people supported each other to overcome poverty, and placed their absolute confidence in the Party’s leadership to overcome the challenges caused by the socio-economic crisis and the complex international situation at that time.

Since 1986, Vietnam entered the renewal period. Under the Party’s leadership, we have carried out the renewal simultaneously and

1. The Communist Party of Vietnam (2004), *Complete Party Documents*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 37, pp. 568-569.

* UNESCO (1987). *Records of the General Conference*, 24th session, Paris, 20 October to 20 November 1987, v. 1: Resolutions.

comprehensively in all aspects from economic, political to cultural, social, military, and foreign relations areas. Particularly, in the cultural area, our Party has issued many important resolutions, decisions, and directives to focus on building and developing culture in the new period. Based on the review of cultural achievements in the early years of the renewal, our Party had promulgated the Resolution of the 4th Plenum of the 7th-tenure Party's Central Committee on the cultural tasks for the immediate years, and especially the Resolution of the 5th Plenum of the 8th tenure on building and developing of an advanced Vietnamese culture that is deeply imbued with national identity.

These are the resolutions of strategic significance on developing the Vietnamese culture in the period of accelerating our national industrialization and modernization. Our Party has selected eight areas for focused directions, in which the most important is building good people with a focus on developing the mind, morality, and lifestyle and a healthy cultural environment. In the Political Platform of 1991 on national construction and the amended Political Platform of 2011, our Party determined that building and developing a modern Vietnamese culture is among the fundamental characteristics of our socialist system. The Political Platform of 2011 pointed out: "*Building an advanced Vietnamese culture* deeply imbued with national identity, comprehensively developed, unified in diversity, and profoundly permeated with the spirit of humanity, democracy, and progress; making culture closely connected to and deeply penetrated into the whole social life, becoming the solid spiritual foundation and important endogenous strength of development."¹

1. The Communist Party of Vietnam (2011), *Documents of the 11th Party Congress*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, pp. 75-76.

Then, in Resolution No. 33-NQ/TW dated June 9, 2014 of the 9th Plenum of the 11th-tenure Party's Central Committee on developing culture and building good people to meet the demands of national sustainable development. In this Resolution, our Party continued to affirm the viewpoints and tasks already specified at the Resolution of the 5th Plenum of the 8th tenure, and added and emphasized new issues which affirmed the objective, the role and tasks of culture.

On the overall objective, our Party clearly pointed out the building of a Vietnamese culture that is comprehensively developed toward "the True, the Good and the Beautiful," (*chân, thiện, mỹ*), imbued with a nationalism, humanity, democracy, and scientific knowledge. Culture has truly become an internal strength and driving force for national development and defense, toward the goal of a prosperous people and a strong, democratic, equitable, and advanced country.

Our Party emphasized that culture must be placed on par with economic, political, and social issues. We must make clear that an advanced Vietnamese culture imbued with national identity is characterized by a nationalism, humanity, democracy, and scientific knowledge. The key point of cultural building is to build people with human dignity and healthy lifestyle, among others. In this Resolution, our Party has determined the new tasks of building culture in politics and economy, developing the cultural industries and improving the cultural market. On June 4, 2020, the Political Bureau, the 12th tenure, issued Conclusion No. 76-KL/TW on continuing to implement Resolution No. 33-NQ/TW of the Party's Central Committee, the 11th tenure, on building and developing the Vietnamese culture and people.

By briefly recalling the above, I would like to affirm that since its establishment, our Party has always placed importance on the role of culture and paid great attention to the building of culture in the cause of national liberation and construction, particularly in the transitional period toward socialism. The Party's awareness of culture has become ever more comprehensive, complete and profound. Our Party has determined that cultural development is both the spiritual foundation of society and the goal, the intrinsic strength and important motivating force for national development. It has also determined that developing culture simultaneously and harmoniously with economic growth and social progress is the fundamental direction of building the socialism in Vietnam, thus reflecting the greatness of our system. Uncle Ho put it in a succinct and profound way, "culture must shine the way for the people."¹

The culture we have built is the advanced culture deeply imbued with national identity, with its core content being national independence and socialism. Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Thought have played a guiding role in the spiritual life of our society. We inherit fine cultural traditions of the country, and selectively acquire cultural achievements and quintessence of the world. We strive to build a civilized and healthy society to serve legitimate interests and for human dignity, with the increasing levels of knowledge, morality, physical strength, lifestyle, and aesthetics.

At the same time, our Party has affirmed that people have a central role in the strategy of development, and that developing culture and building good people are both a goal and a driving force of the renewal process. The development of education and

1. The speech of President Ho Chi Minh at the first National Conference on Culture on November 24, 1946. See *Cứu quốc* Newspaper, No. 416, on November 25, 1946.

training, science and technology is the top national policy. Protecting the environment is one of the critical issues for survival and a criterion for sustainable development. Building happy and progressive families to serve as healthy and strong elements of the society, and working towards gender equality are the criteria for progress and civilization.

Our Party has affirmed that the focus of building and developing culture is:

- to build people with dignity, and a healthy cultural environment;
- to pay attention to the relationship between culture and politics, culture and economy;
- to build culture in the Party and in the political system; and
- to build a culture of public servants, a culture of public service, particularly public service ethics, and to pay attention to encouraging government officials and Party members to set good examples.

Our Party has also determined that the main forces of cultural building and development are the Party's leadership, the State's governance, and the people as a creative force. The contingent of intellectuals, writers and artists plays an important role. It emphasizes that all resources from the State and society, from the country and from abroad should be maximized for cultural development.

Therefore, our Party's awareness of cultural building in the renewal period has been gradually added, developed, and further improved in an increasingly comprehensive and profound way. This is a fundamental premise for us to firmly understand in order to organize its implementation.

Dear delegates and colleagues,

Looking back at the achievements in the building and development of the Vietnamese culture under the Party's leadership, especially in the past 35 years of renewal, we are proud of the great contributions of culture to the cause of national liberation and construction. Our notable achievements include the awareness of culture, which has become more comprehensive and profound in all fields and all forms. Cultural products have become more diverse, meeting new, multi-faceted demands of the society. Many traditional cultural values and cultural heritages of the country have been inherited, preserved, and developed. Political and economic culture have started to be given importance, and their positive aspects have been promoted. Cultural industries and market have flourished. The activities of exchange, cooperation, and international integration have seen new developments.

The building of the Vietnamese people has, step by step, become the center of our socio-economic development strategy. We have paid attention to fighting, criticizing, and pushing back the bad, the evil and the backward, against the unethical viewpoints and behaviors that are harmful to our culture and lifestyle. Many shining examples of the patriotic emulation and "*the entire people unite to build a cultured life*" movements have been commended and spread over to our social life, thus consolidating the people's trust in building culture in particular and building the country in general.

On this occasion, on behalf of the leaders of the Party and the State, I would like to warmly welcome, congratulate, commend, and thank the entire Party, people, government officials and Party members, especially the contingent of intellectuals, writers and artists, and forces participating in the cultural front for their great contributions.

However, besides the recorded achievements, we also need to objectively look at the limitations, inadequacies, and weaknesses in the cultural area, so that we can make an effort to find the causes and the solutions to overcome them. A weakness and limitation often talked about is that the levels and sectors have yet had deep awareness of culture, and have yet paid proper attention to culture on par with the economy and politics. It is yet to become an internal strength and motivating force for national sustainable development. The role of developing culture for building good people is yet to be up the mark, and there is still a leaning towards entertainment. The development of culture is yet to be synchronous, it is still one-sided, relying heavily on process, and is yet to go into the depth and essence of the matter.

There is still a shortage of great cultural, literary, and artworks that can reflect the stature of the renewal and have a positive impact on national construction and building good people. The cultural environment has still been polluted by social evils, corruption, and negative practices. The imbalance of cultural enjoyment among areas and regions is still large. The cultural life of ethnic minority groups and the people living in remote areas, in the border, the sea, and island areas is still much to be desired. Many precious cultural heritages of the country are in danger of being degraded, lost into oblivion, or even perished.

Leadership, guidance, and management in the cultural area are still indecisive and late, particularly in institutionalizing the Party's viewpoints, directions, and guidelines on culture. Investment in culture is far from being satisfactory, still scattered and ineffective. The quality and quantity of government officials directly involved in cultural tasks are yet to meet the requirements of cultural development in the new period. The introduction and promotion of

Vietnamese culture in foreign countries are not yet vigorous, and the absorption of humanity's cultural quintessence remains limited. Our rich culture has not received sufficient importance or positive measures to be preserved, protected, and promoted. There have been imitations of what foreign countries have done in ridiculous, offensive ways without discretion, which can be criticized as uncultured or lack of culture.

The weaknesses and inadequacies above have only been resolved slowly, even though they have been repeated many times in different documents and resolutions of the Party. They have made negative impacts on socio-economic development, building good people, and our cultural environment.

Such limitations and shortcomings have both external and internal causes, in which the latter still plays a major role. Especially, in leadership and managerial work, we are yet to be fully, deeply, and comprehensively aware of the Party's directions on culture, particularly in the current renewal period. Cultural leadership and management methods are slowly renewed, and yet to be timely adaptable to the cultural environment and development in the period of industrialization, modernization, and international integration. The institutionalization and implementation of the Party's directions on culture still have not been synchronous, persistent, and effective enough. The organizational and personnel work in the cultural area still has many inadequacies. The responsibilities of the Party committees, the organizations in the political system, the contingent of government officials and Party members in leading and guiding cultural development are yet to be high. We need to examine these causes so that we can find the way to overcome them, in order to further enhance the improvement and development of the Vietnamese culture in the coming time.

Dear delegates and colleagues,

With the vision from now to the year 2045, in celebration of the centenary anniversary of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, now the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, our Vietnamese culture is also facing new opportunities and challenges. The great achievements of historic significance in the past 35 years of renewal have created a new posture and strength, enhancing our national synergy and international prestige. The people's confidence has become ever higher, thus creating important premises to build and defend our Homeland, and to develop an advanced Vietnamese culture. With all due modesty, we can say *our country has never enjoyed such fortunes, potentials and international status and prestige as they are today*. This is a great advantage for us to enhance our national pride, our determination for renewal, and to improve our Vietnamese culture in the new period.

On the other hand, the shortcomings and weaknesses in the process of socio-economic development and cultural building in recent times are also major obstacles to cultural development. The impact of globalization, international competition, and the struggle in the cultural and ideological spheres will also occur in a fiercer and more complex manner. The Fourth Industrial Revolution, digital technology, digital society, digital culture, among others, have brought about new opportunities and challenges in cultural building and development. At the same time, we are also confronting the challenges of traditional security and non-traditional security, particularly climate change and epidemics, first of all the response and adaptability to and co-existence with the COVID-19 pandemic, protecting the people's health and maintaining socio-economic development.

Faced with new opportunities and challenges, the external requirements of our revolutionary cause are to continue building,

preserving, and developing a modern Vietnamese culture imbued with our national identity, serving as the true “spiritual foundation,” the “motive force for development,” and the “light shining the path for the people;” to promote cultural values and the strength of the Vietnamese people; to foster aspirations for developing a prosperous and happy nation; to create synergy of the entire country, in order to grasp opportunities and overcome challenges; and to successfully achieve the goal of becoming a socialist-oriented developed country by the mid-21st century.

We can say that developing culture is one of the key issues, the outstanding aspect in the documents of the 13th Party Congress. This is the first time our Party has dealt with the cultural area comprehensively and profoundly, ranging from the theme of the Congress to major viewpoints, objectives, and directions, key tasks, and strategic breakthroughs. The documents of the Congress have emphasized one of the fundamental and thorough guiding viewpoints: “To tremendously arouse the sense of patriotism, the will of national self-resilience, the strength of the great all-nation unity, and the earnest aspiration for the country’s prosperity and well-being; to promote socialist democracy and the aggregate strength of the entire political system as well as of the Vietnamese culture and human person... To combine the nation’s strength with that of the times..., and maximize internal resources while soliciting external resources, with endogenous resources, particularly human resources, being the most important.”¹

To further build, preserve, improve, and develop a national culture, we should focus on successfully fulfilling a number of key tasks as follows:

1. The Communist Party of Vietnam (2021), *Documents of the 13th Party Congress* (English version), National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, pp. 81-82.

First, we need to further foster patriotism, the spirit of self-resilience and solidarity, the aspiration for developing a prosperous and happy country; to highly promote cultural values, the strength and spirit of contributing to the country by every Vietnamese; to create the internal resources and motivating forces for breakthroughs in order to successfully implement our national objectives to 2025, 2030 and the vision to 2045, as mapped out by the 13th Party Congress.

Second, we must build the Vietnamese people with cultural values in the cause of renewal, development, and integration, together with preserving and developing Vietnamese family values, the system of cultural values and national values of the country; and competently combine traditional values with modern values, which include patriotism, solidarity, self-resilience, affection, sincerity, responsibility, discipline, and creativity. These values have been (a) nurtured by the culture of Vietnamese families with core values of prosperity, happiness, progressiveness, and civilization, (b) developed by an advanced Vietnamese culture imbued with national identity, with the value system of nationalism, democracy, humanity, and scientific knowledge, and (c) based on the foundation of a national value system, which is also the noble goal of our people of striving for peace, reunification, independence, a prosperous people, and a strong, democratic, equitable, advanced, and happy country.

Third, we need to comprehensively and synchronously develop cultural spheres, cultural environment, and cultural life, including:

- to preserve and promote traditional cultural values, acquire humanity's cultural quintessence, and at the same time improve the creativity and effectiveness of new cultural values;

- to build a healthy and civilized culture together with a persistent struggle against the bad, the evil, and the uncultured;
- to protect the values of truth, goodness, and beauty;
- to enrich the cultural life of the people;
- to build a joyful, healthy, and happy cultural life; and
- to narrow the gaps in levels of development and cultural enjoyment among areas and regions of the country.

Fourth, we must promote the people's role as active creators and beneficiaries of culture, and

- respect and protect the diverse expression of culture and of the people, ethnicities, and regions;
- develop cultural movements deeply, widely, and practically;
- improve the conditions of cultural enjoyment, raise the people's level of cultural enjoyment, and ensure equality in enjoyment; and
- uphold and promote the vanguard role of the contingent of intellectuals, writers and artists, and those who do cultural work.

Fifth, we must pay attention to building the Party and the political system in terms of culture and morality, and

- resolutely fight against corruption and negative practices so that our Party and political system can truly be moral, civilized, representing the conscience and dignity of the Vietnamese people;
- build culture in leadership and management;
- promote the role of setting good examples among government officials and Party members, particularly strategic-level leaders and officials, following the thoughts, morality and cultural style of President Ho Chi Minh; and
- improve the Party's role and leadership capacity, the State's governance efficiency, and the active participation of the

Fatherland Front and other socio-political organizations in the cause of cultural development.

Sixth, we need to build a digital cultural environment consistent with our digital economy, digital society, and digital citizenship, thus making culture adaptable to national development within the context of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, and to urgently develop cultural industries and build a healthy cultural market.

To improve and develop culture, and to cultivate the Vietnamese people in the above directions, we need to focus on implementing the following solutions:

First of all, we need to further improve the Party's awareness and leadership capacity and the State's governance in the cultural area in order to meet the demands of cultural development, to build the Vietnamese people in the period of developing the socialist-oriented market economy, and accelerating industrialization, modernization, and international integration more intensively and extensively. In order to further renovate the Party's leadership methods and the State's governance, we must ensure the consistency of thoughts and action in building and developing culture from the Central to grassroots levels. The Party committees and government offices at all levels should be deeply aware and thoroughly understand the Party's viewpoints and guiding line of thoughts regarding culture, thereby building programs and plans to implement and maximize resources for cultural development. We must overcome the thinking of "economy only," that is to focus only on economy with less attention being paid to culture. We need to seriously understand the viewpoint that "culture should be placed on par with the economy, politics, and society."

The 13th Party Congress has determined that the overall development strategy of our country is to comprehensively and

simultaneously enhance the cause of renewal for the rapid and sustainable development of the country; to closely integrate and concertedly put in place the required tasks, with socio-economic development as the centerpiece, Party building as the key, cultural development as society's spiritual foundation, and ensuring national defense and security being of vital and permanent importance.¹ This is the fundamental guiding viewpoint that needs to be strictly and resolutely implemented by all sectors and levels in their tasks.

Regarding the State's governance, we need to overcome the slowness in institutionalizing the Party's directions, guidelines, and viewpoints into law with feasible, specific policies on developing culture and building good people. We need to (a) enhance the reorganization of the apparatus of cultural management from the Central to grassroots levels; (b) build and promulgate appropriate mechanisms and policies, taking into consideration the uniqueness of cultural and art activities; and (c) increase proper investments from the State budget, and unlock social resources, both domestic and foreign resources, for cultural development. In the process of diversifying cultural activities, the State should focus on investing in the mainstream revolutionary culture to make it the main, leading force that primarily inspires the cultivation of pure and healthy thoughts, spirit, and sentiments that contribute to building the spiritual foundation of our society.

Second, we must build and foster the contingent of officials directly involved in cultural affairs, on par with to the requirements and tasks of developing the Vietnamese culture in the new period. We need to overcome arbitrary assignment of officials to do cultural work at both Central and local levels. President Ho Chi Minh

1. *Ibid.*, p. 81.

emphasized: “Officials are the root of all work.”¹ Cultural leadership and management require not only political quality but also professional competence, thorough understanding of the contingent of intellectuals, writers and artists, those who have deep and wide vision, the ability to mobilize and convince the people of all backgrounds to participate in cultural building and development.

We need to pay special attention to training, fostering, and building the contingent of intellectuals, writers and artists in charge of cultural, literary, and artistic work. They play a crucial role in the cultural cause in particular, and in the revolutionary cause as a whole. Uncle Ho once said: “To fulfill their noble task, writers and artists have to self-improve in revolutionary ethics, heighten the spirit of serving the people, and uphold their modesty; to really immerse themselves with the masses, try to study politics and improve professional qualifications.”² We need to revise our policy on compensating and using the contingent of writers, artists, and those who do cultural work, and to honor their talents and contributions to the country’s cultural development. In addition to focusing on improving the cultural life at the grassroots level, we need to pay attention to building and developing the top culture, to strive for greatest talents in various cultural and art forms to produce great works that deeply reflect the realities of our country’s remarkable renewal. This has a significant meaning in the building of the Vietnamese culture and people today.

Third, we must pay more attention to preserving, restoring and promoting the values of national culture, and tangible and intangible

1. Ho Chi Minh (2011), *Complete Collection*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 5, p. 309.

2. *Ibid.*, Vol. 13, p. 505.

culture among various regions and ethnicities, together with acquiring the world's cultural quintessence. We need to promote the "soft power" of Vietnamese culture, which contributes to improving our national synergy in the time ahead. Currently, we have:

- 166 museums nationwide, including 4 national museums with over 3 million exhibits;
- 3,486 relics classified and ranked at the national level, including 1,626 historical relics;
- 105 special national relics;
- 288 national intangible cultural heritages (including 21 festivals in Hanoi); and
- 27 tangible and intangible cultural heritages recognized by UNESCO as "world cultural heritage" (including two world cultural heritages in Bac Ninh province, namely "*Dân ca Quan họ*" and "*Ca trù*").

These are extremely precious national heritages inherited from our ancestors thousands of years ago. Therefore, it is our responsibility to preserve, value, and promote them. Not fulfilling this responsibility means being morally guilty towards our national history, and ungrateful to our ancestors. Uncle Ho, before his death, still reminded us that "To love our Homeland, love dearly our folk songs!" (Thus, composer Tran Hoan wrote exceptionally moving songs: "Uncle Ho's Teachings Before Leaving" and "I Hear *Ví Dặm* Folk Singing in Moscow").

Fourth, we should pay attention to developing cultural behaviors in society, and promoting positive values in good morals and customs in the family and society. We need to uphold the spirit of mutual support and unity, and respect for relationships, justice and morality, as in the following Vietnamese proverbs and folklores.

*“A red cloth covers the mirror to protect it,
People of the same country should love one another.”*
“Love others as yourself.”
“Whole leaves protect broken ones.”
“Less broken leaves protect more broken ones.”
“When a horse is ill, the whole stable refuse to eat grass.”
“Respect the old if you want to live long.”
“Respect the old, the old will give you their years.”
“Siblings are like our own legs and arms.”
“Respect the old, give way to the young.”
*“My wife wears ragged clothes and I love her,
Other people’s wives wear fragranced brocade clothes, that’s
nothing to me.”*
*“Husband and wife in harmony can dry up even the East Sea,
Friends in harmony can dry up even the East Sea.”*
“Hungry as you are, you must be honest,”
Ragged as you are, you must be clean.”
“Honesty conquers evils [i.e., the best policy.]”
“Revere teachers, respect morality.”
“A word of greetings is more valuable than a big feast.”
“A good name is sooner lost than won.”

We should preserve traditions such as “family rules” (*nếp nhà*), “rural simplicity” (*chân quê*) (from the poem “*Chân quê*” by Nguyen Binh in 1936) and loyalty and devotion in love and relationship (from the poem “*Việt Bắc*” by To Huu in 1954). We must build a code of conduct of being civilized in public agencies, in the community, particularly in cyberspace, in the writers and artists’ circle, among others.

We must be resolute and persistent in fighting against corruption, bribery, and negative practices, against degenerative manifestations of political ideology, morality, and lifestyles. We need “to sweep away individualism,” which is the root cause of all corruption cases, negative practices, and wrongdoings in the cultural sector and agencies. We must pay attention to the regulation that requires government officials and Party members to set good examples. We need to implement the Resolution of the 4th Plenum of the 11th and 12th tenures, especially the conclusions, decisions of the 4th Plenum of the 13th tenure on building and rectifying the Party and the political system.

Dear delegates and colleagues,

Today, our National Conference on Culture is an important occasion for our entire Party, people and armed forces, particularly for those who work in the cultural sector, the contingent of intellectuals, writers, and artists across the country, to understand much more profoundly, comprehensively, and simultaneously Ho Chi Minh Thought and the Party’s viewpoints, especially the viewpoints of the 13th National Party Congress on building, preserving, and promoting the significant values of an advanced Vietnamese culture deeply imbued with national identity. Together, we must be aware deeply, completely, and comprehensively of the very important role of culture in the cause of building and defending our Homeland, as well as realizing the aspiration for the development of a prosperous and happy country, to be worthy of the cause of the renewal and the tradition of a glorious history with thousands of years of civilization.

I sincerely wish that after this Conference, our cultural work will see positive developments and new progress, which will be stronger and more effective, marking a new milestone in the process

of improving and developing the Vietnamese culture in the new era. I believe that as a country, a people that respects civilization, respects virtuous and talented people, and rich in patriotic traditions; where the people are united, industrious, and creative; the contingent of intellectuals, writers, and artists are dedicated, talented, and have the spirit of responsibilities to our people, our Party, our country, and the future of our nation; together with the determined and unanimous participation of the entire political system, we will certainly overcome all difficulties and challenges to improve and successfully develop an advanced Vietnamese culture deeply imbued with national identity. In doing so, we can further glorify our country and our people, create an unparalleled strength to build our Homeland more thriving, our people happier, and our country more prosperous, to be worthy of our history with the thousand-of-year civilization and of the bravery of a heroic nation, and to be comparable with other countries in the five continents in the world. And only in that way can we say that our Conference today is of practical significance, and truly successful.

I wish the leaders of the Party and the State, distinguished delegates, colleagues and our people the best of health, happiness, and success.

Thank you sincerely!

**“BAMBOO OF VIETNAM”
SCHOOL OF DIPLOMACY:
DEVELOPING MODERN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
EMBEDDED WITH NATIONAL IDENTITY***

*Distinguished leaders of the Party, the State and the Vietnam
Fatherland Front,*

Dear delegates,

And all colleagues,

Today I am very delighted to attend the National Foreign Relations Conference for the implementation of the Resolution of the 13th National Party Congress. First of all, on behalf of the leaders of the Party and the State, and from my own heart, I would like to offer to you and all the government officials, public servants and civil servants, and those who work in the field of foreign relations at home and abroad my best greetings, my most earnest salutations, and my warmest congratulations. May the Conference today be a great success.

The Conference today is of great significance, and as some colleagues may put it, of historic significance, because it is the

* The speech was delivered on December 14, 2021, at the National Foreign Relations Conference for the implementation of the Resolution of the 13th National Party Congress.

first-ever National Foreign Relations Conference held under direct guidance of the Political Bureau and the Secretariat to discuss the Party's foreign relations, State diplomacy, people-to-people diplomacy, and that of our political system. The Conference takes place at a time when our Party, people and armed forces are redoubling our efforts to turn the Resolution of the 13th National Party Congress into reality. Our country is presented with many advantages and opportunities, and at the same time confronted with new, fiercer difficulties and challenges than we have previously predicted. The COVID-19 pandemic and its very complex developments and manifold impacts have caused immense losses to many countries and peoples, including our own.

Under the timely and effective leadership of our Party, with synchronous coordination and vigorous implementation of our political system, and thanks to the joint efforts and support of our people across the country and the Vietnamese overseas, in addition to the assistance from international friends, we have essentially and effectively controlled the pandemic. We are proactive in bringing the country to the new normal state, "a safe, flexible adaptation and effective control of COVID-19" for socio-economic development. The requirements of building and defending our Homeland are very high in the new era, which demands us to promote our internal strengths to the highest level in combination with our external opportunities. We are determined to take advantage of opportunities and advantages, and to overcome difficulties and challenges for rapid and sustainable development of our country.

Since our successful 13th National Party Congress, the National Assembly of the 15th legislature has organized the first two sessions. The Government of the 13th tenure, the Vietnam

Fatherland Front, and bureaus in the areas of internal affairs, culture and Party building have held their own national conferences to chart the implementation of the Resolutions of the 13th Party Congress. These conferences were methodically well-prepared and very successful, precisely as in our proverbs: “When the front calls, the back cheers,” “One calls, one hundred respond,” “One common heart from top to bottom,” and “Smoothness flows both vertically and horizontally.”

In the same spirit, at the National Foreign Relations Conference today, we shall review the implementation of the Resolution of the 12th National Party Congress with regard to foreign relations work, understanding the essence and content of the Resolution of the 13th National Party Congress, and discussing measures to effectively implement key foreign service missions in the years to come. This will also be an opportunity for various levels, sectors, and localities and the contingent of officials working in foreign relations to have a better understanding of Vietnam’s current landscape and standing vis-à-vis the region and the world, and how significant and important foreign relations activities are within our overall strategy to build and defend our country, thus creating a new impetus, determination and driving force for our political system, our government levels, sectors, each and every organization and individual involved in foreign relations.

Dear colleagues,

As we all know, any state and nation, throughout their formation and development, must address two fundamental matters: *internal and external affairs*. These two aspects are organically, dialectically and reciprocally related, and mutually

reinforcing, just like two wings of a bird. Each would create power and momentum for the other in a cohesive and coordinated way, especially in the current context of intense and widespread globalization. External relations activities today are not merely a continuation of domestic policies, but rather a strong driver for the growth of nations and peoples.

In the thousand-year history of building and defending our country, independence, self-reliance and ensuring highest national interests have always been an immutable principle and the overarching direction for our every action. In addition to the heroic struggles to defend our territory, independence and sovereignty, our forefathers always paid great attention to foreign relations. They created our own unique traditions and identity in the conduct of diplomacy and foreign relations: heroism, humanism, amity and tolerance, and *respect for truth, justice and righteousness*, as expressed by Nguyen Trai: * “Use a great just cause to defeat a brutal and cruel tyranny. Use wisdom and compassion to replace mighty forces and violence” and “Extinguish forever the flames of war, usher in an eternity of peace!” Diplomacy has been used to prevent and ward off wars, or to put an end to war in as advantageous a position as possible. It must always be in service of domestic policies to build and develop the country. *These philosophies of our forefathers are well ahead of their time* and eternally relevant.

These fine traditions and identity have been further built on, advanced and shined brightly in the Ho Chi Minh era and evolved into a modern Vietnamese diplomacy deeply imbued with national

* Nguyen Trai (1380-1442) was a revered poet and strategist, who was commemorated by UNESCO as a Great Poet and Great Man of Culture of the world in 1980.

identity. As the first Foreign Minister of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam established after the 1945 August Revolution, President Ho Chi Minh laid the foundation, gave direct guidance and led the development of the revolutionary diplomacy of Vietnam. The fundamental elements of Ho Chi Minh’s diplomatic thoughts have originated from the diplomatic philosophy and tradition used by our forefathers. President Ho Chi Minh developed these values to a new height, seamlessly combined patriotism, national culture and the Vietnamese diplomatic traditions with cultural quintessence and diplomatic experience of the world.

This school of thought always upholds the goal of *national independence, tolerance and amity*, using diplomacy to overcome conflicts, adapting to the world’s situation in order for Vietnam to integrate globally. According to President Ho Chi Minh, national independence must go hand-in-hand with socialism, self-reliance and self-dependence with international solidarity, and national strength with international opportunities. He found it necessary that friendship be cultivated with every country, especially our neighbors, traditional friends and the progressive, peace-loving peoples of the world. In the conduct of foreign relations, President Ho Chi Minh always exercised the guiding principle of “*strong vision and careful thinking*” in order to know ourselves, know others and always be in control, especially to understand Vietnam’s strategic position within the relationships among major powers. He paid special attention to maintaining good relations with other countries, especially neighboring countries and major powers. He believed in having respect for major powers and making them look good, knowing ourselves and others, knowing the time and the tide, and “*combining hard and soft ways*” in order to ensure highest people’s and national interests.

President Ho Chi Minh never wished for Vietnam to suffer from wars, nor did he wish wars upon others. His humanistic and humanitarian philosophy, in which integrity and morality are upheld in the interest of peace, independence, freedom and happiness for all peoples and all nations, is the embodiment of a seamless combination of *our national culture and that of humanity*. With this philosophy in mind, in his foreign affairs work, President Ho Chi Minh sought to uphold the role of international law, harness the values of culture and traditional diplomacy of Vietnam alongside universal and progressive philosophies of humankind. He sought out similarities and emphasized humanitarianism, benevolence, integrity and lawfulness in international relations in order to seek the support from the peoples around the world.

Thanks to this, together with political, military, economic, and cultural fronts among others, the diplomatic front has always played a vital role in the revolutionary cause of our people, contributing to the remarkable victories that brought glories to our national history. This role has especially been shown by “fighting and negotiating at the same time”: from the negotiation to defend the new Democratic Republic of Vietnam following the 1945 August Revolution, to the negotiation and signing of the 1954 Geneva Accord that contributed to the victory against the invading French colonialists, and the negotiation and signing of the 1973 Paris Accords on Vietnam as a necessity for a complete liberation of the South and the reunification of the country. Since then, the diplomatic service has become a pioneering front in breaking us out of the isolation and embargo, to open new paths for relations with many partners, to bring about new landscapes for renewal, international integration, and to build and defend our country.

Over the past 35 years of renewal, inheriting and building upon our proud diplomatic traditions, particularly the ideology of President Ho Chi Minh, who paved the way for Vietnamese diplomacy in the Ho Chi Minh era, our Party has continuously cultivated and advanced our foreign policy in the direction of independence, autonomy and openness in the interest of peace, cooperation and development. Our foreign policy is multilateral, diversified, and active and proactive international integration. At the 13th National Party Congress, our Party, people and armed forces reached a strong consensus in our understanding, and resolved to consistently exercise the foreign policy of independence, autonomy, peace, friendship, cooperation, development, and diversification and multilateralization of external relations. To ensure to the utmost national interests on the basis of fundamental principles of the United Nations Charter and international law, equality, cooperation and mutual benefit. To combine the national strength with international opportunities, and be proactive and active in comprehensive and in-depth international integration; Vietnam is a friend, a reliable partner, and an active and responsible member of the international community.¹

To sum up, over the past 90 years, under the leadership of the Party and President Ho Chi Minh, with creative application of the fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism, inheriting and building on the traditions and national characters of foreign relations, diplomacy and culture, and selectively learning from the cultural quintessence of the world and the progressive philosophies of the era, we have built a unique and fascinating school of foreign

1. The Communist Party of Vietnam (2021), *Documents of the 13th Party Congress* (English version), National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, pp. 143-144.

relations and diplomacy of the Ho Chi Minh era, with rich national characteristic of “*the bamboo of Vietnam*,” of “strong roots, stout trunks, and flexible branches,” (as in the poetry: “The bamboo has thin trunks and fragile leaves, yet it can build strong forts and citadels!”) deeply filled with the soul, character and spirit of the Vietnamese people. That is, (1) to be supple and subtle but firm and forceful; flexible and creative but bold, tenacious and courageous against all odds to achieve national independence, freedom and happiness of our people; (2) to be united and compassionate but determined and resilient in defending national and people’s interests; and (3) to know when to be gentle and when to be tough, to know the time and the tide, to understand ourselves and others, to determine when to advance and when to retreat, to “act as the situation demands,” like “a soft bamboo string that can still tie really tight.”

Dear colleagues,

Following our Party’s renewal direction within the field of external relations, over the past 35 years, especially since the 12th Party tenure, we have achieved commendable results. I should mention four highlights:

First, emerging out of isolation and embargo, we have established and strengthened a posture of open, multilateral and diversified foreign relations conducive to the renewal process.

Until now, we have expanded and improved foreign relations with all neighboring countries, major powers, important partners and traditional friends. Therefore, we have been able to call on the broad support and assistance from the international community in favor of our people’s renewal cause. Vietnam has established diplomatic relations with 189 out of 193 member states of the United Nations, including 3 Special Relationships, 17 Strategic Partnerships,

and 13 Comprehensive Partnerships. In multilateral diplomacy, Vietnam is an active and responsible member in more than 70 international organizations and forums of importance, such as the United Nations, ASEAN, APEC, ASEM and WTO, to name just a few.

Party external relations, State diplomacy, people-to-people external relations, and foreign relations by each sector, locality and business are all expanding and becoming more active and in-depth. Our Party has forged ties with 247 political parties in 111 countries, including roughly 90 communist and workers' parties all over the world, ruling parties and politically active parties of a considerable role. The National Assembly has had parliamentary relations with its counterparts in 140 countries, and has taken an active part in many important international parliamentarian forums. The diplomatic work conducted by the Government across the political, national defense, security, economic and socio-cultural pillars has been advanced, contributing to strengthening the political trust and the interweaving of interests between Vietnam and its partners. The Vietnam Fatherland Front and the people's friendship organizations have also engaged in foreign relations in a concrete way, contributing to consolidating the friendship between our people and the peoples in the world, bringing to them the story of Vietnam's renewal, and promoting the image of our country and people to the world.

Second, we have created a conducive international environment and attracted resources from outside to accelerate industrialization, modernization and socio-economic development.

From a centrally planned economy and a country under isolation and embargo in the past, today's Vietnam has become a socialist-oriented market economy enjoying an immense breadth and

depth of economic connectivity with 15 free trade agreements (FTAs), including three next-generation FTAs of very high standards, and participating in an extensive network of economic linkages with major economies in the world. While 30 years ago, we had economic and trade ties with just 30 countries and territories, and today, it is 230. Total foreign trade turnover has so far reached approximately US\$600 billion, about 120 times as compared to the early years into the renewal period. We have attracted foreign direct investment (FDI) of more than US\$400 billion, of which some US\$250 billion has been disbursed. Efforts to engage overseas Vietnamese have helped to tap into the tremendous resources of the Vietnamese diaspora to contribute to the building and defending of our country.

In the context of complex developments of the COVID-19 pandemic today, we have actively and responsibly contributed to the global effort in the fight against COVID-19, and at the same time, called on the international community for support regarding vaccines, medical supplies and drug treatment. This has tremendously helped our battle against the pandemic and socio-economic recovery and development.

Third, our foreign relations play a pioneering role in maintaining a peaceful and stable environment, greatly contributing to the steadfast defense of national independence, sovereignty, unification and territorial integrity.

Border issues with countries involved have been resolved step-by-step, which has created the legal framework and conducive conditions for the protection of national sovereignty. This has helped maintain the border of peace, friendship and cooperation, promote socio-economic development, and at the same time, maintain peace and stability in the region. With regard to complex

border issues, we always place emphasis on peace and cooperation, and earnestly engage in discussion and negotiation with countries involved in order to manage disputes and seek a fundamental and long-term solution for disputes through peaceful means on the basis of international law.

Fourth, Vietnam’s standing and prestige in the region and the world are constantly on the rise, actively and responsibly contributing to maintaining peace and cooperation for development and progress worldwide.

We have successfully organized many international events and fulfilled many important international responsibilities, including non-permanent membership on the United Nations Security Council, ASEAN Chairmanship, host of the ASEM and APEC Summits and the World Economic Forum on ASEAN, among others. Hundreds of Vietnamese officers and service members have been dispatched to United Nations peacekeeping missions in Africa. In many significant international issues, our voice, initiatives and solutions are sensible and generous, in the spirit of equality, amity, tolerance and humanity. The international community has agreed with them and supported them. Thanks to this contribution, Vietnam’s standing and prestige in the international arena have been enhanced.

The efforts, results and achievements I have touched upon just now add to the overall, immense and historic gains of Vietnam after 35 years of renewal, as stated by the 13th National Party Congress: “Our country has never enjoyed such fortunes, potentials, and international status and prestige as they are today.”¹

The gains and achievements above are recorded thanks to the effective, visionary, confident and conscious leadership of the Party’s Central Committee, the direct guidance of the Political Bureau and

1. *Ibid.*, p. 73.

the Secretariat, the active and flexible administration of the State, and the harmony, solidarity and support of our people. It is also thanks to proactive engagement and operation of our political system across every sector and government level, among which the Commission for External Relations under the Party's Central Committee, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Industry and Trade and agencies and bodies directly involved in foreign relations all over the country are the core forces, and play an essential role. On behalf of the leaders of the Party and the State, let me take this opportunity to offer my warmest congratulations, commendations and thanks to all government officials engaged in foreign relations for your immense and very meaningful contributions.

However, there remain certain shortcomings in our foreign relations work. In some aspects, we have yet to fulfill, or fulfilled at a lower level than specified by the 13th National Party Congress. Specifically, certain work in external relations and international economic integration was not proactive and effective at times. We still lack cohesive and effective measures to minimize negative impacts in the process of advancing international integration. Our understanding and direction have yet to catch up with the rapid and complex situations at times. Coordination and collaboration among branches, levels and localities have yet to be seamless. Strategic studies and forecasts are yet to be professional or satisfactory.

Looking at the above achievements and limitations in particular, and at our rich experience in foreign relations until now in general, we can continue to draw and build on practical lessons from previous tenures. There are five lessons as follows:

(1) *The lesson of combining national strength with international opportunities, and managing the relationship between national interests and international responsibility in harmony.* The international

situation is changing rapidly and in a complex way, yet the major trend and the ardent aspiration of all nations have ever been to preserve peace and expand cooperation for development. We have properly and clearly identified our position and role in international cooperation and assigned responsibilities, improved our standing in the regional and global value chains, production and supply chains. Our guidelines, policies and goals are firm, consistent and relevant to major global trends. Today, our national interest remains to safeguard an international environment conducive to development. This is entirely consistent with the interest of the peoples of the world to strive for peace, national independence, democracy, and social progress.

(2) *The lesson of persistence in principle and flexibility in tactics.* Our *principle* is national independence and socialism. Our *tactics* are to be flexible in order to adapt to the situation, the time, and the ally versus adversary. We follow President Ho Chi Minh’s great thinking: “Firm in goals, flexible in tactics” (*dĩ bất biến, ứng vạn biến*), “More friends, fewer foes,” “Willing to befriend all democratic countries, and not cause animosity towards anyone.”¹ Vietnam always stands ready to be a reliable and responsible friend and partner to all countries in the international community.

(3) *The lesson of building solidarity and harmony within the Party, armed forces, and the people* as per Uncle Ho’s teaching: “Our cause is built on *unity*.”² The right direction for foreign policy, the emphasis on justice, and effective implementation of concrete policies helped create harmony within our political system, national

1. Ho Chi Minh (2011), *Complete Collection*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 5, p. 256.

2. *Ibid.*, Vol. 3, p. 279.

solidarity, and broad agreement and support from international friends. The institutions and policies for consistent management of external relations activities under the leadership of the Party have become more complete, cohesive, and suitable. The coordination mechanism between Party's external relations, State diplomacy and people-to-people external relations with foreign relations activities deployed in all political, economic, cultural, social areas, national defense, security, environmental protection, and many others, and between the Central and local levels, has witnessed a multitude of improvements towards increasingly greater cohesion. This has contributed to creating the synergy, dynamism, creativity, effectiveness and efficiency of foreign relations activities, making significant contributions to materializing the goals of defending our Homeland at an early stage while threats remain yet afar, preserving an environment of peace and stability, and creating the best opportunities and conditions for national development.

(4) *The lesson of building the organizational apparatus and personnel work*, which we have always viewed as “the root of all work.” Generations of government officials working in the foreign service have remarkably accomplished their missions through different periods in our national history. Among them are the contingent of officials of the Party's Central Committee's Commission for External Relations, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Industry and Trade, in their role as the adviser and direct implementer of the external relations work of the Party and the State. “Striking our bell in the land of others” (*Mang chuông đi đánh xứ người*), as the saying goes, is an exceedingly hard and difficult work, and requires special qualities for foreign service officials. The efforts on the foreign relations front so far have brought about generations after generations

of diplomatic staff endowed with both political acuity and professionalism, who begin to demonstrate the courage, morality and virtue of Ho Chi Minh’s diplomacy.

(5) Last but not least, encompassing all is *the lesson on the consolidated and absolute leadership of the Party and the centralized administration of the State*. The leading bodies of the Party, first of all the Political Bureau and the Secretariat, and their advisory organs have demonstrated agility and sharp senses in their evaluation of the situation, and decisiveness in the making of concrete policies and measures. Many policies and solutions to address complex issues, deliberations over which timing is right for major external relations undertakings, including the reception and dispatch of high-level visits, have created strong and persuasive impacts and a high level of harmony within our Party, people and armed forces, and helped garner support from the international community.

Dear colleagues,

The 13th National Party Congress has been crowned with great success, forming the *Strategy for national building, development and defense in the new period*, including the *10-year Socio-economic Development Strategy for 2021-2030 period with a vision to 2045*. Accordingly, we shall redouble efforts so that by 2025, which marks the 50th anniversary of the liberation of the South and reunification of the country, we will become a developing country with an industry moving toward modernity and having passed over the lower middle-income level; by 2030, upon celebration of the Party’s centennial, Vietnam will become a developing country with a modern industry and an upper middle-income level; and by 2045 which marks the centennial of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam,

now the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, we will become a developed, high-income and socialist-oriented country.

At the same time, the 13th Party Congress also set out the foreign policy orientations in the new era, with the following core elements:

On the guiding ideology: To consistently exercise the foreign policy of independence, autonomy, peace, friendship, cooperation and development, multilateralization and diversification of foreign relations; to be a friend, a reliable partner, and an active and responsible member of the international community. To handle properly relations between national independence, autonomy and comprehensive, intensive and extensive international integration. The will of self-reliance, self-resilience and the endogenous strength and resources are decisive, fundamental, and long-term, while the support, assistance and resources from outside are of extreme importance.

On the principle of external relations: To ensure highest national interests on the basis of fundamental principles of the United Nations Charter and international law, equality, cooperation and mutual benefit.

On the direction of external relations: To deploy cohesively, creatively and effectively external relations activities, including Party external relations, State diplomacy and people-to-people external relations, external relations of various levels, sectors, localities, agencies, organizations, and the community of businesses. To deepen and add substance and practical application to foreign relations. To mobilize and effectively combine external resources with domestic resources for national building, development and defense. To ceaselessly engage in innovation on the basis of effectively applying the lesson of acting according to circumstances, wherein the principle and strategy remain unchanged, while measures and tactics must be flexible.

On the fundamental task of external relations: To continue promoting the pioneering role of foreign relations in shaping and

firmly preserving an environment of peace and stability, mobilizing external resources for national development, and heightening the country’s status and prestige. These tasks are closely interlinked and mutually reinforcing, and among them, the maintenance of peace and stability is a vital and permanent task, serving national development is the central task, and raising national standing and prestige is an important task.

We implement the 13th National Party Congress Resolution against the backdrop of a multitude of interweaving opportunities and challenges. In the following years, the world will experience upheavals which evolve in a highly rapid, complex, and unpredictable manner. Peace, cooperation and development would remain the major trend, but beset with multiple hurdles, difficulties and challenges. Globalization and international integration would move on but being defied by the rise of extreme nationalism, and fierce strategic rivalries, economic competition, and trade war. Under COVID-19 pandemic impacts, the world is falling into a serious crisis in many regards. The Fourth Industrial Revolution would powerfully develop, instituting breakthroughs in multiple domains, bringing about both opportunities and challenges to all countries and nations. Countries are adjusting their development strategies and methods in order to adapt to the new reality. The Asia-Pacific continues to become all the more important and strategic area. In Southeast Asia, the security environment and sovereignty disputes in the East Sea will continue to develop in complex ways...¹

To make worthy contributions alongside our Party, people and armed forces to successfully fulfill these incredibly heavy but

1. The Communist Party of Vietnam (2021), *Documents of the 13th Party Congress* (English version), National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, pp. 75-77.

glorious goals and missions, against the backdrop elaborated above, let me stress on six more points in the implementation of the solutions and measures raised at the Conference today:

First, we must continually follow, carefully study and grasp a good understanding of the current situation and its development in order to come up with suitable solutions in the foreign relations work. The rapid and complex political developments in the world thus far have, in many respects, gone beyond conventional forecasting. Without proper understanding of the situation, we would not be able to catch up with the actual development on the ground. We need to be sharp, agile, courageous in our thinking and be willing to take initiatives outside our routines and comfort zones in order to have thoughts and actions going beyond national scope to reach regional and global levels.

We must build a new standing and a new state of mind for Vietnam in our conduct of foreign policy and in managing our relationship with other countries, bilaterally and multilaterally. The stature and power of Vietnam across key indicators, such as the economy, population, national defense and external relations, have shown dramatic changes after 35 years of renewal. Especially, issues pertaining to the core and strategic interests of Vietnam require us to express a stronger voice and more active external relations stance, first of all within the region. At the same time, we must also accelerate innovation in thoughts, take bold new steps and find new methods in our work, expand into new areas and seek new partners and new directions. Of course, innovation must be based on principle, certainty, prudence, while persevering with our goal, and with sincerity and humility.

Second, we must continue to fully understand and effectively implement the foreign policy of independence, autonomy, peace,

cooperation and development, multilateralization and diversification of relations; active, intensive and extensive international integration for national interests; cooperating and combatting at the same time, with proper understanding of “ally” versus “adversary;” promoting cooperation and creating positions of mutual strategic interests between Vietnam and other countries; preventing conflicts, and avoiding confrontation, isolation, or dependence. In this process, the overarching goal is to maintain an environment of peace and stability conducive for building and defending our country; to implement strategic tasks for socio-economic development, to resolutely and persistently safeguard national independence, sovereignty, sovereign rights, territorial integrity, and other legitimate national interests in accordance with international law.

With regard to safeguarding an environment of peace, one of the key requirements is to always be persistent, calm, judicious and skillful in order to properly handle foreign relations, including the matter of national sovereignty and territory. This is an extremely important task for our political system, in which the diplomacy field is the pioneer. Given the developments in the world as mentioned above, the pursuit of this overarching goal shall face many challenges as we move forward.

To fully make use of and tap into opportunities, contain and neutralize challenges, and well respond to external changes, we must always remember Uncle Ho’s teaching: “Our cause is built on *unity*.” Accordingly, we must always place importance on nurturing and preserving solidarity and harmony within our country. The greatest, highest unity here is our shared determination to protect our national interests. Everyone must work in the interest of the nation and the people. Only in so doing, shall we be able to “combine national strength with international opportunities,” to follow the

motto “firm in goals, flexible in tactics,” to keep “our heart warm and our head cool,” and remain determined and persistent in addressing challenges in foreign relations, and harness common interests to promote cooperation and development on the basis of the protection of national interests and respect for international law.

Third, we must maximize our favorable opportunities to actively contribute to the making and shaping of multilateral institutions according to Directive No. 25-CT/TW dated August 8, 2018 of the Secretariat of the Party’s Central Committee on elevating and uplifting the multilateral external relations caliber to 2030, viewing this as an important strategic direction, including the development of the *Master Strategy for Foreign Relations to 2030*. The focal point of work going forward is implementing and building upon the important gains in the multilateral forums to which Vietnam is party, especially through cooperating with our partners to accelerate the implementation of Vietnam’s adopted initiatives. We must demonstrate our role as a core in the building of the ASEAN Community and reinforcing ASEAN centrality in the regional security architecture.

Active participation must be continued within the framework of the United Nations, especially in the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals and participation in the United Nations peacekeeping missions. We should review our conduct and performance of our mandates as ASEAN Chair in 2020 and non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council in 2020-2021, and from here draw lessons for the upcoming future that may be applied to other multilateral forums, within and outside of the United Nations.

Fourth, we should expand and enhance the effectiveness of external relations activities, especially economic, cultural, political,

security and national defense cooperation with other countries. Relationships with partners with whom we have established cooperation frameworks, primarily taking neighboring countries and major powers into consideration, should be continually deepened, stabilized and augmented. We should prioritize the maintenance of stability and momentum in the relationships through building political trust and promoting cooperation across the board, while addressing differences and emerging issues in the spirit of cooperation, friendship and dispute management, based on international law and the practice of the region.

We must continue to effectively translate the policy of active and proactive international integration into reality, especially Resolution No. 06-NQ/TW dated November 5, 2016 of the Party's Central Committee on “effectively implementing international economic integration, maintaining socio-political stability as Vietnam takes part in next-generation free trade agreements” and the 2016 *Overall Strategy for International Integration Through 2020, Vision to 2030*. We need to effectively implement international commitments, with the focus on those under the WTO, ASEAN Economic Community, APEC, CPTPP, RCEP, EVFTA and EVIPA, among others.

Economic diplomacy must be enhanced in the interest of national sustainable development. Priority should be given to seeking and expanding market access for Vietnamese goods, services and workers, attracting financial sources, technologies and managerial expertise, especially FDI into areas of national priority. We shall actively join other countries in advancing the negotiation, signing, ratification and enforcement of multilateral FTAs, look into the possibility of joining multilateral initiatives for economic connection and infrastructure development in the region, and

endeavor to negotiate next-generation bilateral FTAs with other countries, especially major trade partners.

Work related to the overseas Vietnamese community must be conducted more comprehensively and extensively, keeping in mind that the overseas Vietnamese is our flesh and blood, an inseparable part, and an important force of the community of Vietnamese ethnicities. Competent authorities must continue to create a more complete system of policies, instruments and laws to enable our overseas compatriots to play an increasingly more active and greater role in national building and defense, and assist them in gaining a strong legal status so that they may take heart in integrating into, living and working in their places of residence while preserving the Vietnamese language and the cultural identity of our nation.

Fifth, we must especially pay attention to and further improve the quality of strategic studies and forecasting, focusing on accurately assessing the trends of policy and relationships among major powers, neighboring and regional countries, the political, economic, socio-cultural tendencies in the region and the world, especially as the Fourth Industrial Revolution, digital transformation and the digital economy and digital society take the world by storm, and as the dangers of epidemics and climate change loom. In the medium to long term, we must be able to prepare scenarios to project changes in the world and regional order, and prepare response plans accordingly. We must be fully aware of our strengths and limitations, and remain sober in identifying Vietnam's strategic value and position in a new context in order to plan appropriate strategies and policies.

Peace, cooperation and development in the region and the world remain the major trend of our era. A country cannot randomly make decisions and act unilaterally without taking into consideration

the damage such action might cause to others and itself. It can be said that strategic research and forecasting are of vital importance if we are to maintain our proactiveness in a world of complex turbulence. The Party’s Central Committee, and the Political Bureau and the Secretariat, directly speaking, always highly appreciate the strategic reports from the advisory, specialized and professional bodies of the Party and State. That said, the requirements for strategic research and forecasting going forward are extremely high and full of challenges, I hope you would pay greater attention to this line of work. As I usually say: “The only thing to fear is not knowing, once we know, there is no fear!”

Sixth, to accomplish these tasks, we must pay special attention to the organization of the apparatus, the training and retraining, and developing the contingent of diplomatic officials.

On the organizational apparatus, the system of foreign relations organs, consisting of the Party’s Central Committee’s Commission for External Relations, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Industry and Trade, together with other agencies and units charged with conducting external relations across every ministry, agency, service and locality and the entire political system must continue to redouble efforts to implement the Resolution of the 4th Plenum of the 12th Party’s Central Committee on Party building and rectifying, and the Conclusion of the 4th Plenum of the 13th Party’s Central Committee on strengthening effort for building and rectifying the Party and the political system. We must be resolute in preventing, combatting and strictly handling government officials and Party members of degrading political thoughts, morality or lifestyle, and those who show manifestations of “self-evolution” and “self-transformation” from within.

At the same time, we must continue reviewing and renewing the organizational and managerial system, and improve the skill and capacity for the organization of the Party's Central Committee's Commission for External Relations, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Industry and Trade, and many ministries, agencies, services and localities, especially the agencies and organizations involved in external relations work, both within Vietnamese diplomatic missions overseas and in agencies inside Vietnam, with the goal of a streamlined, efficient and effective organizational apparatus in line with the spirit of the Resolution of the 6th Plenum of the 12th Party's Central Committee in this regard. We must further augment the coordination between ministries, agencies, services and localities, in particular between the Party's Central Committee's Commission for External Relations, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Industry and Trade, Ministry of National Defense, Ministry of Public Security, and many ministries, agencies, services and localities involved in the conduct of Vietnam's external relations work and international integration. In an era of comprehensive integration, in which the tendency towards globalization, connectivity and cooperation becomes inevitable, the close concert between Party external relations, State diplomacy, and people-to-people external relations, and between the external relations activities performed by various ministries, agencies, organizations and individuals engaged in this process at the Central and local levels, in particular in border localities, is crucial if we are to fulfill the common task and the individual mission of each service, locality, agency, and organization.

With regard to personnel work, let me quote once more the lesson our Party has drawn: "*Officials are the root of all work.*" We are living in the era of renewal and intensive and extensive international

integration. Personnel work must meet this demand. Throughout the history of the revolution, our Party has always attached great importance to personnel work for the diplomatic service in particular and for external relations as a whole. In the hardest and most trying years of the revolution, we have always had exemplary diplomats and foreign relations staff. They stand as exemplary for all generations, representing patriotism, the willingness to learn, political competence, style and the art of diplomacy and statesmanship. One may well say, they are diplomats, foreign service officers and politicians acknowledged and held in high esteem by friends worldwide.

Today's foreign relations staff inherit invaluable traditions and experiences of previous generations, and are endowed with the opportunity to study and to work. The average level of knowledge and education of the foreign relations staff is very high. I am aware that within the Party's Central Committee's Commission for External Relations, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Industry and Trade, there are numerous colleagues who are capable and held in high esteem by their colleagues and international friends. However, given the requirements of the new situation and missions, we must continue to attach greater importance to the training of diplomatic and foreign relations staff in knowledge, capacity, and political competence, *especially political competence*. You must continue to tirelessly train yourselves in political thoughts, remain absolutely loyal to the ideal of the Party and the interest of our nation, and stay alert to the influencing and luring of hostile forces. You must actively combat and prevent “self-evolution,” “self-transformation” and never be snared by the trap of corruption or negative practices.

The more Vietnam is integrated into the world, the greater our need for a contingent of diplomatic and foreign relations staff that

possess firm political competence, capability, influence and style if we are to stand on the same footing as other countries and international friends. They must be entirely devoted to the service of our Homeland and the people. A skilled diplomat or conductor of external affairs must firstly be a capable politician, who always views the interest of the nation-state and the political system as the compass guiding his action. Such a person must also conduct himself with culture, for external relations work, after all, is culture – the representation of the culture of our nation in dealings with others. Diplomats and foreign relations staff must always keep in mind that behind you stand the Party, our Homeland and the people. Be confident, be steadfast, be tenacious, be skillful, and be wise.

Dear colleagues,

The world is changing rapidly. While hardship remains on our country's path, our prospect is very bright. Our entire Party, people and armed forces are standing together, with the highest resolve, to realize the Resolution of the 13th National Party Congress. Every Vietnamese, no matter at home or abroad, desires our country to grow mighty and prosperous, to stand side-by-side with the powers of the five continents, as the aspiration of President Ho Chi Minh.

I am confident that our Conference today will set another milestone and bring about yet another, more vigorous and effective, change to Vietnam's foreign relations work. I have been informed that following this Conference, the diplomatic service will convene the Diplomatic Conference, bearing the spirit and conclusion of the Conference today into the discussion as concrete directions, missions and measures in conducting foreign relations in order to successfully translate the foreign policy orientations of the 13th National Party Congress into reality. This is an excellent practice that we must continue.

On the occasion of the New Year of 2022 and the Lunar New Year of the Tiger, once again I would like to extend my gratitude to the diplomats, delegates, and all government officials, public servants and civil servants working in the external relations domain nationwide. May good health and many successes be with you in your glorious and noble tasks. I would also like to ask the heads of Vietnamese missions abroad to convey my best regards and New Year’s wishes to the officials, staff and personnel, and the Vietnamese community overseas. May the friendship and cooperation between the people of Vietnam and the peoples of the world continue to grow stronger and closer.

We are determined to build and develop a modern Vietnamese foreign service and diplomacy deeply imbued with national identity - the school of diplomacy “Bamboo of Vietnam!”

Thank you very much!

STRONG PARTY, MODERN COUNTRY, EVERLASTING PEOPLE*

Leaving the year of 2018, looking back at three years of implementing the Resolution of the 12th National Party Congress, we are very happy at the results achieved by our country, particularly regarding socio-economic development, Party building and rectifying, ensuring national defense and security, maintaining peace and stability of the country, expanding foreign relations, and proactive and active international integration.

Our socio-economic landscape continues to thrive. Notably, the rate of GDP grew to 7.08 percent, the highest level of the past decade; exports were US\$238 billion and the trade surplus reached a record US\$7.2 billion; the debt-to-GDP ratio sharply decreased; CPI averaged below 4 percent, the third consecutive year of this proportion; the State's foreign exchange reserve recorded over US\$60 billion. The scope of the economy grew strongly; in 2018, it was estimated to reach 5.5 quadrillion dongs (approximately US\$240 billion), 1.3 times more than the figure in 2015. Per capita GDP reached US\$2,580, an increase of nearly US\$200 as compared

* The article was written on January 31, 2019 on the occasion of the 89th founding anniversary of the Communist Party of Vietnam (February 3, 1930 - February 3, 2019).

to 2017. Start-ups and innovation have been supported and expanded, marking over 131,000 newly established enterprises. The tourism sector welcomed nearly 15.6 million international tourists, served 80 million domestic tourists, with the total revenue of 620,000 billion dong, gradually developing the spearheading economic industry of the country.

Generally speaking, in 2018 we reached and even surpassed all 12 targets (with nine surpassing the schedule). The independence and autonomy of the economy has grown step-by-step. The successful implementation of the dual goal of growth and inflation control has facilitated the fulfillment of the tasks in maintaining social security and stabilizing social order and safety. These positive results have created the spillover effect, consolidated the confidence of our people and strategic investors at home and abroad.

On November 12, 2018, the National Assembly, 14th legislature, approved the Resolution on the ratification of the CPTPP which officially took effect on January 14, 2019. This is a comprehensive and high-quality next-generation FTA with the strongest level of commitment. In Hanoi last September, we successfully organized the World Economic Forum on ASEAN 2018 to assemble various ASEAN heads of state, senior leaders of partner countries together with 1,000 representatives from multi-national groups, ASEAN and international enterprises, under the theme: “ASEAN 4.0: Entrepreneurship and the Fourth Industrial Revolution.” WEF Founding President Klaus Schwab appraised this as the most successful forum in 27 years of organizing WEF on ASEAN and East Asia.

In Hanoi, in January 2018, the 26th annual meeting of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF-26) took place with the

participation of 22 parliamentary delegations and more than 300 delegates. This event was the highlight in foreign relations of the National Assembly, 14th legislature. The APPF-26 had strongly conveyed the message and image of a renewed, dynamic, active and responsible Vietnam to international friends. At the 73rd session of the United Nations General Assembly, Vietnam was elected for the first time as a member of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) during the 2019-2025 term. Holding this new important position, Vietnam will have an opportunity to further learn from international experience in order to improve the framework of law, creating an enabling environment for investment and business in pursuit of the goal of sustainable development.

In late March 2018, Hanoi hosted the 6th Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS-6) Summit and the 10th Cambodia-Laos-Vietnam Summit on Development Triangle Area (CLV-10) with the participation of more than 2,000 delegates and 200 economic groups and enterprises. In 2018, Vietnam continued to be the destination of foreign investment with the FDI capital having reached over US\$30 billion, in which US\$19.1 billion had been disbursed. Vietnam had become “the hottest investment destination in Asia,” “occupying the top position for two consecutive years among the destinations expected to attract the greatest foreign investment in the APEC region.” As of November 2018, our country was home to approximately 27,000 investment projects from 128 countries and territories, with the total registered capital of around US\$340 billion and the total implemented capital of roughly US\$188.8 billion. The number of international tourists to Vietnam tripled that of 2010, the highest ever seen.

On building and further improving the institutions and policy, the Party, the National Assembly and the Government have promulgated a variety of new directions, policies and mechanisms regarding the key and urgent issues. The resolutions of the Plenums of the 12th Party's Central Committee on "Improvement of the institution of the socialist-oriented market economy;" "Further restructure, renovation, and improvement of the performance of State-run enterprises;" "Development of private sector as an important engine of the socialist-oriented market economy" belong to this overall program.

On the organizational apparatus, the Party issued the resolutions and stipulations regarding the continued renovation and arrangement of the organizational apparatus of the political system that is streamlined, effective and efficient; improvement of the wage policies for government officials, public servants, civil servants, armed forces and workers in the enterprises; reform in the social insurance policies; continuation to renew the organizational and managerial system, improvement of quality and effectiveness of the public non-business units, to name a few, continuing to create the fundamental foundation and strong motive force for the sustainable socio-economic development.

On Party building and rectifying, the resolutions of the Party's Central Committee on preventing and pushing back the degeneration of the political ideology, morality, lifestyle, the manifestations of "self-evolution," "self-transformation" from within have been issued. We have focused on preparing a contingent of officials at all levels, particularly strategic-level officials, who are sufficiently qualified, capable and respectable, on par with their tasks. On professional titles, we had defined the criteria to assess the officials under the

management of the Party's Central Committee, the Political Bureau and the Secretariat, especially the stipulation of the example-setting responsibility of government officials and Party members, first of all the members of the Political Bureau, the Secretariat, the Party's Central Committee. All of these have created the new vitality and strength in leadership and guidance of implementing the political tasks of overall strategies.

Particularly, the fight against corruption, wastefulness, bureaucracy and negative practices has been led, guided and carried out time and again by the Party and the State in an active way for many years now, but in recent times, it has been accelerated more than ever before, guided resolutely, thus many concrete results were achieved. The serious and complex economic and corruption cases had been resolutely and strictly handled, pursuant to the Party's stipulations and the State's law, including for senior leaders of the Party and the State, generals and officers in the public security and army, and officials in office or retired.

As of the 12th Party Congress in January 2016, within nearly three years, more than 60 senior officials under the management of the Party's Central Committee were disciplined, including five members of the Party's Central Committee still in office, three of whom were expelled from the Party's Central Committee, even one Politburo member expelled from the Party and imprisoned for 30 years; 11 retired members of the Party's Central Committee were also disciplined. This is a breakthrough in the work of Party building and rectifying, with strict discipline and order in the state apparatus and our political system, making an important contribution to consolidating the people's confidence in the Party's leadership.

Even though there remain many challenges and limitations, we can see from a broad perspective that our country's position and strength have been enhanced, that our country is prospering, and the opportunities for our country are increasing. Many international organizations have seen Vietnam as a country where the economy and culture are developed, politics and society stable, and prospects for positive development plentiful. As one of the fastest growing economies in the region and the world, Vietnam possesses big markets, such as monetary, securities and real estate, which are stable, consistent with macro-economic developments. Our country has never enjoyed such fortunes, potentials, status and prestige as they are today. Is it a miracle in the context that our country is facing many difficulties and the world situation is flooded with strong and complex upheavals? The more important thing is that we have learned more valuable lessons of experience from this practical context.

One question to ask is, what is the root of our results and successes? There are many reasons, but above all, we have enjoyed great achievements of historical significance after more than 30 years of renewal, with the comprehensive results obtained in the period 2016-2017. We have had unity, unanimity and joint efforts in our Party, people and armed forces. Our political system, including the leading bodies of the Party, the National Assembly, the Government, the Vietnam Fatherland Front and the sectors, levels and mass organizations, has conducted a variety of reform and had closer, more seamless, simultaneous and methodical coordination in leading and guiding the thorough understanding and the implementation of the 12th Party Congress Resolution.

This has brought about positive changes in appropriately promoting the Party's leadership, the State's governance and the people's ownership of the country, timely, properly and effectively addressing issues in everyday life, particularly the important, sensitive and pressing social issues. Furthermore, our achievements are the result of the harmony, support, encouragement, and timely contribution of opinions of government officials, Party members, revolutionary veterans, people of all strata, including the Vietnamese overseas, the mass media, the press agencies, and so on, who have created the synergy and the unanimity of our political system and the society as a whole. As we all know, it is no coincidence that ever since the 12th Party Congress, an atmosphere of enthusiasm and confidence in the Party's leadership, the victory of the renewal cause, and the national building and defense has increasingly spread nationwide.

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The rich experiences of the Vietnamese revolution throughout 89 years of the Party's founding have proven that the Party's judicious leadership is the primary determinant of the success of our revolution, bringing about many victories in Vietnam. At the same time, it is the process of leading the revolution that our Party has been trained, tested and gradually mature with a sea of experiences in order to be worthy of the role and mission of leading the revolution and of the people's confidence. The past century has shown that in Vietnam, there is no other political force apart from the Communist Party of Vietnam, that has sufficient courage, competence, wisdom, experience, prestige and capacities to lead the country to overcome

difficulties and challenges so as to be able to take the revolutionary cause of our nation to win one victory after another.

In this process, our Party has accumulated and gained many precious lessons, forging *the glorious traditions* that we today are held responsible to maintain and promote them.

- It is the tradition of absolute loyalty to the interests of the people and the class, being consistent with the goal and ideology of national independence in close combination with socialism on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Thought.

- It is the tradition of firmly maintaining our direction of independence and autonomy; firmly grasping, applying and developing creatively Marxism-Leninism, learning from international experience so as to be able to map out the right direction and organize the effective implementation of the revolutionary tasks.

- It is the tradition of the close bond between the Party and the people; serving the people always as the *raison d'être* and the goal.

- It is the tradition of unity, unification, with effective organization and discipline based on the principle of democratic centralism, self-criticism and criticism with camaraderie.

- It is the tradition of faithful and pure international solidarity on noble principles and goals.

At present, our Party, people and armed forces are striving to carry out the Political Platform of the Party, the Constitution of the State, to enhance comprehensively and simultaneously the cause of renewal, industrialization and modernization, to develop the socialist-oriented market economy, to open for international integration, to carry out two strategic tasks of building and defending firmly our Homeland, for the goal of “a prosperous people, a strong,

democratic, equitable, and advanced country.” This is a great but also very challenging and complex revolutionary cause, “an enormous struggle” and “a difficult self-surgery” as Uncle Ho taught us.

The international context and the domestic situation, apart from advantages and opportunities, still have many difficulties and challenges. We are facing many new problems that must be dealt with, many extremely complex issues that must be settled. This situation requires our Party, people and armed forces, more than ever, to promote to the highest degree of the patriotic and revolutionary tradition, the spirit of unity and duty, to strive to overcome all difficulties and challenges so as to build our Homeland to be ever more dignified and more beautiful. The resilience and creative efforts of the entire people, of branches, localities and economic sectors are very important factors for the development of the country. We must not be laid back and self-satisfied, “do not get carried away with success; do not rest on our laurels.”

Since the 12th Party Congress, our Party has reserved much time and energy for the Party building, defining it as the key task. Recently, the entire Party has carried out Party building and rectifying in the spirit of the Resolution of the 4th Plenum, the 12th tenure, and obtained important initial results and experiences, making a contribution to preventing and pushing back the negative practices and improving the Party’s leadership capacity and resiliency. However, in the Party building work, there are still many things to do, particularly the fight against the degeneration of the political ideology, morality and lifestyles; the manifestations of “self-evolution,” “self-transformation” from within; the corruption, wastefulness, bureaucratic red-tape and detachment from the people, among others. Hostile forces are still finding ways and means

to sabotage the revolutionary cause of our people. They are trying their hardest to distort and slander our Party and our State by attacking our ideological system, our political platform, directions and policies of the Party so as to provoke and divide the Party, the State and the people. They attempt to disintegrate our Party and our system from the root, from the inside, in an extremely vile and dangerous scheme.

To enhance our country's position, win our people's heart, build our Party to deserve to be "an outstanding child" of the nation, "the truly loyal leader and servant of the people," to lead the renewal process forward, our Party should try hard to step up Party building and rectifying, making the Party purer and stronger, fulfilling its responsibilities of the vanguard to lead the revolutionary cause in the new period. The general direction of the current tasks for Party building and rectifying is to continue to promote fine traditions, firmly maintain and enhance the revolutionary and vanguard nature of the Party, to build the Party to be truly pure and strong in politics, ideology, morality, and organization, to renew the method of leadership, to enhance the close bond between the Party and the people, to ensure that the Party is strong enough to lead the country's continued development.

On the condition that our Party is the party in power, operating in the development of the market economy and international integration, government officials and Party members have many responsibilities and are constantly faced with the temptation of money, material well-being, power, and personal ambitions. Therefore, we have to be careful to maintain firmly the revolutionary and vanguard nature of the Party. If we are not deeply conscious of it, if government officials and Party members are not active and

persistent to train and learn, it is easy for them to get degenerated and degraded. That the nature of the Party - a Communist Party, a genuine revolutionary party working for the cause of the working class, of the nation, for the interests of the people - is firmly maintained is a very fundamental and important issue.

The Resolution of the 4th Plenum, the 12th tenure on Party building and rectifying has affirmed that Party building and rectifying must be carried out with an active, resolute and strong spirit in order to create a clearer change in all aspects, to prevent and push back the state of degeneration, to consolidate the consistency in goals and revolutionary ideals; to enhance the unification of will and action; to strengthen the close organization; to enhance the close relationship with the people; to improve the Party's leadership capacity and resiliency, considering it the vitality of our Party, our system. *A genuine revolutionary Party having the right direction, a close organization, a contingent of government officials and Party members who are pure, exemplary, devoted and have a close connection to the people and are supported by the people is the party with invincible power and no other force can stop it on the path to lead and move the nation forward.*

This year we are celebrating the anniversary of the Party's founding at the time when our country has undergone more than 30 years of renewal, 50 years of implementing President Ho Chi Minh's *Testament*. This was an important historical period for our national development, marking the maturity in all aspects of our Party, State, and people. The renovation has revolutionary significance and scope; it is a process of profound, comprehensive and radical transformation, the great cause of our Party and people. From a broad perspective, after more than 30 years of renewal,

our country has recorded the remarkable achievements of historical significance. The fruits of the year 2018 and the three-year implementation of the 12th Party Congress Resolution have consolidated our confidence in the bright prospects of our people, our country ahead.

The year 2019 is the fourth year, the year of preparations for closing the five-year tenure. It plays a very important role in the successful implementation of the 12th Party Congress Resolution as a whole and the 2016-2020 Five-year Socio-Economic Development Plan. It is the inaugural year of preparations for holding the Party committee congress at all levels, advancing to the 13th National Party Congress. The international and domestic situations have presented many opportunities and advantages, but also posed many difficulties and challenges, demanding the entire Party, people and armed forces to make greater endeavors, greater determination to strive to fulfill successfully the 2019 tasks. Specifically, our key tasks are:

- To strive to fulfill at the highest degree the tasks of socio-economic development, to enhance the stability of the macro-economy, to accelerate the implementation of strategic breakthroughs, to restructure the economy in combination with the renewal of growth model, to guarantee social security and social welfare and to improve the people's life;

- To firmly maintain independence, sovereignty and environment of peace and stability for national development; to enhance foreign relations; and

- To continue to implement the Resolution of the 4th Plenum, the 12th tenure, on Party building and rectifying, Directive No. 05-CT/TW of the Political Bureau on speeding up the learning and

practicing of Ho Chi Minh Thought, morality, lifestyle, creating a stronger change for Party building and rectifying.

With enthusiasm and pride, we firmly believe that the Communist Party of Vietnam founded and led by President Ho Chi Minh will remarkably fulfill its responsibilities. The entire Party, people and armed forces shall join the efforts and be united in striving to build a Vietnam of peace, independence, unification, democracy, prosperity and strength as it moves firmly towards socialism.

Our strong Party, our modern country, and everlasting people!

BUILDING A PURE AND STRONG PARTY: PROMOTING TRADITIONAL VALUES AND BEING ROLE MODELS*

Dear delegates,

Dear colleagues and compatriots,

In the atmosphere of our country full of enthusiasm and joy because of the important achievements of 2019 and for welcoming the Lunar New Year 2020, today in the capital city of Hanoi “of a thousand-year civilization and heroism” and “the city for peace,” we solemnly organize the ceremony of the 90th anniversary of the glorious Communist Party of Vietnam (February 3, 1930 - February 3, 2020). On behalf of the Party’s Central Committee, I warmly welcome and convey to our leaders and former leaders of the Party, the State, the Vietnam Fatherland Front, revolutionary veterans, Vietnamese Mothers of Heroes, distinguished guests, colleagues and compatriots across the country and overseas Vietnamese my sincerest regards and best greetings.

* The speech was delivered on February 3, 2020 at the 90th founding anniversary of the Communist Party of Vietnam (February 3, 1930 - February 3, 2020).

Dear colleagues and compatriots,

Our nation's thousands of years of history have shown that our patriotism and determination to fight foreign invasion to protect our independence, sovereignty and unification are the extremely precious tradition of our people. Inheriting this tradition, since the mid-19th century when the French colonialists invaded our country, our people refused to become slaves and continuously rose up and fought in many strong patriotic movements using different methods. From the intellectuals' path to save our country from colonialism, to peasants' uprisings and bourgeois' road to revolution, these movements were determined and dedicated struggles with great sacrifices. However, due to constraints in the historical situation, particularly the lack of the right direction, these movements failed. History demanded a new path.

In 1911, a patriotic young man, Nguyen Tat Thanh (our beloved Uncle Ho), left Vietnam in search of a new path to save our country from colonialism to achieve national independence. With a burning ambition, he found Marxism-Leninism and saw in this revolutionary theory the right path to save our country - the proletarian revolutionary path. After many years of activism overseas, he was persistent in his efforts to study, learn, creatively apply and gradually propagate Marxism-Leninism to Vietnam. He worked hard to prepare for the establishment of a genuine revolutionary party.

On February 3, 1930, the Conference to unite communist organizations was held in Kowloon peninsula, Hong Kong (China) under his leadership (as Nguyen Ai Quoc) to unify them into one party named the Communist Party of Vietnam. This was an important turning point that put an end to an ongoing crisis due to

a lack of organization and direction for the Vietnamese revolution. The establishment of the Communist Party of Vietnam was an achievement of Marxism-Leninism combined with the workers' movement and the patriotic movement. It showed that the Vietnamese working class was mature and strong enough to shoulder the historical mission of leading the revolution. *The first political platform of the Party* approved at the Party Founding Conference determined the fundamental path of the Vietnamese revolution, which met the urgent needs of the nation and the ardent aspiration of the people.

After its birth, the Party was in close touch with the people and won their support and absolute confidence. Within 15 years, our Party led the struggle for national liberation and conducted three revolutionary uprisings: *the 1930-1931 revolutionary uprising*, with its pinnacle at the Soviet Nghe-Tinh movement, *the 1936-1939 revolutionary uprising to demand human rights and democracy*, and *the 1939-1945 revolutionary uprising of national liberation*. In 1945, ripe with opportunities, the Communist Party of Vietnam and all Vietnamese people launched the "earth-shattering" August Revolution, and established the Democratic Republic of Vietnam on September 2, 1945. And this year, we celebrate the 75th anniversary of this historic event.

Soon after the establishment of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, we faced many difficulties and challenges: confronting hunger, illiteracy and foreign invasion at the same time. In this crisis, the Party led our people to overcome the danger with the determination to defend and build the new administration. At the same time, we actively prepared to start the resistance war against the French colonialists. The direction of the resistance war was to engage "the entire people," to be "comprehensive," "protracted," "to be mainly

self-reliant,” and to promote our tradition of unity and patriotism. Our Party led the people to beat the enemy’s schemes and plans of invasion, especially the victory of the Winter-Spring Campaign 1953-1954 which reached its climax at the historic victory of Dien Bien Phu, which was “famous all over the world and shook the globe.” This event forced the French colonialists to sign the Geneva Agreement in 1954, putting an end to their war of aggression in Vietnam.

From 1954 to 1975, our country was divided into two parts. Under the Party’s leadership, the North made great efforts to build socialism and strove hard to fulfill its responsibilities of being a great home of support for the great front. The Vietnamese people in the South continued their undaunted struggle to gain national independence and achieve national reunification. In the spirit that “we would rather sacrifice everything than lose our country, than return to slavery,”¹ “nothing is more precious than independence and freedom,”² with the Party’s right and creative direction and with the combined strengths of our entire nation, our people and armed forces defeated war plots of the U.S. imperialists, completely liberated the South and reunified our country on April 30, 1975. This victory “will be engraved eternally in the history of our nation as one of the most radiant pages, a brilliant symbol of the complete victory of revolutionary heroism and human mind, and it has entered in the world history like the great victory of the 20th century, an event of great international importance and of profound epochal significance.”³ And this year, we celebrate the 45th anniversary of this historic event.

1. The Communist Party of Vietnam (2000), *Complete Party Documents*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 8, p. 160.

2. *Ibid.*, Vol. 27, p. 274.

3. *Ibid.*, Vol. 37, p. 471.

Then, while urgently working to overcome the grave aftermath of the war, the Vietnamese people had to confront new wars. Under the Party's leadership, our people and armed forces focused on restoring the economy and society and on defending our border, our independence and sacred territorial sovereignty of our Homeland. At the same time, we had to fulfill our international obligations with the Cambodian people to end the genocide and to start reviving their country.

With new demands for national development, we needed to overcome the inadequacies of a centralized planning system and bureaucratic subsidy mechanism, which led to socio-economic crises in the post-war years. Reviewing initiatives and creativities in the people's life, our Party implemented gradual renovation in agriculture, industry, and first of all, renovation of the mindset and theory of socialism, and step by step formed the direction for national renovation. With in-depth analysis of the country's situation and through the process of searching and testing for solutions in realities, and with the spirit of "looking squarely at the truth, judging correctly the truth and speaking clearly the truth,"¹ the 6th National Party Congress, in December 1986, mapped out *the direction for comprehensive renewal for the country*, marking an important turning point on the transitional path to socialism. The direction for the renovation satisfied the requirements of our realities, reflecting the courage and creative thinking of the Communist Party of Vietnam to open a new period for national development.

After the 6th Congress, the Party gradually improved and made specific the direction for renewal, of which the fundamental and core content was reflected in the *Platform on National Construction in the*

1. *Ibid.*, Vol. 47, p. 269.

Period of Transition to Socialism (the 1991 Platform and the 2011 amended and revised Platform) and the Party's important documents in the Congresses. In the 1990s, we overcame the challenges caused by the collapse of the socialist model in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. The Communist Party of Vietnam and the Vietnamese people were persistent in continuing creatively on our path to socialism consistent with specific conditions and characteristics of Vietnam. The Party's Central Committee, from the 6th to the 12th tenures, issued many resolutions on fundamental and important issues regarding the Party and national development. The National Assembly institutionalized them through the legislative system and the laws, creating the legal basis which was more simultaneous and suitable for the renovation process. The Government made them specific, turning them into concrete mechanisms, policies and solutions for management, governance and operation of building and developing the country.

In determining and mapping out the direction for renewal, our Party has always grasped and creatively applied the fundamental principles and viewpoints, the dialectical methods of Marxism-Leninism, Ho Chi Minh Thought and the relevant domestic and international conditions. The Party has managed well the fundamental relations, such as:

- Developing a socialist-oriented market economy;
- Building a socialist law-governed State “of the people, for the people and by the people;”
- Closely combining economic renovation with political renovation, economic growth with social progress and equity; and
- Effectively combining socio-economic development with national defense and security, building with defending our Homeland; independence and autonomy with proactive and active

international integration; the Party's leadership with State governance and the people's rights to ownership of the country, without being partial, extreme and over-confident, going from one extreme to the other.

In fact, after nearly 35 years of implementing the renewal, from a poor country with a less-developed material and technical system and low socio-economic infrastructure, Vietnam has become a developing country with the lower middle-income level. Culture and society continue to develop, the people's material and spiritual life has improved, building the Party and the political system has earned breakthroughs; national unity has been constantly strengthened; politics and society are stable, national defense and security, independence and sovereignty have been solidly maintained; the status and prestige of the country have been raised ever more in the international arena. Now, Vietnam has become a country with the population of nearly 100 million with average per capita income of US\$2,800. Vietnam has participated in almost all international organizations, become an active and responsible member in the international community. Recently, Vietnam has been elected by the United Nations General Assembly with a very high, almost absolute confidence vote. Accordingly, for the second time, Vietnam has become the non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council. With many great achievements, we can affirm that our country has never had such fortunes, potentials, position and prestige as they are today.

Dear colleagues and compatriots,

The rich legacy of the Vietnamese revolution over the past 90 years has proved that the effective and clear-sighted leadership of the Party is the primary factor that led to the victories of the revolution

and many impressive achievements for Vietnam. On the other hand, through the process of leading the revolution, our Party has been trained and matured to be worthy of the role and mission of leading the revolution and of the people's confidence and expectations. This reality has affirmed the truth that in Vietnam, there is no other political force apart from the Communist Party of Vietnam, that has sufficient courage, confidence, wisdom, experience and prestige to lead the country to overcome difficulties and challenges so as to be able to take the revolutionary cause of our nation to win one victory after another.

In this process, our Party has accumulated and gained many precious lessons, forging *the glorious traditions* that we today are held responsible to maintain and promote them.

- *It is the tradition* of absolute loyalty to the interests of the people and the class, being consistent with the goal and ideology of national independence in close combination with socialism on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Thought;

- *It is the tradition* of firmly maintaining independence and autonomy in our direction; firmly grasping, applying and developing creatively Marxism-Leninism, learning from international experience so as to be able to map out the right direction and organize the effective implementation of the revolutionary tasks;

- *It is the tradition* of the flesh and blood relationship between the Party and the people, serving the people always as the *raison d'être* and the goal;

- *It is the tradition* of unity, unification, with effective organization and discipline based on the principle of democratic centralism, self-criticism and criticism with camaraderie; and

- *It is the tradition* of faithful and pure international solidarity on noble principles and goals.

Having a look back at the 90-year period of building, fighting and maturing of the Communist Party of Vietnam, and in this sacred time, we would like to express our boundless gratitude to the immeasurable merits of President Ho Chi Minh, the genius leader of our Party and our nation, the great teacher of the Vietnamese revolution, “the hero of national liberation and the great man of culture.” He has devoted his whole life to our people and country, and led our Party and our people to glorious victories, “glorifying our nation, our people and our Homeland.” Our country has been ever more developing, and our people have been ever happier and more prosperous. This has further proved that the ideology, cause, morality and style of President Ho Chi Minh are priceless assets, the torch shining the path for our nation to firmly advance towards the future.

We have eternally borne in mind the great merits of our predecessor leaders, of millions of heroes and martyrs, the eminent sons of our heroic nation who had laid down their lives for the independence, freedom, sovereignty, unification and territorial integrity of our Homeland, for socialism and for the noble international duty. We would like to express our deep gratitude to the revolutionary veterans, to the families of martyrs, to the Vietnamese Mothers of Heroes, to the war wounded and ill soldiers, to the families who have rendered great services to the country and to the entire people and the soldiers nationwide who have fought, sacrificed, worked with creativity and made great contributions to the glorious revolutionary cause of our nation. With all the modesty of the revolutionaries, we still are able to say that “*Our Party is really great! Our People are really heroic!*” We will forever bear in mind and express our deep gratitude to the people of the fraternal socialist countries, the progressive forces together with friends all over the

world for their support and precious help to the struggle for national liberation and national reunification in the past as well as the construction and defense of the Homeland today.

Dear colleagues and compatriots,

At present, the entire Party, people and armed forces are striving hard to carry out the Platform of the Party, the Constitution of the State, to enhance comprehensively and simultaneously the cause of renewal, industrialization and modernization, to develop the socialist-oriented market economy, to open the door for international integration, to carry out two strategic tasks of building and defending firmly our Homeland, for the goal of “a prosperous people and a strong, democratic, equitable, and advanced country.” This is a great revolutionary cause, “an enormous struggle” as Uncle Ho once put it, but it is also extremely difficult and complex. The international context and the domestic situation, apart from advantages and opportunities, still have many difficulties and challenges. We are facing many new problems that must be dealt with, many extremely complex issues that must be settled.

This situation requires our Party, people and armed forces, more than ever, to promote to the highest degree of our patriotic and revolutionary tradition and our spirit of unity and duty, to strive to overcome all difficulties and challenges so as to build our Homeland to be more dignified and more beautiful. The resilience and creative efforts of the entire people, of branches, localities and economic sectors are very important factors for the development of the country. Our Party has to strive to push ahead Party building and rectifying, making the Party purer and stronger so that it can be able to fulfill its responsibilities of being the vanguard to lead the revolutionary cause in the new era.

Since the 12th Party Congress, our Party has reserved much time and energy for the Party building, considering it as the key task. Recently, the entire Party has carried out Party building and rectifying in the spirit of the Resolution of the 4th Plenum, from the 11th to the 12th tenures, and obtained important initial results and experiences, making a contribution to preventing and pushing back the negative practices and improving the Party's leadership capacity and resiliency. However, in the Party building work, there are still many things to do, particularly the fight against the degeneration of the political ideology, morality and lifestyles; the manifestations of "self-evolution," "self-transformation," corruption, wastefulness, bureaucratic red-tape and the distance from the people. Hostile forces are still seeking ways and means to sabotage the revolutionary cause of our people. They are trying their hardest to distort and slander our Party and our State by attacking our ideological system, our political platform, directions and policies of the Party so as to provoke and divide the Party, the State and the people. They attempt to disintegrate our Party and our system from the root, from the inside, in an extremely vile and dangerous scheme.

The general direction of the current tasks for Party building and rectifying is to continue to promote fine traditions, firmly maintain and enhance the revolutionary and vanguard nature of the Party, to build the Party to be truly pure and strong in politics, ideology, morality, organization and personnel, to renew the method of leadership, to enhance the close bond between the Party and the people, to ensure that the Party is strong enough to lead the country's continued development.

On the condition that our Party is the party in power, operating in the development of the market economy and international integration, government officials and Party members

have many responsibilities and are constantly faced with the temptation of money, material well-being, power, and personal ambitions. Therefore, we have to be careful to maintain firmly the revolutionary and vanguard nature of the Party. If we are not deeply conscious of it, if government officials and Party members are not active and persistent to train and learn, it is easy for them to get degenerated and degraded. That the nature of the Party - a Communist Party, a genuine revolutionary party working for the cause of the working class, of the nation, for the interests of the people - is firmly maintained is a very fundamental and important issue. President Ho Chi Minh once warned: "A nation, a party and each person, who was great yesterday with a great attraction, will not necessarily be loved and praised by people today and tomorrow, if the heart is no longer pure and falls into individualism."¹

The Resolution of the 4th Plenum from the 11th and the 12th tenures on Party building has affirmed that Party building and rectifying must be carried out with an active, resolute and strong spirit in order to create a clearer change in all aspects, to prevent and push back the state of degeneration, to consolidate the consistency in revolutionary goals and ideology; to enhance the unification of will and action; to strengthen the close organization; to enhance the close relationship with the people; to improve the Party's leadership capacity and resiliency, considering it the vitality of our Party, our system.

A genuine revolutionary Party having the right direction, a close organization, a contingent of government officials and Party members who are pure, exemplary, devoted and have a close connection to the

1. Ho Chi Minh (2011), *Complete Collection*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 15, p. 672.

people and are supported by the people is the party with invincible power and no other force can stop it on the path to lead and move the nation forward.

Dear colleagues and compatriots,

This year we are celebrating the anniversary of the Party's founding, right at a time of special significant importance: The year 2020 is the ending year of the tenure of the 12th Party Congress; this year the Party committee levels will carry out their congresses so as to move to the 13th National Party Congress; the year with many important political events; the year when Vietnam will implement its role as the ASEAN Chair and as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council. The international and domestic situations have presented many opportunities and advantages, but also posed many difficulties and challenges, demanding the entire Party, people and armed forces to make greater endeavors, greater determination to strive to fulfill successfully the 2020 tasks, in which the key tasks are:

- To strive to fulfill at the highest degree the tasks of socio-economic development, to enhance the stability of macro-economy, to accelerate the implementation of strategic breakthroughs, to restructure the economy in combination with the renewal of growth model, to guarantee social security and social welfare and to improve the people's life;

- To firmly maintain independence, sovereignty and environment of peace and stability for national development; to enhance foreign relations; and

- To focus on organizing successfully the congresses of the Party committee levels to advance towards the 13th National Party Congress in combination with the continuity of implementing the

Resolution of the 4th Plenum of the 11th and the 12th tenures on Party building, Directive No. 05-CT/TW of the Political Bureau on speeding up the learning and practicing of Ho Chi Minh Thought, morality and style, creating a stronger change for Party building and rectifying.

With enthusiasm and pride, we firmly believe that the Communist Party of Vietnam will fulfill remarkably its responsibilities. The entire Party, people and armed forces shall join efforts and be united to strive to build a Vietnam of peace, unification, independence, democracy, prosperity and strength to advance firmly towards socialism.

Eternal glory to the civilized and heroic Vietnamese nation!

Long live the glorious Communist Party of Vietnam!

Long live the Socialist Republic of Vietnam!

President Ho Chi Minh shall live forever in our cause!

INHERITING PRESIDENT HO CHI MINH'S GREAT CAUSE: FOLLOWING HIS PATH OF SOCIALISM*

Distinguished delegates and guests,

Dear colleagues and compatriots,

Today, in Hanoi, in the capital city “of a thousand-year civilization and heroism,” of nobility and grace, of human conscience and dignity, “the city for peace,” with all the esteem and boundless gratitude, we solemnly organize the 130th birth anniversary of President Ho Chi Minh (May 19, 1890 - May 19, 2020) - a genius leader, “a hero of national liberation and great man of culture,” a great teacher of the Vietnamese revolution, an exemplary international communist fighter, and a close friend of peace-loving and social progressive nations in the world.

Dear compatriots and colleagues,

“Our nation, our people, our Homeland have given birth to *President Ho Chi Minh*, a great national hero. It was he who glorified our nation, our people and Homeland.”¹ His life of 79 years is

* The speech was delivered on May 18, 2020 at the ceremony of the 130th birth anniversary of President Ho Chi Minh (May 19, 1890 - May 19, 2020).

1. The Communist Party of Vietnam (2004), *Complete Party Documents*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 30, p. 275.

the most beautiful symbol of patriotism and revolutionary heroism of Vietnam. He is the radiant crystallization of morality, wisdom, courage and the conscience of our nation and our era.

Born in a patriotic Confucian scholar family in Kim Lien Commune, Nam Dan District, Nghe An Province, a rural land that is rich in historical, cultural and revolutionary tradition, President Ho Chi Minh absorbed a fervent patriotism, a deep love for the people and the bravery inherited from our forefathers. He witnessed our country being invaded and our people's houses being destroyed. He saw that many uprisings to fight against the French colonialists failed to gain independence and freedom, despite the deaths of many heroic people. Therefore, he nurtured a strong determination to search for a new path to save our country and our people from French colonialists.

With his passionate love for the country and his drive and aspiration for national liberation, on June 5, 1911, Nguyen Tat Thanh (Ho Chi Minh) left Saigon Harbor, starting his journey to search for a path to save our country. With a sharp political outlook, he decided to go to the West where colonialism originated and where bourgeois revolutionaries occurred, in order to understand what was behind the words "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity," and to see what was happening in France and other countries. Then he would come back to help our people.

He traveled all over the world to study various types of revolutions, examined many theories, doctrines and paths of struggle of the working class and the people in colonial countries. In the end, he found Marxism-Leninism as the light for the era and a path for national liberation, social liberation and human liberation. He came to the conclusion: "To save the country and liberate the people, there is no other path than the proletarian

revolutionary path.”¹ Having learned and creatively applied Marxism-Leninism, he gradually built a system of theories on the revolution of national liberation that was suitable to the Vietnamese realities. He determined the appropriate goals, paths, participating forces, leading forces, and revolutionary methods, and actively prepared to establish a genuine revolutionary party in Vietnam.

In the Spring of 1930, he chaired the Conference on the Founding of the Communist Party of Vietnam and approved the First Political Platform of the Party. This was an important historical turning point that put an end to the prolonged crisis of political direction and the organization of patriotic movements of Vietnam. The establishment of the Party affirmed the vision, role, courage, intellect and reputation of President Ho Chi Minh. This was his great and creative contribution in applying Marxism-Leninism to the establishment of the genuine revolutionary party in order to lead the Vietnamese revolution.

After nearly 30 years of travel and political activism in foreign countries, on January 28, 1941, President Ho Chi Minh returned to the country and directly led the revolution. He chaired the 8th Plenum in May 1941, and decided to change the strategic direction of the revolution to adapt to the rapid changes in the international and domestic situation. This meant prioritizing the task of national liberation above all; organizing, mobilizing and rallying forces in the whole country; establishing the League for the Independence of Vietnam (Viet Minh Front); building armed forces and revolutionary bases, thus creating strong revolutionary movements nationwide.

In August 1945, with a sensitive and sharp political mindset, accurate forecast, timely and thorough analysis of the domestic and

1. Ho Chi Minh (2011), *Complete Collection*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 12, p. 30.

international situation, well aware of the ripe revolutionary opportunities, he expressed the determination: “Even if we have to burn the whole Truong Son mountain range, we are determined to gain our independence,”¹ and “Use our own strength to liberate ourselves.”

Under the Party’s leadership, headed by our leader Ho Chi Minh, our nation rose up and broke the chains of slavery of the 80-year-old colonialist regime and the millennia-old feudal regime, and established the Democratic Republic of Vietnam - the first people’s democratic state in Southeast Asia, opening a new era that is most brilliant in our nation’s glorious history - the Ho Chi Minh era.

After the victory of the August Revolution, internal and external enemies worked hand in glove with each other to attempt to overthrow the new revolutionary government aiming to impose their ruling yoke on our country again. Facing this dangerous situation, President Ho Chi Minh and our Party led the entire people to fight against three enemies simultaneously: hunger, illiteracy, and foreign invaders. With sensible and flexible tactics, he steered the Vietnamese revolution like a boat to overcome all rapids and dangers in an extremely dangerous situation. At the same time, he built up forces and strived to protect and consolidate the newly established and still very young revolutionary government.

Facing the French colonialists’ intention to invade our country again, on December 19, 1946, President Ho Chi Minh made the *Appeal for Nationwide Resistance War*, calling for the entire people to have a common view and pool their common efforts to launch the protracted resistance war, with iron-like will: “We would rather

1. Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics - Institute of Ho Chi Minh and the Party’s Leaders (2018), *Ho Chi Minh - Biographical Chronicles*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 2, p. 225.

sacrifice everything than lose our country, than return to slavery.”¹ Under the effective leadership of the Party and Ho Chi Minh’s banner of “fighting the invaders, building the country,” our people and armed forces once again defeated one military plan after another of the enemy. The height was the historic victory at Dien Bien Phu, which was “famous all over the world and shook the globe.”

After the victory in the anti-French colonialist resistance war, the North was completely liberated. Our people entered a new revolutionary period, with two strategic tasks to be carried out simultaneously: building socialism in the North and continuing the struggle in the South to complete the people’s national democratic revolution.

In the cause of socialist building in the North, President Ho Chi Minh creatively applied and developed Marxism-Leninism. Together with our Party, he worked out a plan and led our people to strive to enhance our socio-economic development, to intensify the Party building, to consolidate the people’s democratic government, to promote the strength of national unity, and to build a new culture and new socialist people. This made the North become stronger in all aspects and serve as a solid home for the great frontline in the South.

Liberating the South and reunifying the country were President Ho Chi Minh’s burning wish and deep concern. He once said: “The country of Vietnam is one. The people of Vietnam is one.”² “Rivers can dry up and mountains can be worn down, but this truth will never change,”³ and “The image of beloved South Vietnam

1. Ho Chi Minh (2011), *Complete Collection*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 4, p. 534.

2. *Ibid.*, Vol. 14, p. 532.

3. *Ibid.*, Vol. 4, p. 280.

is always in my heart.”¹ Before passing away, he left to our Party and people the historic *Testament*, in which a strong will, a firm determination and a confidence in our inevitable victory were affirmed: “No matter what difficulties and hardships there might be, our people are certain to win the complete victory. Our Homeland will be surely reunified. Our compatriots of the South and the North will certainly be reunited under the same roof.”²

Having implemented his Testament, our Party, people and armed forces highly developed our revolutionary heroism, and used our strength of national unity together with international opportunities to win a great victory in the anti-U.S. resistance war for national salvation. The height was the historic Ho Chi Minh Campaign which completely liberated the South and restored national unity, ushering in a new era in the history of our country - the era of independence, reunification, peace, and the whole country has advanced towards socialism.

Dear compatriots and colleagues,

President Ho Chi Minh has devoted his whole life to the revolutionary cause of our Party, our people and international friends. His name and cause will live forever with our country and in the hearts of our nation and of humankind. He left to our Party, our people and the generations of today and tomorrow a very precious ideological heritage, an extremely radiant example of morality, virtues and style!

1. Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics - Institute of Ho Chi Minh and the Party's Leaders (2018), *Ho Chi Minh - Biographical Chronicles*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 8, p. 230.

2. Ho Chi Minh (2011), *Complete Collection*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 15, p. 623.

Ho Chi Minh Thought is a comprehensive and profound ideological system on the fundamental issues of the Vietnamese revolution. It is the result of the whole process of applying and developing creatively Marxism-Leninism to specific conditions of our country. It inherits and develops fine traditional values of our nation, and receives cultural quintessence of humankind. It is an extremely important and valuable spiritual asset of our Party and our nation. It will shine eternally the path of the revolutionary cause of our Party and our nation to win one victory after another, making a contribution to the common struggle of nations in the world for peace, national independence, democracy and social progress.

President Ho Chi Minh creatively applied Marxism-Leninism to the situation of Vietnam to map out the creative revolutionary path that was consistent with the characteristics of the revolutionary realities of Vietnam: national independence was closely associated with socialism, and national liberation was closely associated with the class liberation and human liberation. He pointed out that, after gaining independence, the revolution must develop into a socialist revolution so that we can win a complete victory, because only when advancing towards socialism, our people would be happier, and our Homeland would be more prosperous and powerful.

From the historical conditions of Vietnam, President Ho Chi Minh pointed out that our country needed to undergo the transitional period, from a backward agricultural country to advance towards socialism, bypassing the capitalist period. This was new without any precedents in history. Therefore, there would be innumerable difficulties and complexities we had to overcome. The transition to advance towards socialism in our country should be carried out gradually, step by step, without being laid back and hasty.

We need to study and learn from experiences of the countries in the world, and to analyze and review the realities in order to identify methods and steps of the transitional period and the path to socialism in our country. We need to look at the reality of our country, to pay attention to historical trends, and to avoid being dogmatic, stereotypical and routine.

President Ho Chi Minh pointed out that to win a victory in the socialist revolutionary cause and to build a new society, our Party should rely on the people's force, and organize, mobilize and promote the great strength of the entire people. The Party's directions, the People's hearts are the root of the united strength and the decisive factor of all victories of the revolutionary cause. Promoting the strength of national unity is a great ideology of strategic significance of Ho Chi Minh Thought. With the wise, effective and consistent directions, he always placed importance on building the Unified National Front, taking the workers-peasants-intellectuals alliance led by the Party as the foundation, creating a great, widespread and firm political entity that rallied all forces, ethnicities, religions and all patriotic Vietnamese people to create the strength of national unity, thus helping the Front fulfill its glorious mission in the historical process of the Vietnamese revolution.

As the founder and teacher of our Party, President Ho Chi Minh always placed special attention on the Party building work so that our Party could become pure and strong, and truly a genuine, moral and civilized revolutionary Party. In his *Testament*, he recommended us to strive hard to maintain and consolidate the unity and unanimity of views of the Party: "*Unity* is an extremely precious tradition of our Party and people. All the colleagues, from the Central Party to the Party levels, should maintain the unity and

unanimity of the Party as to maintain the apples of our eyes.”¹ In the spirit of promoting democracy, self-criticism and criticism must be carried out seriously; the discipline must be kept firmly; the flesh and blood relationship between the Party and the people must be enhanced; the Party’s leadership capacity and resiliency must be regularly adjusted and improved; and all manifestations of individualism must be resolutely fought against.

Party building and rectifying must be linked with the building of the State of the people, by the people and for the people in order to build a socialist democracy. He pointed out that, our country is a democratic country, all the benefits are for the people, and all the powers come from the people. Democracy is the people’s most precious asset, thus practicing widespread democracy is the magic key to complete all tasks and to overcome all difficulties. We must listen to the people, see the people as the root of all, “use the people’s talents, the people’s abilities for the benefit of the people.”

With a clear-sighted mind and a sharp political mindset, he was aware of the characteristics and trends of development at the time. He thus connected the Vietnamese revolution to the world’s revolution and combined our national strength with international opportunities, which was an important element to create synergy of our country’s revolution. Ho Chi Minh Thought and his great revolutionary cause are not only the priceless treasures of the Vietnamese nation, the ideological foundation and the compass of the Vietnamese revolution, but also a precious contribution to the revolutionary cause of oppressed nations in the world, and to the development of ideological and cultural quintessence of humankind.

1. *Ibid.*, Vol. 15, p. 622.

Dear compatriots and colleagues,

Ho Chi Minh is *the shining example of revolutionary morality*. He is the symbol of will, energy and tireless endeavor to overcome all difficulties and challenges. He sets a bright example of determination, courage, and an absolute loyalty to the revolutionary goals and ideology. He is an example of being close to the people, having the confidence in the people, the love for the people and the respect for the people, and his wholehearted dedication to serve the Homeland, the people. He sets an example of being hard working, thrifty, honest and upright, public-spirited and selfless. He is the embodiment of the spirit of tolerance and humanity of Vietnam, the symbol of the noble revolutionary morality, the pure, faithful international spirit, the envoy of peace and friendship among nations.

The noble revolutionary moral qualities of Ho Chi Minh did not just come naturally. It was the result of the entire process of constant self-improvement. Therefore, he always recommended that government officials and Party members should constantly self-improve in morality to become the exemplary revolutionary fighters. He is the embodiment of a simple, pure life, of the love for labor, despising luxury, not having any desire for fame or riches. He dedicated his whole life for a single purpose of “striving for the benefits of our Homeland and for our people’s happiness.”¹

Ho Chi Minh’s morality and style, the unification between ideology and action, between words and deeds, have become the natural *raison d’être*. Each government official, Party member and our people have found in his teachings and his noble moral example the values and norms from which we can learn, train, and so that we

1. *Ibid.*, Vol. 4, p. 272.

can improve ourselves to achieve the cultural values of truth, goodness and beauty (*chân - thiện - mỹ*) in life.

Dear compatriots and colleagues,

Each victory and each step to advance on the path of the Vietnamese revolution is closely associated with President Ho Chi Minh's great merits and the guidance of Ho Chi Minh Thought. In the work of renovation, facing many complex developments of the world situation and domestic difficulties, our Party has been persistent in Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Thought, creatively applied and developed them in our country's realities, and recorded great achievements of historic significance.

From a poor and backward country, Vietnam has risen up to become a developing country with middle income. Our country has never had such fortunes, potentials, international status and prestige as they exist today. We have many more favorable conditions and premises to firmly advance on the path selected by our Party, people and Uncle Ho. The achievements after 35 years of renewal have affirmed that our Party's directions for renewal based on the foundation of Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Thought are appropriate and creative, compatible with the Vietnam's realities and development trends of the era.

The more we are enthusiastic and proud, the more we have to avoid being laid back and complacent with our results and achievements. Our country is still facing many difficulties and challenges. In leadership and management, in the organization of implementation, we still have many limitations and weaknesses, problems not thoroughly resolved, many bottlenecks have yet to be removed. At the same time, there are new requirements and tasks, as new challenges and contradictions and big and complex problems continue to arise.

Hostile forces still look to sabotage our people's revolutionary cause, to slander, incite and divide in an attempt to disintegrate our Party and our system. Internally, the conservativeness, stagnation; local mindset, group interests; the power degeneration, "self-evolution," "self-transformation," corruption, wastefulness, degradation in morality and social responsibilities, and so on, are the internal enemies and are also dangerous, threatening the leadership role and historical mission of the Party, the existence of our system and the fate of our country and people. These difficulties, limitations and shortcomings require that our Party, people and political system must recognize them, and have a higher political determination and make greater efforts to overcome them at all costs.

Deeply imbued with President Ho Chi Minh's last instructions, we must continue to enhance Party building and rectifying and the political system to be pure and strong in politics, ideology, organization and morality. We must improve the Party's leadership capacity, governance and resiliency, and build the socialist law-governed State to be truly "of the people, by the people and for the people." We need to promote the tradition of the flesh and blood relationship between the Party and the people, to rely on the people to build the Party, to strive to promote democracy and the people's rights to ownership of the country, to maintain unity and unification of the Party "as to maintain the apples of our eyes"¹ so that the Party is forever "moral and civilized"² as taught by President Ho Chi Minh, in order to be worthy of the role and mission of leading the revolution and of the confidence and expectation of the people.

1. *Ibid.*, Vol. 15, p. 622.

2. *Ibid.*, Vol. 12, p. 403.

To follow Uncle Ho's guidance on "improving revolutionary morality, sweeping away individualism," we need to be resolute, persistent and active in making the contingent of the Party pure, to prevent and fight corruption and the degeneration of political ideology, morality, lifestyle of the government officials and Party members, the state of "self-evolution," "self-transformation" from within; to continue to accelerate the learning and the practice of Ho Chi Minh Thought, morality and style to become the regular political routine, to become the cultural need of the Party, in the people. Each government official and Party member should seriously implement the responsibility of setting good examples. Especially, those who hold the higher positions, greater titles, particularly those who head the agencies, the units in the Party and in the administration apparatus, need to be exemplary in training and improving their morality, lifestyle, working style so that the masses and the people can follow them as Uncle Ho taught us: "A living example is more valuable than a hundred speeches."¹

We need to continue to deeply grasp the viewpoint of "The country takes the people as the root."² The people are the center and the driving force of the renewal. We need to carry out the principle that, all directions and policies must start from the legitimate and legal aspiration, rights and interests of the people, and to take people's happiness and prosperity as the goal to strive for. It is necessary to first provide proper support for people's livelihoods and their interests.

Uncle Ho taught us: "In the sky, nothing is more precious than the people. In the world, nothing is more powerful than

1. *Ibid.*, Vol. 1, p. 284.

2. *Ibid.*, Vol. 5, p. 501.

people's unity."¹ This is a profound lesson of vital significance when the country is at the historical turning point. Therefore, it is necessary to mobilize our material and spiritual resources in order to continue to have breakthroughs. Recently, with many difficulties of epidemics and natural disasters, we are more deeply aware of the positive nature of our system, of our country's political system, of the strength of our patriotic tradition, of the will of unity and unification of action of the entire Party, people and armed forces, and this has been recognized and highly valued by the world. This fact has affirmed the great value of patriotism, the humane morals, the spirit and will of Vietnam. It is the very important basis to further consolidate the confidence of the people in the Party and the bright prospect of our nation.

Dear compatriots and colleagues,

We are celebrating the 130th birth anniversary of President Ho Chi Minh, right at the time of special significance. The international and domestic situation has not only seen many opportunities and advantages, but also many inter-related difficulties and challenges. This requires our Party, people and armed forces to unite and strive with great determination and efforts, dynamism and creativity to meet our set goals and tasks. First of all, we need to overcome the challenges and negative impacts of COVID-19 pandemic, and to ensure the best of the social security and welfare for the people. At the same time, we need to be proactive and alert to seize the opportunities to strive to effectively implement our socio-economic development tasks of 2020, thus making a contribution to fulfilling the socio-economic development tasks of the 12th tenure

1. *Ibid.*, Vol. 10, p. 453.

and the 2011-2020 period. We need to prepare and organize well the congresses of the Party committee levels and the 13th National Party Congress, to further improve the leadership capacity and resiliency of the Party, and to enhance the flesh and blood relationship between the Party and the people.

Dear compatriots and colleagues,

We pledge to continue to follow the glorious revolutionary path mapped out by President Ho Chi Minh, and to carry out faithfully and remarkably his great cause. We are determined and consistent in the struggle to firmly protect independence, sovereignty, unification and territorial integrity of our Homeland, to build Vietnam into “a prosperous people and a strong, democratic, equitable, and advanced country,” firmly advancing towards socialism, so that our country “will be ever stronger and more beautiful”¹ as our Uncle Ho wished.

Long live the glorious Communist Party of Vietnam!

Long live the Socialist Republic of Vietnam!

President Ho Chi Minh shall live forever in our cause!

1. *Ibid.*, Vol. 15, p. 131.

PRESIDENT HO CHI MINH'S TESTAMENT: SHINING THE PATH FOR VIETNAM'S FUTURE*

Dear compatriots and colleagues,

Today, in the heroic and sentimental autumn in Hanoi, to celebrate the 74th anniversary of the August Revolution and the National Day of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, we are here to solemnly commemorate the 50th anniversary when our dearly beloved President Ho Chi Minh of our Party, nation and people departed to the afterlife and his *Testament* was implemented.

With all our reverences and because we still miss him, in this sacred and meaningful time, we express our boundless gratitude to President Ho Chi Minh - the wise leader, “the hero of national liberation and the great man of culture,” the great teacher of the Vietnamese revolution. Before leaving us, he had bequeathed to our Party, people and armed forces the sacred *Testament*, a historical document of paramount importance, crystalizing the noble ideology, culture, mind, morality and soul of a great man who “has glorified our nation, our people and our Homeland.”

* The speech was delivered on August 30, 2019 at the ceremony to celebrate 50 years of implementing the *Testament* of President Ho Chi Minh and 50 years of his death.

Dear compatriots and colleagues,

President Ho Chi Minh spent much time and dedication to quietly and carefully prepare in detail the *Testament* over four years from 1965 to 1969, amid the anti-U.S. resistance war for national salvation of our armed forces and people, which was raging fiercely, with many hardships and sacrifices. With only a thousand words, extremely short and succinct, his *Testament* has conveyed to our Party, people and armed forces the strong will and determination, the ardent confidence in the great strength of the Vietnamese nation, the strength of justice and truth: “Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom,” and the strength of patriotism and revolutionary heroism of Vietnam.

In the *Testament*, he affirmed: “No matter what difficulties and hardships there might be, our people are certain to win the complete victory. Our Homeland will be surely reunified. Our compatriots of the South and the North will certainly be reunited under the same roof.”¹ This brilliant prediction by President Ho Chi Minh soon became reality, demonstrating the height of his erudite intellect and an extremely abundant and deep practical knowledge, firmly grasping and mastering world’s historical development.

Dear compatriots and colleagues,

President Ho Chi Minh was a remarkable thinker and a gifted organizer. He founded, led and trained our Party. In the *Testament*, “First, about the Party,” he advised most important issues on Party building and rectifying so that our Party would be always a genuine “moral and civilized” Marxist Party, the representative of intellect, conscience and dignity of the Vietnamese nation.

1. Ho Chi Minh (2011), *Complete Collection*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 15, p. 623.

With his intensive and extensive vision, acute and clear-sighted political view, in the *Testament*, President Ho Chi Minh pointed out: “Right after the anti-U.S. resistance war for national salvation of our people has ended in complete victory..., the first thing to do is *to rectify the Party*, encouraging each Party member, each youth union member, each Party unit strive their hardest to fulfill the tasks assigned by the Party and to serve the people wholeheartedly. Having done that, however great and hard the work is, we will also be certainly victorious.”¹

In the *Testament*, he advised, “*Unity* is an extremely precious tradition of our Party and people.”² Unity creates strength and it is the root of all successes. Because of unity, “since its establishment, our Party has united the organization and led our people to struggle enthusiastically to win one victory after another.”³ To build and consolidate our national unity, first of all, there must be unity and unification within the entire Party. The unity within the Party is the premise and the center of our national unity. National unity is the basis to promote and combine national strength with international opportunities, the premise of the victory in our cause of national liberation and reunification, and building new society.

Unity also contributes to preventing the danger of degeneration of the Party in power. Therefore, in the *Testament*, President Ho Chi Minh asked each government official and Party member of Party committees at various levels and Party organizations from the Central Committee to Party units to “maintain the unity and unanimity of the Party as to maintain

1. *Ibid.*, Vol. 15, p. 616.

2. *Ibid.*, Vol. 15, p. 622.

3. *Ibid.*, Vol. 15, p. 611.

the apples of our eyes;¹ to practice self-criticism and criticism regularly and seriously, with love and logic, and “in fellowship with mutual affection.” At the same time, “widespread democracy” must be heightened and practiced in the leadership and governance of the Party so as to rally the revolutionary force, promote the intellect, potential and creativity of government officials and Party members and the people of all strata.

Right from the preparation for the establishment of the Party until he passed away, President Ho Chi Minh's primary concern was to build the Party's morality. In the *Testament*, he recommended: “Our Party is the party in power. Each Party member and government official must be deeply imbued with *the revolutionary morality*, must truly be hard working, thrifty, honest and upright, public-spirited and selfless. The Party must be maintained to be truly pure so as to be worthy of being the leader, the truly loyal servant of the people.”² His instructions were both a profound review in theory and a matter of principle to firmly maintain and improve the Party's leadership role, the resiliency of the Party organization, of the contingent of government officials and Party members, creating the strength of rallying the forces, consolidating and raising the confidence of the masses of the people in the Party and the revolution.

Dear compatriots and colleagues,

President Ho Chi Minh dedicated his whole life to the noble goal of independence and freedom of our Homeland, the prosperity and happiness of our people and the noble humane values of humanity.

1. *Ibid.*, Vol. 15, p. 611.

2. *Ibid.*, Vol. 15, pp. 611-612.

In Ho Chi Minh Thought, the prominent and thorough point is the ideology of national liberation together with social liberation and human liberation, ushering in new, great prospects for human and social development.

In the *Testament*, he strongly emphasized that “First is the work regarding *the people*.”¹ He pointed out that right after the anti-U.S. resistance war for national salvation was victorious, our Party, people and armed forces had to strive hard and quickly heal the war wounds, paid attention to social policy and caring for those who contributed to our revolutionary cause, building our country to be “stronger and more beautiful.” He believed that it was “an enormous struggle” and “a big, complex and difficult but also very glorious task.” Therefore, the Party had to mobilize all the intellect and strength of the entire people, “must have really effective *plans* for economic and cultural development in order to constantly *improve people’s life*,”² and at the same time, “must be ready with clear and detailed plans to avoid losing control, shortcomings and mistakes.”³

The *Testament* shows the vision, richly imbued and filled with humane spirit of President Ho Chi Minh on human liberation and development. He paid special attention to each group, particularly the young generation. He advised: “Nurturing future revolutionary generations is of great importance and necessity.”⁴ This is the care for the complete development of the Vietnamese people, with all the qualities of truth, goodness and beauty, with virtues and talents. It begins with building human dignity, nurturing virtues, and enriching pure and noble souls of the Vietnamese people. Poet To Huu wrote

1. *Ibid.*, Vol. 15, p. 616.

2. *Ibid.*, Vol. 15, p. 622.

3. *Ibid.*, Vol. 15, p. 616.

4. *Ibid.*, Vol. 15, p. 622.

about a tolerant, humane Ho Chi Minh who had devoted his complete love to the people of all walks of life and the whole humankind as: *"Oh, my Uncle, how immense your heart is,/It embraces the whole country and all human beings!"*

President Ho Chi Minh is not only an exemplary Vietnamese communist, but also a pure and faithful international communist fighter, the great, shining and remarkable symbol of the national liberation movement, of national unity and international solidarity, of peace and friendship among nations. In the *Testament*, on international issues, President Ho Chi Minh expressed a great vision, a very humane, profound and delicate cultural outlook. He took great interest in consolidating the unity in the international communists and workers' movements and tried his best to promote the mutual understanding and trust, peace and friendship among nations. It is the outlook and virtue of "a great man of culture." His thought, morality and style embody the aspirations of peoples in the affirmation of their cultural identities and the promotion of mutual understanding.

Dear compatriots, colleagues,

President Ho Chi Minh lived a glorious life filled with hardships and sacrifices, an extremely noble, rich, pure and beautiful life. His whole life was devoted to his country and people. He strived hard to serve his Homeland and people. He is the symbol and a radiant example of revolutionary morality of "hard work, thrift, honesty, uprightness; public spirit and selflessness." Ho Chi Minh Thought, morality and style have made the Ho Chi Minh's cause and era - the most brilliant and glorious era in the history of our nation.

In the final words of the *Testament*, he mentioned his "personal affairs." Even it was about his own affairs, it was still with many

concerns, thinking and actions for the country and the people. This shows that in his whole life, he had “only a wish, a burning wish, to achieve complete independence for our Homeland and freedom for our people so that our compatriots can all be properly fed, clothed and educated.”¹ Bidding farewell to us, he had nothing for himself, but left the most profound and greatest things for the people and the country. He only regretted that he “could not be able to serve the people any longer, any more.” This is Ho Chi Minh’s political ideology, moral culture and humanism.

Dear compatriots and colleagues,

In the past fifty years, Ho Chi Minh Thought and his *Testament* have always accompanied our nation, shone and led our Party, people and armed forces to be always determined and loyal to the revolutionary cause and ideals to which he dedicated and sacrificed his whole life, and brought the victorious banner of President Ho Chi Minh towards the end.

Under our Party’s leadership, promoting the strength of the national unity, energy and will of the entire nation, and combining national strength with international opportunities, our people and armed forces won a great victory in the anti-U.S. resistance war for national salvation, completely liberated the South, reunified the country, thus “fulfilling his wish.”

In the building and defending of our socialist Homeland, especially through over 30 years of the renewal of the country, thanks to the promotion of the strength of the whole country, the non-stop efforts and unanimity by government officials, Party members and people of all strata, our country has recorded great achievements of historic significance.

1. *Ibid.*, Vol. 15, p. 627.

The achievements of the renewal have created favorable conditions for the country to firmly advance on the path to build socialism and defend our socialist Homeland of Vietnam. This proved our Party's leadership capacity, governance and political competence, and our people's great strength and creativity. We can be proud and confident to report to Uncle Ho that under the Party's leadership, our people have built our country "ten times greater and more beautiful" as he wished. This further strengthens our confidence in the victory of the renewal and in the successful building of socialism.

Dear compatriots and colleagues,

To implement President Ho Chi Minh's *Testament*, our Party has always renewed and improved itself in order to maintain its leadership role, improve its governance and resiliency to take our revolutionary cause to move forward. In the past fifty years, our Party has striven hard to maintain and strengthen the Party's unity and unanimity, and to enhance the Party's unity as the core for the people's national unity; and

- "To practice widespread and regular democracy and to carry on seriously self-criticism and criticism;"
- To enhance and consolidate the flesh and blood relationship between the Party and the people;
- To strive hard to strengthen and improve the leadership capacity and resiliency of all-level Party committees, Party organizations and the contingent of government officials and Party members; and
- To uphold the strict discipline and self-consciousness.

In the past years, with high determination, great efforts, resoluteness, persistent and concerted actions, we have brought

about positive changes and visible results in Party building and rectifying, in building the socialist law-governed State of Vietnam, and Vietnam Fatherland Front and organizations of the political system. Through that, we have made an important contribution to consolidating and enhancing the confidence of the people in the Party.

We can affirm that in the process of implementing President Ho Chi Minh's teaching in the *Testament*, our Party has proved the courage, intellect, experience, prestige and capacities of leading the State and society, that the Party is always conscious of its mission and heavy responsibilities for the people and the destiny of the nation. After 50 years of implementing the *Testament*, we have strong evidence to affirm that in order to effectively build and rectify the Party, to prevent the degenerative manifestations of political ideology, morality, lifestyles, "self-evolution," "self-transformation" from within, we must deeply grasp and practice Ho Chi Minh Thought, morality and style.

To implement the *Testament* of President Ho Chi Minh, over the past fifty years, our Party, people and armed forces have deeply grasped and promoted his pure and faithful international spirit on the basis of ensuring national interests, firmly maintaining independence, sovereignty, for peace, friendship, cooperation and development, giving solid support to the communists and workers' parties and progressive movements in the struggle for the common goals of the era; enhancing the understanding, friendship and cooperation between the Vietnamese people and the peoples of the world's countries. With open foreign relations, policy of multilateralization and diversification, Vietnam is a friend, a reliable partner, a responsible member in the international community,

making an important contribution to the cause of peace, national independence, democracy and social progress in the world.

Fifty years of implementing the *Testament* is an important historical stage in the revolutionary cause of Vietnam led by the Party, affirming that in any situation, our Party, people and armed forces shall unite with millions of people and be persistent on the path taken by the Party, people and President Ho Chi Minh.

Fifty years of implementing the *Testament* of President Ho Chi Minh have left us extremely precious historical lessons. It is the lesson of firmly maintaining the banner of national independence and socialism. It is the lesson of revolutionary cause that belongs to the people, by the people and for the people. It is the lesson of constantly consolidating and enhancing unity: the unity of the entire Party, the unity of the entire people, the national unity and international unity. It is the lesson of combining national strength with international opportunities, and internal strength with international strength. It is the lesson that effective leadership of the Party is the primary factor that decides the victory of the Vietnamese revolution.

Dear compatriots and colleagues,

At present, our Party, people and armed forces are striving to carry out successfully the Resolution of the 12th Party Congress. We are making active preparation for the required works so as to organize the all-level Party congresses towards the 13th National Party Congress.

We are proud of all what we have achieved. However, we cannot help but feel concerned about the work not yet done, or if any, not yet complete. Many shortcomings, weaknesses, difficulties and challenges are obstructing the process of the renewal and

national construction. If we are not determined and persistent to prevent and push back them, our Homeland's destiny, the system's survival and the Party's leadership role will be threatened. This demands us to strive harder to promote our strengths and overcome our weaknesses. We cannot be complacent and thus not in control, cannot be satisfied with our achievement, or be discouraged and pessimistic when facing challenges and difficulties.

Well aware of its historical role and mission, our Party has deeply grasped the behests of President Ho Chi Minh. More than ever, we need to promote the fine tradition and characteristics of our Party, with high political determination and persistence in the struggle against the degeneration of political ideology, morality, lifestyle, the manifestations of "self-evolution," "self-transformation" from within. We need to build the Party to be truly pure and strong, improve the leadership capacity and resiliency of Party organizations and Party members to be worthy of being the vanguard, the Party in power, on par with the task.

Steeped in the motto of President Ho Chi Minh: "Firm in goals, flexible in tactics," we will take advantage of the best opportunities and timely overcome dangers, difficulties and challenges, successfully carrying out the renewal cause to build a peaceful, reunified, independent, democratic, prosperous and strong Vietnam as he wished.

Our Party, people and armed forces pledge to inherit loyally and exceptionally the great cause of President Ho Chi Minh, to continue to implement his noble ideology; to be resolute and persistent in the struggle to firmly protect the independence, sovereignty, unification and territorial integrity of the Homeland; and to build Vietnam to become a prosperous people and a strong, democratic, equitable, and advanced country. We pledge to

“maintain the unity and unanimity of the Party as to maintain the apples of our eyes,” to continue to build and rectify the Party to be purer and stronger and act as the center of the unity of the people; and to continue to learn and practice his thought, morality and style.

Dear compatriots and colleagues,

President Ho Chi Minh shall live forever in our Homeland and in our people's heart. His *Testament* which illuminates our national values and those of our era, richly imbued with Ho Chi Minh's culture and humanity, will be forever the banner that rallies the strength of the entire nation, which has strengthened and been a great source of energy to our Party, nation and people in the building and defense of our immensely beloved Vietnamese Homeland.

Long live the Socialist Republic of Vietnam!

Long live the Communist Party of Vietnam!

Our great President Ho Chi Minh shall live forever in our cause!

THE 13TH NATIONAL PARTY CONGRESS: MOVING OUR COUNTRY TO A HIGHER STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT*

For nearly a century - 90 years since the establishment of the Party - each time when the National Party Congress is organized, it is regarded as an important event of historic significance for our nation, marking a new development of the country. The 13th National Party Congress will take place at a time in the global and regional context with the very fast, complex, unpredictable developments. Our country is facing many advantages and opportunities, difficulties and challenges with many new issues. Our government officials, Party members and people have placed their hopes on the effective and strong policy decisions of the Party.

With the motto of *Unity - Democracy - Discipline - Creativity - Development*, the Congress not only reviews the implementation of the Resolution of the 12th Party Congress, but also looks back at 35 years of implementing the renewal, 30 years of implementing *the 1991*

* The article was written on August 31, 2020 on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the August Revolution (August 19) and National Day (September 2) and of the preparation for the congresses of Party committees at the Central level.

Political Platform, 10 years of implementing *the Political Platform (amended and revised in 2011)*, and *the 2011-2020 Strategy on Socio-Economic Development*. It sets out the direction and tasks for the 2021-2026 tenure, determines the goals and directions to the year 2030 (the year to commemorate the centennial of the Party's founding) and the vision of the national development to the year 2045 (the year to commemorate the centennial of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, now the Socialist Republic of Vietnam). Therefore, this is also certainly an important milestone for the development of our Party, nation and people. It has a significance of giving future directions to accelerate the cause of renewal, international integration and national development comprehensively and simultaneously.

Drafting the documents to be submitted to the Congress this time has been prepared in a very elaborate, methodical and careful manner; deeply grasping the principle of effectively combining between *theory* and *practice*, between *commitment* and *renovation*, between *tradition* and *modernization*; on the basis of promoting democracy to the maximum, listening to opinions of scientists, government officials, Party members and people; selecting, refining and incorporating the valuable opinions; and solidifying the mind and creativity of the entire Party, people and armed forces. *The Political Report* is the primary document of the Congress, together with *the Review Report on the implementation of the 2011-2020 Strategy of the Socio-Economic Development, the Building of the 2021-2030 Ten-year Socio-Economic Development Strategy; the Assessment Report on the Implementation of the 2016-2020 Five-year Socio-Economic Development Tasks and the Direction and Task of the 2021-2025 Five-year Socio-Economic Development; and the Summary Report on Party Building and the Implementation of the Party Statutes*.

The documents submitted to the Congress has expressed the great viewpoints, guidelines and directions, showed the Party's strategic mindset and vision, the nation's aspiration for development and the political determination of the entire Party, people and armed forces in the construction and firm defense of the Homeland, a prosperous people, and a strong, democratic, equitable, and advanced socialist Vietnam. The Party congresses at the grassroots level and above have recently organized the adequate discussions on the draft documents of the Congress.

I am told that the contributed opinions are rich, diverse and multidimensional, under the different angles and the different ways of approaching. The Document Sub-committees have summarized, processed, added and improved the reports. At the congresses of the Party committees under the Central Committee and the National Party Congress, the delegates and the delegations to the Party Congress will surely continue to participate in the discussions. I will not present again the content of each report, but I will touch upon general issues to summarize and mention important issues for soliciting further opinions of the Congress.

I- A look back at the 12th Party Congress tenure, we are delighted to see that our Party, people and armed forces have promoted the spirit of unity, expressed the courage, intellect and creative efforts to overcome many difficulties and challenges, successfully achieved the targets and completed the key tasks, *recording very important achievements*. Our country continues to have rapid and *relatively comprehensive development*, with positive changes and many outstanding imprints:

- In the declining global economic and trade context, and then the fall into the serious crisis due to the impacts of COVID-19

pandemic, our country's economy has still maintained the relatively high average growth rate (about 6%), one of the fastest economic growth rates in the region and the world. The quality of growth has been improved, macro-economy remains relatively firm, the big balances of the economy have been fundamentally ensured, and the discipline of finance - State budget has been enhanced. Social investment, the capacities of production and business have been vigorously increased. The potential, scope and competitiveness of the economy continue to be raised further. The society is basically stable, the people's life has been improved every day (the rate of poor households declined from 58% in 1993, 9.88% in 2016, to below 3% in 2020). The areas of social security, health care, education and training, science and technology, environmental protection, cultural development, the building of Vietnamese people and so on have seen many positive changes, in which some aspects are very prominent.

- Special attention has been paid to building and rectifying the Party and the political system. It has been carried out comprehensively in all aspects of politics, ideology, morality, organization and personnel work, creating outstanding imprints. The struggle to prevent and combat against corruption, negative practices and wastefulness has had strong, positive changes. It has been deployed resolutely, methodically, intensively with certain breakthroughs and many concrete, clear and positive results. The state of corruption, negative practices and degeneration in political ideology, morality, lifestyle, "self-evolution," and "self-transformation" in the Party and in the political system has step by step been kept under control. Many bribery and corruption cases, particularly the large-scale, serious cases, have been discovered, and they are investigated, prosecuted and tried strictly

with “no forbidden zones, no exceptions,” thus creating strong deterrents, warnings. They are welcomed and strongly supported by government officials, Party members and people.

- In face of complex developments in the world and the region, and hostile forces’ increased attempts of sabotage, our country continues to strengthen national defense and security. Political security, social order and safety have been firmly maintained. Activities of foreign relations and international integration have been enhanced, constantly expanded and gone into the depth, making a contribution to consolidating the environment of peace and stability for development. Our country’s independence, sovereignty, the right to sovereignty, unification, territorial integrity and the strategic interests have been resolutely and consistently maintained. Vietnam’s prestige and status in the international arena have constantly risen.

- Especially, in 2020, thanks to strong and effective leadership of the Party and the State; resolute and timely guidance and administration of the Government; simultaneous and active participation of the political system; positive response and strong support of the people nationwide and the Vietnamese overseas, we have basically controlled and prevented the spread of COVID-19 pandemic in the community, minimized the losses and damage caused by the pandemic, ensured social security and social welfare for the people. We have step by step restored production and business, made great efforts to fulfill at the highest level the tasks of socio-economic development in 2020 and in the 2016-2020 stage. Vietnam has become the bright spot in controlling and preventing successfully the COVID-19 pandemic, which is recognized and highly valued by the world, contributing to raising the people’s confidence in the Party, the State and the socialist system.

The achievements recorded in the past five years are a result of both internal and external reasons, of which the most important is the effective leadership and guidance of the Party's Central Committee, the Political Bureau, the Secretariat and the Party committees at various levels in deploying the implementation of the Resolution of the 12th Party Congress, and in timely and effectively resolving many problems arisen in the realities. It is a result of strong and effective governance and administration of the government from the Central to local levels; efforts to renew the content and method of operation of the National Assembly; the unity, unification and concerted coordination of the political system; the promotion of the patriotic tradition and the strength of national unity; the great efforts of the contingent of government officials and Party members; the active, creative and responsible working spirit of the people; and the confidence and support of the international community.

These achievements are the results of our solidified creativity. They are the results of the whole process of striving persistently and continuously through many tenures of our Party, people and armed forces. They have contributed to creating the great achievements of historic significance of our country. I have many times said that with all of the modesty, we are still able to affirm that our country has never enjoyed such fortunes, potentials, international status and prestige as they exist today. From a small, poor and less-developed country, with almost no name on the world map, today Vietnam has striven to become a country with a population size of nearly 100 million, a middle-income country with relations in almost all countries around the world and participation in almost all international organizations, and a reliable and responsible member and partner of the international community.

Having said that, we can have more confidence, enthusiasm and pride to further affirm that our path forward is the right one and compatible with the laws of nature, Vietnam's reality and development trends of the era, that our Party's direction is appropriate and creative and its leadership is effective, which was the primary reason for all successes of our revolutionary cause. The Political Platform of the Party continues to be the banner of ideology and theory to lead our nation to firmly enhance the renewal cause, and to be the foundation for our Party to further improve the direction for building and defending our Homeland in the new period.

The five years of implementing the Resolution of the 12th Party Congress are the rich and vivid realities for us to *continue to affirm, add and further deepen the lessons of experience withdrawn from the previous tenures.*

First, the task of Party building and rectifying (which involves building organizations and building good people) must be comprehensively, synchronously and regularly deployed in ideology, politics, morality, organization and personnel. We must be consistent and firm in the Party's ideology along with the building and streamlining of the apparatus organization of the Party and the political system with efficient and effective operation. Deeply imbued with the behests of President Ho Chi Minh: "Officials are the root of all work,"¹ "Success or failure of all work depends on the competence of officials."²

Therefore, the personnel work needs a breakthrough point, as it is the "key" of the "key" task affecting the vitality of the Party,

1. Ho Chi Minh (2011), *Complete Collection*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 5, p. 309.

2. *Ibid.*, Vol. 5, p. 280.

the destiny of the system, and the rapid and sustainable development of the country. It is necessary to place great importance on building and purifying the contingent of officials, particularly the building of strategic-level officials who are sufficiently qualified, capable and respectable on par with the tasks, and to foster the responsibility of government officials and Party members in setting good examples. The higher the position, the better the example that must be set.

Second, in the leadership, administration and organization of the implementation, it is necessary to have high determination, great efforts, dynamism and creativity, and:

- To pay attention to creating breakthroughs for development;
- To place importance on the quality and effectiveness of the work and uphold the responsibility of the heads of organizations;
- To overcome weaknesses and delays in the leadership, administration and organization of the implementation of directions and policies.

- To firmly maintain the discipline in organizing the implementation of the law and the policy and in executing the public services; and

- To protect the government officials and Party members with high resiliency and exemplary role in carrying out the principles and disciplines of the Party and the laws of the State, those who dare to innovate, dare to think, dare to speak, dare to do, dare to bear responsibility, dare to cope with difficulties and challenges and are determined in their action.

Third, in deploying the implementation of the tasks, we need to place importance on the synchrony and comprehensiveness in order to meet urgent, immediate targets and completely settle the weaknesses, bottlenecks and backlogs. At the same time, we need to

simultaneously build the institution of development to implement the long-term, fundamental and sustainable goals of the country in the direction of ensuring the harmony:

- Between economic renewal and political, cultural and social renewal;
- Between economic growth and cultural and human development, social progress and equity, satisfactorily resolving social issues and environmental and natural resource protection;
- Between socio-economic development with ensured national defense and security; and
- Between independence, autonomy with the enhancement of foreign relations and international integration, with the importance placed on the role of education and training, science and technology in the new situation.

Fourth, in ensuring national defense, security and foreign relations, we need to be proactive in studying, grasping and accurately forecasting the situation, and to be proactive with plans and avoid surprises; and

- To properly and effectively handle the relationship with major powers, strategic partners, long-established friendly countries and neighboring countries;
- To pay attention to raising the prestige and image of the country; and
- To be extremely vigilant at the vile and sinister plots and ploys of hostile forces, the reactionaries and the political opportunists who have always frantically sabotaged our Party, State and people, particularly in the political and ideological areas.

Fifth, in all works of the Party and the State, we must be always determined that “the people are the roots.” We must have true

confidence, respect and promotion of the people's right to ownership of the country, and be consistent in implementing the principle: "the people know, the people discuss, the people do, the people check, the people supervise and the people benefit." People are the center, the subject of the renewal work; all directions and policies have to really come from the legitimate aspiration, rights and interests of the people. The Party must take sufficient and deep care of the life and interests of the people; to build the flesh and blood relationship with the people; to rely on the people to build the Party, taking the results of the work, the satisfaction and confidence of the people as the important criteria to judge the quality of the apparatus organization and the quality of government officials and Party members. To consolidate the confidence of the people in the Party, we need to resolutely and actively purify the contingent of the Party's officials, to overcome the phenomena of the degeneration of qualities and lifestyle of a part of government officials and Party members, to build and consolidate the Party organizations to be truly pure and strong, thus making the Party become the true leader and loyal servant of the people.

These precious lessons serve as the important basis for the Party to continue to apply and promote them in leadership and guidance, helping us to strengthen courage and self-confidence facing many new, heavier difficulties and challenges due to the impacts of COVID-19 pandemic and the global economic recession when entering the 13th Party Congress tenure.

II- On the directions and tasks of the 13th Party Congress tenure and the next stage: It is foreseen that in the coming years, the international and regional context will continue to have complex, rapid and unpredictable changes. Under the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the world has fallen into a serious crisis in

various aspects, including the health care, economy, society and governance. Strategic competition, economic competition, and trade wars continue to happen fiercely. The Fourth Industrial Revolution has developed fast, creating the breakthroughs in many fields and also creating opportunities and challenges to all countries. The countries have made great efforts to adjust their strategies and modes of development in order to adapt to the new situation. The Asia-Pacific region has an increasingly important strategic position. In Southeast Asia, the security environment, especially the state of sovereignty dispute in the East Sea, continues to develop complicatedly. Climate change, natural disasters, epidemic and other non-traditional security problems have had strong impacts in various aspects, seriously threatening the stable and sustainable development of the world, the region and our country.

In the meantime, although we have made many proud achievements, *our country must still face many difficulties and challenges*. Economic growth has yet to match our potential. After the first four years of the tenure, the growth was continuously on the rise, but in 2020 it had sharply decreased, still possibly 3% only. The quality of growth was low and is facing many negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The autonomy and resistance of the economy was yet to be high. The State-run economy, particularly the State-owned enterprises, operates less effectively and is facing many difficulties and bottlenecks. The domestic private economy and foreign investment economy are developing fast, but not yet sustainably. The State leadership and management of economy and society, guarantee of political security, social order and safety, the preservation of resources and environment still have many inadequacies, causing social pressures.

The struggle to protect national sovereignty and territorial integrity is still complex. Historical values and cultural tradition of the nation and the Vietnamese people are yet to be fully promoted. The capacities to build the institution remain limited; the quality of law and policy is still low. The capabilities and method of leadership and resiliency of many Party organizations and Party members are yet to be on par with their tasks. The system of checks and balances in the Party and the State is yet to be sufficient and synchronous; their efficiency and effectiveness are yet to be high.

These shortcomings, difficulties and limitations demand *our Party, people and the whole political system of our country to have higher determination, greater efforts and more resolute action so as to be able to overcome the obstacles at all costs. To continue to accelerate the renewal, our Party has to be strong, firmly maintain our revolutionary and scientific nature, the close connection to the people so as to be loved and trusted by the people to surmount all difficulties and challenges, to lead the fulfillment of the goal of building and defending our Homeland of socialist Vietnam.*

The all-guiding ideology of our Party, people and armed forces is to be consistent and to be creatively applied and developed in Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Thought, consistent with the goals of national independence and socialism, with Party's direction of renewal to build and defend our Homeland of socialist Vietnam. This is the issue of vital significance to our system and the Party's firm foundation, and we must not waver or hesitate.

We need to grasp firmly and effectively handle the relationship between commitment and renovation, using creative application. If we are "committed" mechanically, it can lead to dogmatism, rigidity and conservatism. On the other hand, if we are uncommitted and

unprincipled in our “renovation,” we can fall into revisionism, deviation and “color change.” Therefore, we need to properly understand and apply the dialectical method of Marxism-Leninism: *Commitment must be closely connected to creativity, and creativity must be based on commitment in conformity with realities and with the requirements of renewal, integration and development of the country.*

The strategic ideology of the overall development of our country in the future is rapid and sustainable development, ensuring the close connection and simultaneous deployment of the tasks, in which socio-economic development is the centerpiece; Party building is the key; cultural development is the society’s spiritual foundation; the guarantee of national defense and security is vital and of permanent importance.

Dynamism and resources for national development in the new era is to strongly foster the patriotic spirit, the national self-reliant will, to promote the synergy of the political system, the culture, and the Vietnamese people; to combine national strength with international opportunities. This is the precious tradition of our nation which has been creatively applied by the Party all through its 90 years of leading the people in the struggle for national independence, reunification and socialist construction. It is of extremely important significance when the country is at a historical turning point. Therefore, we need to mobilize our great material and spiritual resources to continue to have breakthroughs and advance forwards. The fact that we have prevented and controlled COVID-19 pandemic in recent times is an example to prove eloquently and to affirm the greatness of our system, the unity, patriotism, the spirit of humaneness and the undaunted will of our people. We must not be complacent, subjective and neglectful. The more difficulties and challenges we are in, the higher these values and traditions must be promoted and grow.

The decisive element for the success of building, developing and defending our country is the enhancement of Party building and rectifying and the Party's leadership capacity, governance and resiliency; the building of the State and the political system to be pure and strong, streamlined, efficient and effective in operation; the building of the contingent of government officials and Party members, particularly the contingent of strategic-level officials sufficiently qualified, capable and respectable, on par with their tasks, in close connection with the people. With such a genuine, pure, strong revolutionary party having the leading abilities, mind, experience and prestige as our Party, wholeheartedly loved, trusted and supported by the people, we will have the huge strength to overcome all difficulties and challenges, and no forces can be able to prevent our nation from advancing forwards and recording new miraculous achievements in building and developing our country to be ever stronger and more beautiful as Uncle Ho wished.

Promoting the will and strength of the national unity, our upcoming Congress needs to have more far-sighted vision to the mid-21st century: *To strive for our country to become a socialist-oriented developed country, to work out the specific goals and tasks to be fulfilled in each stage; to express clearly the inheritance and development, the continuity and perfection in the process of socialist construction in our country; to be the heart, the mind and the confidence, "the Party's will and the people's heart" combined with the wishes, aspirations and determination to advance forwards to a bright future of the country and the people.*

The Political Report to be submitted to the Congress has put forth the overall goals: To improve the leadership capacity, governance, and resiliency of the Party; to build the Party and the political system to be comprehensively pure and strong; to consolidate

the people's confidence in the Party, the State and the socialist system; to promote the creativeness, will, aspiration for development and the strength of national unity combined with international opportunities; to enhance comprehensively and simultaneously the renewal, industrialization and modernization, to develop the country rapidly and sustainably; to strongly defend our Homeland, to firmly maintain the environment of peace and stability; and *to strive for Vietnam to become a socialist-oriented developed country by the mid-21st century.*

In the principle of ensuring the scientific nature, feasibility and realities; inheritance and addition in conformity with the changes in each development stage of the country; at the same time, to make references to the experience of other countries and the common development standards of the world, we have determined *the specific goals* in the direction of the important development milestones of our country:

- *By 2025:* To become a developing country with an industry moving toward modernity and surpassing the lower middle-income level.

- *By 2030, upon celebration of the Party's centennial:* To become a developing country with a modern industry and an upper middle-income level.

- *By 2045, which marks the centennial of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, now the Socialist Republic of Vietnam:* To become a developed country with a high-income status.

The overall goals and the specific goals mapped out by the Congress are the important basis to determine the orientations, tasks and solutions for building, developing and defending our country; to ensure the synchrony and feasibility, to meet the long-term requirements and have important points and strategic breakthroughs

that need priority to deploy the implementation; to create the unification from awareness to actions of our Party, people and armed forces in the stage from now to the mid-21st century. Specifically,

First, we need to continue to vigorously renew our mindset, to simultaneously build and improve the institution of sustainable development of economy, politics, culture, society, environmental protection and so on, explore all potentials and resources, creating new motive force for the rapid and sustainable development of the country. First of all, we need to focus on improving comprehensively and simultaneously the institution of socialist-oriented market economy on the basis of unifying consciousness that this is the overall economic model of our country in the transitional period to advance towards socialism. We need to attach importance to building and improving the institutions and policies to settle effectively and harmoniously the relationship between the State, market and society. Especially, we need to create the real breakthrough in institutions so as to settle the practical issues in a very appropriate and specific manner such as:

- To mobilize, manage and use effectively the resources for development, overcome the state of corruption, wastefulness and negative practices in management and use of land, natural resources, public assets;

- To accumulate and concentrate land for the development of high-tech agriculture; to develop simultaneously and create the connection between the economic subjects and the forms of production and business organizations;

- To renew and raise the effectiveness of operation of the State-owned economy and the State-run enterprises;

- To encourage and create favorable conditions for the private economy to develop an important motive force of the economy; and

- To remove the state of discrepancy, contradiction, overlapping in building and enforcing the laws, strategies, schemes obstructing the development and operation of the full-fledged and modern market economy with international integration.

Second, we need to strongly renovate the growth model, to restructure the economy, to accelerate industrialization and modernization, to improve the growth quality, labor productivity and competitiveness of the economy on the basis of awareness that this is the fundamental, important task, of decisive significance for the implementation of the goal of fast and sustainable development of the country, and

- To create the fundamental change of the economy to the growth model on the basis of using effectively the resources, the scientific and technological advances and innovation, to promote the potential and advantages of the sectors, areas, localities and the whole country;

- To effectuate breakthroughs in building modern and concerted infrastructure so as to lay the foundation to promote development of *new branches, new areas, particularly the digital economy, digital society and digital government*;

- To build a strong national industry; to develop the agriculture with large-scale commodity production with the high-tech application; to strongly develop the service sector based on the foundation of digital economy and application of advanced scientific and technological achievements;

- To implement consistently the guidelines that science and technology are the top national policy, and the most important motive force to develop the modern productive force, to renew the growth model, to improve productivity, quality, effectiveness and competitiveness of the economy; and

- To make vigorous breakthroughs in developing human resources, particularly high-quality human resources through fundamental, comprehensive and simultaneous changes in education and training, in which importance is placed on building synchronously the institution and policy, to renew simultaneously the objective, content, program, and method of education and training in the direction of modernity and international integration, to build a healthy educational environment, and to resolutely abolish perfunctory achievements and strictly handle the negative practices in education and training.

Third, we need to properly and effectively implement the management of sustainable social development, and to harmoniously resolve relations of interests in society, and

- To effectively handle the relationship between the practice of democracy and the enhancement of legislature to ensure social order;

- To ensure social progress and equity and sustainability in policies on population and development, and social policy, particularly social welfare, social security and human security, towards stable jobs, developing a comprehensive social security system, advancing toward universal coverage through reform, with a multi-layered, sustainable social insurance system with benefits based on contribution; and

- To build and promote cultural values and strength of the Vietnamese people; to improve and deploy the building of national value system, cultural value system and human standards in connection to the promotion of will and aspiration for development and the strength of Vietnamese people in the new period; to implement breakthroughs, strong solutions in order to effectively prevent the decline in morality and lifestyle, to push back social evils and negative practices.

Fourth, we need to deploy simultaneously, creatively and effectively foreign relations activities; to build modern diplomacy based on national interests, taking the people and enterprises as the center for services; to be proactive and active in intensive and extensive international integration, and

- To be resolute and persistent in firmly protecting independence, sovereignty, the right to sovereignty, unification and territorial integrity of our Homeland and to protect the Party, the State, the people and our socialist system;

- To build armed forces to be the revolutionary, regular, elite and gradually modernized ones; and

- To be proactive to prevent the dangers of war and conflicts early and from afar; to timely discover and handle adversary elements, particularly those who can cause sudden changes; and to struggle to foil the plots and activities of hostile forces.

Fifth, we need to enhance the building and rectification of the Party, the State and the political system to be pure, strong, streamlined, efficient and effective in operation, and

- To enhance the protection of the Party's ideological foundation, to resolutely and regularly fight, criticize, refute the wrong, hostile viewpoints; to struggle, prevent and push back the degeneration of political ideology, morality, lifestyle, the manifestations of "self-evolution," "self-transformation" from within;

- To resolutely and persistently fight against and prevent corruption, wastefulness and negative practices with a higher determination, stronger, fiercer and more effective action with "no forbidden zones, no exceptions;"

- To continue to focus on building the contingent of government officials of various levels, particularly strategic-level

officials who are sufficiently qualified, capable and respectable on par with their tasks;

- To uphold the awareness in nurturing and training morality and responsibilities to set good examples of government officials and Party members; the higher positions they have, the better examples they have to set;

- To combine the enhancement of discipline, respect for the law, building the Party with strict discipline, promoting human dignity and revolutionary morality so as to effectively fight against individualism;

- To effectively implement the stipulations on checks and balances in personnel work, against any actions of nepotism and bribery;

- To handle strictly and simultaneously by both the Party discipline, the administrative discipline and the law for those who commit violations; and

- To vigorously renew, enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of inspection, supervision, discipline of Party in the direction of close and concerted coordination between the agencies of inspection, auditing, investigation, prosecution, trial and the State management agencies, the Fatherland Front and socio-political organizations.

The process of 35 years of implementing the renewal work, 30 years of implementing the Platform, in which 10 years of implementing *the Platform (amended and revised in 2011)*, the *2011-2020 Socio-Economic Development Strategy* and 5 years of implementing the Resolution of the 12th Party Congress shows that it is necessary to be fully aware, to continue to complement, develop and improve the quality and effectiveness of *settling the major relations in terms of ideology and theory*, to make policy decisions to

remove the barriers, problems, continue to develop the country fast and sustainably, *especially importance should be attached to better handle the relations: between renewal, stability and development; between the economic renewal and the political renewal; between compliance with the market law and ensured socialist orientation; between the development of productive forces and the gradual improvement of socialist relations of production; between the State, the market and the society; between the economic growth and the cultural development, social progress and equity, and environmental protection; between the building and the protection of socialist Homeland; between independence, autonomy and international integration; between the Party's leadership, the State's governance and the People's ownership of the country; between the practice of democracy and enhanced legislature and ensured social order.* These are *the major relations*, reflecting the dialectical laws, the core theoretical issues on the direction of renewal in our country. It requires that our Party, people and armed forces to be well aware of them, to thoroughly grasp them and effectively carry them out.

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The 13th Party Congress is approaching soon. The work is heavy while the time is running short. The Party committee levels, colleagues and members of the Party's Central Committee need to further uphold their responsibilities to the Party and the people. They need to strive for the successful implementation of all the goals mapped out by the Resolution of the 12th Party Congress and the resolutions of the Party committees at different levels of the 2015-2020 tenure.

At this important time, we have to keep deep in our minds the teachings of our esteemed Uncle Ho: "The Party Congress is closely

connected to the future of the revolution of our Party and people. The Congress will make our Party which is united to be more united, the ideology and action which are already unanimous will be more unanimous.”¹ Our Party, people and armed forces should be united and make joint efforts to get ready to start very well the 13th Party Congress, taking our country to enter a stage of new development for the purpose of “a prosperous people and a strong, democratic, equitable, and advanced country,” successfully implementing the wishes of our great President Ho Chi Minh and the aspiration of the entire nation.

1. *Ibid.*, Vol. 12, p. 545.

THEORY ALWAYS LEADS AND ACCOMPANIES REALITY*

Dear delegates,

Dear colleagues,

Today I am delighted to attend the Conference to review the work completed in the 2016-2021 term of the Central Council on Theoretical Studies. With my own personal feelings, as I have followed more or less closely the Council's work, our comrades and colleagues, I would like to send to each and every one of you, and to all those who have been involved in the political theory work nationwide, my sincere regards and cordial greetings. I wish all of you the best of health, happiness and success.

I learned that you have made elaborate preparations for this important Conference. Based on the summary and assessment of the Council's activities in the 2016-2021 term, you have built the directions and tasks for the 2021-2026 term and for the coming terms. Through your reports and the opinions expressed at the Conference, I mostly agree with them and highly commend the results achieved by the Council in the 2016-2021 term, as well as

* The speech was delivered on April 17, 2021, at the Conference to review the work completed of the Central Council on Theoretical Studies, the 2016-2021 term.

the directions and tasks mapped out for the time to come. Now I would like to contribute some ideas in order to emphasize what is important or to explore possibilities for your consideration.

1. On the results of the work in the 2016-2021 term

We can say that these are the great, relatively comprehensive and very valuable results. The most outstanding results include:

a) The Central Council on Theoretical Studies has effectively understood the Party's guidelines and directions and the implementation program of the Party's Central Committee, the Political Bureau and the Secretariat. It has enlisted the support available, taken advantage of favorable conditions and experiences and strengths of the Council and overcome difficulties and challenges to deploy a considerable workload, thus making new progress, fulfilling its function and assigned tasks, especially in research and consultancy. The Council has produced recommendation reports of good quality, thereby assisting the Party's Central Committee and the Political Bureau to issue important resolutions and conclusions on issues, such as:

- Simultaneously building and improving the development institutions, the socialist-oriented market economy institution, and the relationship between the State, the market and the society;
- Providing directions for the development of the private sector to become an important driving force of the economy;
- Building and improving the apparatus organization of a streamlined, efficient and effective political system;
- Building a contingent of government officials, particularly strategic-level officials who are sufficiently qualified, capable and respectable, on par with their tasks; and

- Providing directions for the tasks and solutions for a sustainable development of the marine economy, and so on.

b) The Central Council on Theoretical Studies has organized the deployment and management of the Research Program on political theories effectively and methodically at the 2016-2020 stage (KX.04/16-20). The research outcomes are of theoretical and practical values, with timely inputs for reports to the Political Bureau and the Secretariat, thus making a practical contribution to building draft resolutions, directives and conclusions of the Party's Central Committee, the Political Bureau and the Secretariat, as well as the draft documents to be submitted to the 13th Party Congress.

c) The Central Council on Theoretical Studies has effectively fulfilled its task of summarizing theoretical and practical issues over the past 30 years by implementing *the Political Platform on National Construction in the Period of Transition to Socialism*, with emphasis on the 10 years of implementing *the Platform which was amended and revised in 2011*. The summary has further clarified the process of developing our Party's theoretical consciousness; our great achievements of historic significance on the renewal cause; and some limitations and issues with different opinions that must be settled. It has proposed preliminary viewpoints and orientations in order to gradually improve the theories and directions for the renewal with rapid and national sustainable development, and for the theories on socialism and the path to advance towards socialism for Vietnam in the new era.

I especially welcome and acknowledge the responsible, active and proactive spirit of the Council, the sub-committees of the Council, particularly the Standing Council in participating in building the draft documents to be submitted to the 13th Party Congress. The important parts are the draft Political Report, the draft Report of

the Party's Central Committee of the 12th tenure on the documents for submission to the 13th Party Congress. The Standing Council and many members of the Council are the core of the editing team for the Documents of the 13th Party Congress. They have worked actively, seriously, scientifically and devotedly with a spirit of duty, thus playing an important role in the process of crafting the draft documents.

Many issues proposed by the Council were based on summarizing and reviewing our experience in reality, researching theories and receiving opinions from experts, scientists, government officials, Party members and the people. They have been considered and accepted for inclusion in the documents of the 13th Party Congress by the Document Sub-committee, the Political Bureau, the Party's Central Committee and the Congress. They have been supported and highly valued by government officials, Party members and the people.

I am also very glad to see that the Council is a collective unit that is truly united and responsible. You are the link to the Council members, rallying and promoting the knowledge and creativity of the scientists, particularly the theoretical researchers nationwide, and advancing the democratic, active, creative and innovative spirit in fulfilling the tasks. Therefore, the material infrastructure and working conditions of the Council have been invested and improved.

We can say that in the past five years, the Central Council on Theoretical Studies has made efforts to renew the operational model and mode, to further rally many scientists, research institutes, academies and universities. They have inherited the achievements and experience of the previous tenures, and have made further developments deserving recognition. They effectively

carried out their functions and assigned tasks, and made a contribution to the overall success of our Party and our country. On behalf of the Party's Central Committee, the Political Bureau and the Secretariat, I would like to acknowledge, commend and congratulate the contributions of the Central Council on Theoretical Studies in the 2016-2021 term.

Besides the positive results, the Council should also be more deeply aware and make greater efforts to overcome limitations and weaknesses, particularly limitations in the quality and effectiveness of the consulting work at the overall strategic level, and the direction for political theory as you have pointed out in the Report. Our country has undergone 35 years of implementing the renewal, and our Party has experienced 30 years of implementing the 1991 Platform. However, there still exists theoretical and practical issues that are yet to be explained thoroughly and clarified. There still exists emerging issues in the realities of the development of the world, particularly of Vietnam, that must be studied and reviewed in order to contribute to developing and improving the Party's guidelines, directions, and viewpoints. This contribution serves as the basis of enhancing the unification in the Party and social harmony, to protect the Party's ideological foundation, and to refute the inaccurate and distorting views from reactionary, hostile forces.

2. On future directions and tasks

Our simultaneous and comprehensive renewal cause has now entered its depth. Therefore, the new tasks are very heavy, but also very glorious for the circle of theoretical scientists in Vietnam, and first of all, for the Central Council on Theoretical Studies. On this occasion, I would like to offer some suggestions regarding a number of issues for you to think about and to discuss.

First of all, we need to have more sufficient and deeper consciousness of the requirements of the political theory in the new era. The 13th Party Congress has determined the strategic vision and specific roadmap for national development for the next five, ten and 25 years. The international context and the requirements for breakthrough developments of the country in the new era require our Party to continue to renew its development mindset on the basis of strengthening our potentials, while considering the practical conditions in order to conform with the development trends of the world and the era. That is why “it is impossible to prolong the backwardness of theory considering the changes in the realities and the new demand,” and “it is necessary to have a vision beyond our time.”¹ We need:

- To create breakthroughs in the development of theories, and to remove bottlenecks in mindset, awareness and viewpoints in order to improve our institutions and build directions, orientations and policies for development;
- To foster aspirations and promote the will and determination to move forwards of the entire nation; and
- To strive to implement successfully the goals and tasks mapped out by the 13th Party Congress.

As V. I. Lenin emphasized: “Without revolutionary theory, there can be no revolutionary movement,”² and “The role of vanguard fighter can be fulfilled only by a party that is guided by the most advanced theory.”³

1. Nguyen Phu Trong (2018), *Strong Confidence in the Party’s Leadership: Overcoming every Challenge*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, p. 287.

2. V. I. Lenin (2005), *Complete Collection*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 2, p. 575.

3. *Ibid.*, Vol. 6, p. 32.

In the documents of the 13th Party Congress, the theoretical work has emphasized specific directions, together with Party building and rectifying to be pure and strong. Specifically, it is to build the Party politically, ideologically and theoretically at a high degree: “To raise the Party’s theoretical mindset, to promote the practical summary, the theoretical study, to supply in time the scientific basis to the making of the Party’s guidelines, directions, policies, and the State’s policies and law.”¹

The Central Council on Theoretical Studies and the circle of theoretical scientists in our country must answer the important question: By serving and contributing to achieving the goal of national development through three important milestones 2025, 2030 and 2045, what is the objective of theoretical development in Vietnam? Could it be that,

- To the year 2025, based on reviewing 40 years of implementing the renewal, 50 years of national reunification, is it necessary to fundamentally improve the theoretical system on the directions for renewal?

- To the year 2030, based on reviewing the work completed in 40 years of implementing *the Political Platform on National Construction in the Period of Transition to Socialism*, summarizing 100 years of the Party’s leadership role in the Vietnamese revolution, is it possible to add and develop the Platform, meeting the requirements of the new era; to add, enrich and advance one more step to further improve the Party’s ideological foundation?, and

- To the year 2045, when our country becomes a developed country with high income, will we have a complete, scientific and

1. The Communist Party of Vietnam (2021), *Documents of the 13th Party Congress* (Vietnamese version), National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. II, pp. 234-235.

modern theoretical system on socialism and the path to socialism of Vietnam?

We need to determine and unify our goals for theoretical development, so that we can be determined to strive, work and innovate, and

- Pay attention to emerging issues in theory of the world and those posed by the reality, and to the experience of advanced countries and the scientific and technological revolution, and so on;
- Step by step add and improve theories to build a theoretical foundation of the Vietnamese revolution in the new stage; and
- Build and defend our country by opening the door for integration, and to be a reliable friend and partner of the countries in the world, with an important position in the region and the world.

We can say that a large horizon of creativity and a very good development opportunity are presented for the Central Council on Theoretical Studies and the circle of theoretical scientists of our country.

To serve the big task above, the Central Council on Theoretical Studies should focus on further improving the quality of reviewing the realities in close association with theoretical research based on firmly grasping and creatively applying the methodology of dialectical materialism of Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Thought.

- *To improve the quality and effectiveness of advising political theory, to help the Party's Central Committee, the Political Bureau and the Secretariat to lead and guide the building and defense of our Homeland;*
- Based on the tasks of the tenure of the Party's Central Committee, to build and deploy a plan on reviewing the realities and theoretical research in order to build consultative reports;

- To review and advise the Party's Central Committee, the Political Bureau and the Secretariat to have timely conclusion on practical issues that have become ripe and clear;
- To build the theoretical special subjects of good quality to serve the research program of the Political Bureau and the Secretariat;
- To deploy effectively the Research Program of political theory for the 2021-2025 period; and
- To serve the Party's Central Committee, the Political Bureau and the Secretariat to promulgate the resolutions and conclusions, to contribute to bringing the Resolution of the 13th Party Congress into life.

We need to connect theory with reality in the field of politics, economy, culture, society, national defense, security and external relations; and with the building of political systems, particularly Party building, and the building of the socialist law-governed State and socialist democracy. We should use a new approach and requirement to build institutions simultaneously and develop our country, based on a scientific-technological foundation and innovation. We need to promote human development, with people as the force of development, thus creating a strong driving force for rapid and national sustainable development. This helps prevent the danger of falling behind and of the “middle income trap,” in order to successfully achieve the goal of becoming a socialist-oriented developed country in the mid-21st century.

Are the five lessons summarized in the Political Report for submission to the 13th Party Congress the substantial theoretical issues of the Vietnamese revolution in the new era? The Central Council on Theoretical Studies should continue to research, improve, develop and deepen these contents. To this end, we must

place importance on fundamental theoretical research in combination with reviewing realities, on studying and learning from other countries' experiences, particularly development models that are dynamic, creative and effective. Reviewing realities at the theoretical level demands commitments and methods that are detailed, serious and scientific.

With the assigned tasks, the Central Council on Theoretical Studies should be proactive and effectively play its role as the connector to coordinate the Central committees, commissions, and sectors, Party committee levels, agencies and the contingent of officials in the research field of political theory nationwide in reviewing realities and theoretical research. The more the renewal goes into depth, the greater the need for theoretical issues and realities is, thus we need to promote the intellectual capacity of the whole political system and the entire people, especially agencies and the contingent of officials in the field of theoretical research.

The Central Council on Theoretical Studies should build a mechanism and create a favorable environment to attract and rally a contingent of collaborators, experts, and scientists who are well-qualified and devoted in all fields across the country. It should:

- Expand forms of discussions, debates and dialogues on theory in the spirit of science, democracy and progress;
- Truly respect theoretical ideas and suggestions that are valuable and useful for the cause of the Party, the State, national welfare and people's livelihood;
- Avoid thinking that is conservative, sectionalizing, arbitrary and labelling, and avoid working in isolation;
- Promote democracy and ideological freedom in the theoretical study in the interests of the country and the nation;
- Be proactive and resolute to struggle against reactionary, hostile and distorting arguments;

- Protect the Party's ideological foundation, effective directions and guidelines and the State's policies and laws; and
- Build a system of arguments on theories and realities that are highly scientific, combative and convincing, in order to practically and effectively serve the ideological and theoretical struggle against hostile, reactionary forces, which has intensely and fiercely been happening and will continue to be.

The Central Council on Theoretical Studies needs to continue to be improved and renewed to better meet the requirements and tasks for the new period. Through the realities of 25 years with 5 terms in operation, the Council has affirmed its position and role in the system of the Central agencies. As I said in a previous meeting and working with the Council: You need to “play the right role, perform the right task.” You need to affirm: the Central Council on Theoretical Studies is an agency under the Political Bureau, under the direct and regular leadership and guidance of the Political Bureau and the Secretariat. It is an agency that reviews realities and conducts theoretical research for the Party, and acts as the advisor for the Party's Central Committee, the Political Bureau and the Secretariat on issues of political theory to serve the Party's Central Committee, the Political Bureau and the Secretariat in their leadership and guidance, as well as the building, developing and improving of the Party's guidelines and directions, and the State's policies and laws.

We need to seriously review and promote our achievements and strengths; to identify aspects that need improvement, and the limitations and inadequacies both internally and externally in order to timely overcome. The Council needs to work with the Party's Central Committee's Organization Commission, the Central Office, the Ministry of Science and Technology and other relevant agencies

of the Party and the State in building and improving the functions, tasks and structures of the apparatus organization and personnel, as well as operational mechanism and policy and appropriate compensation system and to submit them to the Political Bureau for consideration and approval. It is proposed that relevant agencies should provide active support and coordination to the Central Council on Theoretical Studies in the process of operation, ensuring that the Council can implement its functions and tasks at its best.

In an atmosphere that our country is enthusiastic and welcoming the success of the 13th National Party Congress and the 11th Session of the National Assembly, 14th legislature, to actively and urgently deploy the implementation of the Resolution of the 13th Party Congress, to prepare for the election of deputies to the National Assembly, 15th legislature and the representatives of the People's Council of different levels, the 2021-2026 tenure, it is out of my duty and personal feelings with the Council and colleagues that I would like to commend the Central Council on Theoretical Studies to continue making efforts to strive for many more of achievements, successes and victories, with the deserved confidence and hope of the Party, the State and the people. I wish you and your colleagues the best of health, much joy and happiness with your creative work and in life.

With high regards, I thank you.

DEVELOPING THE CLASS OF INDUSTRIAL WORKERS TOGETHER WITH STRONG TRADE UNIONS*

Distinguished Presidium of the Congress,

Distinguished delegates and guests,

Dear colleagues,

In an atmosphere when our entire Party, people and armed forces are making efforts in emulation and striving to implement successfully the goals and tasks of 2018, today the 12th Vietnam Trade Union Congress is officially opened – an important event in the political life of the working class of our country. On behalf of the leaders of our Party and State, I would like to extend my warm greetings to the Congress, and to send to our delegates, distinguished guests and to the entire Trade Union officials and members, workers, civil servants and employees nationwide my solicitous regards and best wishes.

Having undergone nearly 90 years of formation and development, under the leadership and training of our Party and Uncle Ho, the Vietnam Trade Union has been constantly growing in strength and making the worthy contributions to the great

* The speech was delivered on September 25, 2018, at the 12th Trade Union Congress.

victories of the Vietnamese revolution. The Trade Unions has always had the flesh and blood relationship with the working class, accompanied the nation and the Communist Party of Vietnam to strive to build a Vietnam of independence, peace, reunification, a prosperous people and a strong, democratic, equitable and advanced country.

In the last 11th Congress, the Vietnam Trade Unions greatly renewed both in terms of content and mode of operation. The trade union work and the workers' movements recorded comprehensive results, meeting the requirements and legitimate aspirations of the members, workers, civil servants and employees. The Trade Unions had creatively suggested and organized many new operational programs such as: to have given care to the welfare of trade union members; organized "the Reunion Tét" for working people; built the trade union institutions, contributing to removing the inadequacies in housing, kindergartens, the places for cultural activities for working people.

Many measures have been taken flexibly and timely together with the political system to settle issues related to ensuring security, order, interests and life of workers, civil servants employees. You have organized dialogues and negotiations on the collective labor agreement, contributing to ensuring the regulations and policies and step by step improving social welfare, ensure social security for working people, promoting production and business, building a harmonious, stable and progressive labor relationship. The communication and educational activities have created the spillover impacts in the system.

An active change was seen in the patriotic emulation movement in workers, civil servants and employees. Trade union organizations have been more consolidated and developed.

Many results have been made in rallying workers and working people with the quantity of members spreading quickly as compared to the previous tenures, many forms of rallying workers and civil servants, of developing members, of setting up the grassroots trade unions across enterprises. The model of organizing the apparatus and the trade unions is being improved; the quality of the contingent of trade union officials has step by step been enhanced. In many aspects, there have been many outstanding, advanced examples, the workers, civil servants and employees who are front-runners and successful in labor, production and business, thus affirming the role of the trade union organizations in the political system, beautifying further the glorious tradition of the Vietnam Trade Unions.

The achievements of the Trade Unions and the growth of the Vietnamese workers' movement are great and proud-worthy. On behalf of the leaders of the Party and the State, I warmly congratulate, respectfully commend and highly value the endeavors and efforts of the workers' movements and the operation of the trade unions at different levels nationwide.

Apart from the achievements and progress, the trade unions and the workers' movements in the past tenure still have limitations and inadequacies as pointed out in the Report of the Executive Committee of the Vietnam General Confederation of Labor. I only want to draw attention to and make further emphasis on a number of issues and I wish you pay attention to them.

At present, our society still has concerns about the state of affairs that a number of workers and employees have faded in political ideology. They are far more worried about their economic interests and the immediate lives and they have paid much less attention to the fundamental and long-term strategic issues such as the awareness of class consciousness, the political competence,

the historical role and mission and responsibilities of the working class. A number of them have been impacted, abetted and incited by the bad and hostile forces, having made the wrongdoings and caused instability of social order and safety.

The quality of the workers in our country have shown signs of inadequacies. The trend of differentiation in this contingent has made the task of rallying the forces and raising the leadership role of the working class for the entire society ever more difficult. On economic and everyday life issues, the trade union organizations are still confused in study, forecast and proposal of solutions to overcome, particularly the inadequacies in labor intensity, jobs, the material, spiritual and cultural life of workers and working people.

The organization model, the content and mode of operation of the trade unions are slowly renewed and yet to keep pace with the fast changes of the economy and society and the labor relations. A number of parts of the trade unions have still failed to keep close contact with and gain an insight of the needs and thoughts of working people and are not the representatives of their legitimate interests. Here, the Party committees and government offices at all levels and mass organizations, particularly the trade union organizations, are held responsible for it.

Dear colleagues,

At present, the world and regional situation, besides the fundamental advantages, still have many complex and unpredictable developments. The Fourth Industrial Revolution with a series of scientific and technological breakthroughs has made deep impact on production, life and jobs of the working people. Countries have participated ever more intensively and extensively in the production network and in the global value chain. Together with the economic,

trade, market and technological competition, the competition in human resources, particularly the high-quality human resources, is also happening fiercely. Domestically, the status and synergy of the country have been raised, creating the important premises to implement the tasks of building and defending our Homeland. Yet, we have to face many difficulties and challenges, with great impacts on jobs and life of the working people, labor relations, and organization and operation of the Trade Unions.

The Party, the State, and the people have always given special care to the working class and workers. In the process of history, the working class is the vanguard force of the Vietnamese revolution. It has always been at the center of important political events of the country, inherited and brightened further the glorious tradition of the nation. Especially, after more than 30 years of renewal, the working class of Vietnam has constantly grown in both quantity and quality, joining in all the sectors and occupations, the economic sectors, at the forefront in the cause of national industrialization and modernization.

In the current revolutionary stage, we continue to be committed to the viewpoint that the working class is the leading class of the revolution through the Communist Party of Vietnam as the vanguard. The class represents an advanced and modern production mode; the vanguard class in the cause of socialist construction; the core force in the alliance of the class of industrial workers (*giai cấp công nhân*), the peasantry class (*giai cấp nông dân*), and the contingent of intellectuals under the leadership of the Party. The growth of the class of industrial workers is the prerequisite to the guarantee of success of the renewal cause, industrialization and modernization of the country. Therefore, the building of the class of industrial workers to be strong in the period of accelerating

industrialization and modernization is the important and urgent task of the Party, the State and the whole political system, of each worker and of the entire society, in which trade union organizations have an important role and responsibility.

Dear colleagues,

The goal and tasks already determined in the Resolution of the 12th Party Congress, particularly the goal of taking our country to soon become an industrial country in the direction of modernity require that the workers' movement and the trade union organizations should renew constantly and make great efforts to strive to improve the organizational quality, mode and effectiveness in operation, to represent, care, protect and strongly promote the role of workers, public employees, working people, thus meeting the requirements of the revolutionary cause in the new period.

The Report of the Executive Committee of the Vietnam General Confederation of Labor, the 11th tenure, submitted to this Congress, has closely grasped the ideology and viewpoints of the Resolution of the 12th Party Congress, the resolutions of the Party's Central Committee, especially the content, solutions and the important tasks. I propose that you should focus on discussing so as to accurately judge the situation, to carefully review the realities, to unify the directions, the tasks, the solutions which are practical and highly effective for the Vietnam Trade Unions in the 2018-2023 tenure. I would like to emphasize and to have some more suggestions for a number of issues for the Congress to discuss, consider and make decision.

First, we need to place importance on improving the awareness, the political competence for workers, civil servants and employees. We need to focus on communication, education to help workers, civil servants and employees to have deeper consciousness of class,

the Party, the trade union organizations, and the historical mission of the working class. We must educate and promote patriotism, the spirit of national pride and self-respect, and the political consciousness of workers. It is necessary to unify the awareness that nowadays, the yardstick to measure patriotism, the spirit of national pride and self-respect of workers and working people is to constantly improve the level in all aspects, to work with high consciousness and professional work behavior, labor discipline, vocational skills, hard and creative work so as to adapt to the labor conditions in the context of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, to be determined to win over hunger and poverty, backwardness, to constantly strive for sustainable jobs and better life of each worker, for the stability and development of enterprises and prosperity of the country.

To do better the above tasks, the Trade Unions should place importance on communication, education, study and creative application of Marxism-Leninism, Ho Chi Minh Thought, the directions and guidelines of the Party to the realities of the work. We need to study to build the mechanism in coordination with the organization for officials and trade union members to learn and improve their level of political consciousness. Especially, the organization of learning and following Ho Chi Minh Thought, morality and style must be persistent, creative and essential. It is necessary to uphold the responsibility to set examples, to be self-conscious to learn first, do first by trade union officials at all levels, at the same time, to place importance on building and replicating the role models;

- To enhance the understanding of the situation and developments from the grassroots so as to be proactive and more effective in coordinating and organizing the communication, mobilization and implementation of the guidelines and directions of the Party, the policies and laws of the State.

- To develop the modes of communication that have the fast and widespread impacts such as the Internet and social media, and promote social and cultural activities for the majority of working people; and

- To place importance on educating workers to have courage, sharp political knowledge in order to develop the ability to resist negative manifestations, the wrong side of society and the sabotages and distortions of hostile forces. We must not let hostile forces exploit the genuine patriotism of workers and working people by exciting and dragging them to stage the demonstrations, the gatherings to cause disorder, instability and the division of the national unity.

Second, we need to give constant care to the legitimate interests of trade union members and better implement the role of the representatives and protectors of legal rights and interests of the trade union members and working people, considering it the key point to attract the majority of working people to volunteer to join and always support, connect and believe in the trade union organizations.

Trade unions at all levels should focus on the resources, on renewing the activities of giving care to its members and working people in the direction of developing the programs throughout all the systems in association with the policies on social security, social welfare of the Trade Unions to serve the right objects, to carry out simultaneously between responsibility and benefits, taking the interests as one of the important motive forces to rally and attract working people to the trade union organizations. They need:

- To place importance on protecting the regulations and policies on salary, social insurance, health insurance, labor safety, to give care of the labor health and environment to workers;

- To improve the quality of negotiation and signing, and to carry out the collective labor agreement;
- To be proactive in building the harmonious, stable and progressive labor relations in enterprises;
- To enhance the benefits program for trade union members so as to make specific the implementation of material interests, the spiritual interests and the political interests brought about by the trade union organizations to working people, particularly the issues of jobs, housing, kindergartens, the water and power prices, the health care and so on; and
- To be proactive to coordinate with agencies, organizations and enterprises to settle in time the pressing and urgent problems of the class of industrial workers.

Third, the Trade Unions need to continue to renew and improve the quality of organization, mode and effectiveness of the operation to be in conformity with the new situation, the new requirements, the realities in our country where the cause of renewal is being implemented, the mutli-sectoral economy is being developed, the industrialization and modernization are being accelerated and international integration is being carried out proactively and actively. The trade union organizations are of the working people, by the working people and for the working people, taking the legal and legitimate requirements of the working people as the basis for operation; taking the representation, care and protection of their rights and interests as the goal of operation. It places importance on the mode of collective dialogue and negotiation and on building harmonious, stable and progressive labor relations, and

- To focus on building the contingent of professional trade union officials with courage, mind, dedication and responsibilities with their work, to be steady before all difficulties and challenges,

not to be degenerated in political ideology, morality, lifestyle, “self-evolution,” “self-transformation,” to build the contingent of officials with sufficient qualities, capacities to meet the higher requirements of the period of national industrialization and modernization; and

- To place importance on effectively carrying out trade union membership work, from the development of new trade union members, the management of trade union members to the improvement of quality of trade union members and the care for the members’ interests.

The Trade Unions should study to renew the model and organization of operation in the spirit of the Resolution of the 6th Plenum and the 7th Plenum, the 12th tenure, as well as:

- To timely overcome difficulties, impediments and inadequacies in the organizational model, the operational mechanism and to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of operation of the sectors’ trade unions, the direct superior trade unions over the grassroots trade unions; and

- To carry out on a trial basis the model of trade union organizations in the private economic groups, the divested State-run corporations, the enterprises having the same owners of labor; the model of the grassroots trade unions with the connection of many enterprises, agencies, units according to sectors and occupations in the same area; the model with the assembling of working people who are the foreigners working in Vietnam.

Fourth, we need to participate in building, rectifying and protecting the Party and the political system, considering it as the responsibility and political interests of trade union members, workers, public employees, working people and the trade union organizations. The trade unions at all levels should be active to struggle to protect

the Political Platform and the Party's direction; to implement well the role of supervision, social debates, to take part in contributing opinions to build the Party and the governments offices, to prevent corruption, wastefulness, negative practices; to contribute opinions to Party members to prevent the degeneration in the political ideology, morality, lifestyle, "self-evolution," "self-transformation" in the internal organization with the suitable form, contributing to the successful implementation of the Resolution of the 4th Plenum, the 11th and the 12th tenures on Party building. They need to enhance the introduction of the outstanding trade union officials and members for fostering to be admitted into the Party; to pay attention to discovering and fostering the advanced trade union members, the key persons in the non-State, non-public enterprises and units.

Dear colleagues,

One of the extremely important tasks of the Congress this time is to elect the Executive Committee of the Vietnam General Confederation of Labor, new tenure. I propose that the delegates of the Congress should uphold the high sense of responsibilities and elect with clear-sightedness prominent colleagues with the political competence, morality, professional skills and reputation among workers, civil servants and employees to the Executive Committee of the General Confederation of Labor, the 12th tenure, to well carry out the Resolution of the Congress of the new tenure, taking the workers' movements of our country to further develop and record greater achievements.

On this occasion, I also propose that the Party committee levels, the Party organizations, government offices, the Fatherland Front, and the socio-political organizations at different levels should grasp thoroughly, improve the consciousness and responsibilities

for the care, fostering, education and promotion of the role and potential of the Vietnamese working class. We need to focus on institutionalizing and materializing all the viewpoints and guidelines of the Party on the working class manifested in the Resolution of the 12th Party Congress, the Resolution No. 20-NQ/TW of the Party's Central Committee, the 10th tenure.

Building a growing and strong class of industrial workers is the responsibility of the political system, the society and the effort from each worker, and the active participation in contribution of the labor users. In which, the Party's leadership and the State's management play a decisive role, and the Trade Unions have a direct important role in caring for the building of the working class. The State pays attention to amending, adding the policies and laws on salary, social insurance, health insurance, unemployment insurance and so on, so as to ensure the interests, improve the life of workers and working people. Building a growing and strong class of industrial workers should be closely connected with building the Party to be pure and strong in politics, ideology, organization and morality, and to build the trade union organizations, the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union in the working class to be strong ones.

Dear colleagues,

The 12th Congress of Vietnam Trade Unions is an important political event of the class of industrial workers and employees, ushering in the new development stage of the trade union organizations. I believe and expect that after the Congress, the workers' movement and Trade Unions of our country will have new, stronger and more creative development, making a worthy contribution to the successful implementation of the resolutions of the Party Congress.

Being the revolutionary leading class through the Communist Party of Vietnam as the vanguard, the Vietnamese class of industrial workers will surely uphold its revolutionary nature, the pioneering, core spirit, promote the patriotic, united and creative tradition, together with our Party, people and armed forces helping to firmly maintain and promote the revolutionary achievements, build and protect our beloved Homeland of Vietnam to be ever more prosperous, beautiful and stronger.

I would like to wish the Vietnam Trade Unions for being ever worthy of the firm socio-political basis of our Party and State; the contingent of workers, civil servants and employees the ever growing and strong, being the prerequisite to ensure the success of the renewal cause, the national industrialization and modernization.

I would like to wish the 12th Congress of Vietnam Trade Unions the best of success. I wish all of the delegates the best of health, happiness and success.

DEVELOPING THE PEASANTRY: MAIN FORCE OF AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AND NEW RURAL IMPROVEMENT*

Today I am delighted to attend the 7th National Congress of the Vietnam Farmers' Union - an important event in the socio-political life of the peasantry nationwide. On behalf of the leaders of the Party and the State, I warmly congratulate the distinguished guests and 999 delegates representing the qualities, talents, hard and creative work of the Vietnam peasantry in the renewal and integration period. I would like to send to officials and union members at different levels together with all the farmers nationwide my respectful greetings, sincere regards and best wishes.

Dear colleagues,

After 88 years since its establishment and development, which was led and trained by our Party and Uncle Ho, the Vietnam Farmers' Union has grown and become stronger, making worthwhile contributions to the revolutionary cause of our country. The Vietnam Farmers' Union is always the reliable bridge between the Party, the State and the peasantry. It is the political foundation

* The speech was delivered on December 12, 2018, at the 7th National Congress of the Vietnam Farmers' Union, the 2018-2023 tenure.

of society, representing farmers' legal rights and interests. It contributes many advisory ideas and proposals to the Party and the State about the policy and direction on agricultural development, building up the peasantry and rural areas; it takes an active part in social supervision and debates; and it participates in contributing ideas of building up the Party and the State.

In the 6th tenure, the Vietnam Farmers' Union renewed much of its content and mode of operation. The Union's work and the farmers' movements had attained many important results. The Union has carried out its role as "the center and the core of the farmers' movements and the building of new rural," contributing to bringing the directions and policies of the Party and the State to the farmers; mobilizing and communicating to help the farmers understand and express their consensus in implementing the directions of the Party and the policies and laws of the State, contributing to strongly building the agriculture and the rural areas in our country and to improving the farmers' life in various aspects. The recorded results have been expressed fully in the Political Report submitted to the Congress. I would like to emphasize some outstanding achievements:

First, the Union's levels have effectively implemented the communication and mobilization of farmers to carry out satisfactorily the directions of the Party and the policies and laws of the State on the agricultural development and the building of rural areas. Thanks to that, in recent times, even though our agricultural sector has faced many difficulties, great impacts of climate change, environmental pollution and the fierce competition of the world's agricultural products market, particularly the trend of trade protection, our country's peasantry has step by step overcome them and recorded the new miraculous results. Our agriculture has

still developed stably, export turnover of agricultural products has increased sharply, agriculture has become the support to the national economy to overcome the global economic downturn and financial crisis; the building of new rural has achieved many notable results. Farmers' life has been constantly improved. The average income per household in the rural areas has increased from 75.8 million dongs in 2012 to 130 million dongs in 2017, making an important contribution to hunger eradication and poverty reduction.

As pointed out in the Report, the Vietnam Farmers' Union has made creative initiatives, proposed and organized many new forms of operation, which have been highly appreciated by public opinion. These rich and practical activities have created the motive force to promote the nationwide farmers' movements to develop strongly, particularly the movement "Farmers emulate to have good production and business, unite and help each other to become rich and reduce poverty sustainably." There have been many billionaires who are farmers.

The operation of the Farmers' Union at all levels has contributed to rapidly applying scientific and technological advances to agricultural production and the farmers' life. There are many renovations in mobilization and rallying of farmers, typically the deployment of building the occupational branches and teams under the Union, thus contributing to raising the percentage of farmers joining the Union's organizations.

Second, the quality of the contingent of the Union's officials at different levels has grown. The advisory work and proposals with the Party and the State to build the directions, policies, to remove barriers, to protect the legal rights and interests of farmers, to take part in building the Party and the government offices, in building

our national unity of the Union's levels have obtained many important results. Particularly, this has been seen in the advisory work for the Party committees and the government offices at all levels to deploy effectively all the resolutions and directives of the Party, the Government and the National Assembly.

Third, the direction for renewal of the Party and the State in recent years has made a contribution to changing the mindset of the farmers who have got used to doing the traditional, small and fragmented production. The peasantry has become stronger and its quality has been improved. An increasing percentage of Farmers' Union members has been trained professionally. The spirit of unity and the sense of responsibility for the Party, the State and residential communities have been higher. The movement of agricultural development and the building of new rural have obtained many important results, in which the movement of mutual assistance for poverty reduction and wealth building, of contributing land to build roads and public works are of profound political, social and humane significance. Progress has been seen in the sense of community and in the cultural way of life in the countryside. There have been many good examples of the outstanding collective units and individuals recognized by the Party and the State. Many noble awards have been presented to them.

The achievements of the farmers' movements and the Vietnam Farmers' Union are great, making an important contribution to the common success of the country. On behalf of the Party and the State leaders, I would like to extend my warm congratulations, respectful commendation and high appreciation of the endeavors and services of the peasantry and the Union's levels nationwide. On this occasion, I also would like to extend my thanks to the goodwill, support and effective cooperation of international

farmers' organizations and friends for Vietnam's agricultural and rural development.

Apart from the achievements and progress, there are still certain limitations and inadequacies in the Union's work and in the farmers' movements as pointed out in the Report of the Executive Committee of the Vietnam Farmers' Union, the 6th tenure. I only draw your attention and emphasize some of the issues for your concern in the coming time.

The content and mode of operation of the Union are still slowly renewed. The participation of the Union's levels in building the policies, in supervision and social debates remains limited. Some Union members have still failed to keep a close contact and to gain an insight of farmers' thoughts and aspirations. The communication and mobilization of farmers are still left much to do. The farmers' movements are yet to be evenly developed. The Union's work is yet to strongly foster the potential and creativeness of the strata of farmers in developing production, building new rural and cultural life in residential areas. The building of collective economic model in agriculture is still in confusion. Industrialization and modernization in agriculture and rural areas in combination with the building of new rural remain at a low rate.

Productivity, quality and effectiveness in agricultural production are still low. The state of being unhygienic and lacking food safety is yet to be overcome. The life of some farmers, particularly in the remote areas and ethnic minorities' areas, is still in difficulties. The problems of farmers leaving their fields as they no longer wish to do field work, leaving their villages, not cooperating in production and not participating in joint ventures and linkages are of great concern. The responsibilities should be on the Party

committees and the government offices at all levels, mass organizations, especially the Farmers' Union.

Dear colleagues,

Currently, the world and regional situation is basically favorable, but there are also many complex and unpredictable developments. The Fourth Industrial Revolution with a series of scientific breakthroughs and technological advances has made deep impacts on production and life, on the jobs of the working people in general and on the farmers in particular. Our country's economy has been more intensively and extensively integrated with the world. This means the process of the world's scientific and technological transfer to Vietnam and high-quality products will be in fierce competition right in our home field.

Domestically, our status and potentials and the synergy of the country are on the rise. Vietnam's international prestige has been improved, creating important premises to carry out the task of building and defending the Homeland. Yet, we also face many difficulties and challenges that have greatly impacted our agriculture and farmers' life.

Our Party and State have determined that agriculture, farmers and countryside have a strategic position in industrialization and modernization, in building and defending our Homeland. They are the important basis and forces for socio-economic development, firm maintenance of political stability, security and national defense, and the promotion of national cultural identity and eco-environmental protection of our country. The Resolution of the 12th Party Congress provides a direction "to build agriculture toward large-scale commodity production, high-tech application, improved

product quality, ensured food hygiene safety; to raise added value and boost export.”¹

The issue is that, facing increasingly intensive and extensive scientific and technological impacts, what are the advantages and disadvantages for the development of Vietnam’s agriculture? How do farmers need to change their mindset and actions in order to be able to use technology and build modern agriculture? In the new context, what requirements are needed to build and implement policies on agricultural development, farmers and rural development in the coming time in order to have full strength for global competition and sustainable development? This situation requires movements of the farmers and the Farmers’ Union to renew themselves constantly, to advance forwards, to improve the quality of organization and performance, to strongly promote the role and position of the peasantry in order to meet the higher requirements of the revolutionary cause in the new era.

The report of the Executive Committee of the Vietnam Farmers’ Union, the 6th tenure, submitted to this Congress has thoroughly grasped the ideology and viewpoints of the Resolution of the 12th Party Congress and the resolutions of the Party’s Central Committee on agriculture, farmers and countryside. I propose that you should focus on discussion so as to accurately assess the situation, to carefully examine the realities, to have unanimity of directions, tasks and the practical and highly effective solutions for the Vietnam Farmers’ Union in the next tenure. I would like to emphasize and have some more suggestions for a number of issues for the Congress to consider, discuss and make decisions.

1. The Communist Party of Vietnam (2016), *Documents of the 12th Party Congress* (English version), National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, p. 92.

First, it is necessary for the Farmers' Union at different levels to further renew its program and mode of operation, to better communicate, mobilize and unite farmers to truly become the revolutionary force, and a great and strong economic, political and social force of the Party and the State. Each official, member of the Farmers' Union and each farmer should understand clearly that the industrialization and modernization of agriculture and rural areas and the building of the new rural are the cause of the entire people, in which the Union members and farmers are the driving force. They are both the executive force and the beneficiary force, thus it is possible to mobilize and use effectively all the resources of the peasantry and the domestic and foreign economic sectors, making agriculture, farmers and countryside in our country have more rapid and sustainable development. We need to strive to implement the goal of building a prosperous agriculture, wealthy farmers, civilized and modern countryside.

Second, the Union's level should coordinate with local Party committee, government offices and mass organizations from the Central to local levels and the economic sectors so as to enhance the training of occupations, raise the knowledge and skills in all aspects for the farmers. We need to organize well the consulting and service activities to support the farmers, to supply in time the new knowledge in science-technology and the opportunities and challenges of the globalization process, the Fourth Industrial Revolution, and climate change, helping farmers to have sufficient information and conditions for the economic development, enrichment, and hunger eradication and poverty reduction in a sustainable manner.

We need to focus on communication and education in order to make officials and members of the Farmers' Union and farmers

deeply aware of the driving force of the peasantry, the Party, and the Union's organization. We need to promote patriotism, national pride and self-respect, mutual assistance and aspiration to strive for legitimate wealth building, and to raise the consciousness of abiding by the law. In so doing, our farmers can be truly in control of the process of agricultural production and business when Vietnam has implemented all of its commitments to the ASEAN Community and the WTO, participated in the next-generation free trade agreements, and more intensive and extensive international integration as compared to the previous period. Only by doing so, can our farmers have sufficient political competence and capacity to be in control of new rural. Our farmers are not only the strong economic force, but also the strong political, cultural and social force, the reliable support of the Party and the State in the cause of building and defending our Homeland.

Third, the Vietnam Farmers' Union should be active in building and consolidating the organization in order to meet the requirements of mobilizing the farmers in the new situation, to be a reliable bridge between the Party, the State and the peasantry. It should be more effective in fulfilling the role of representing farmers' legitimate rights and interests, and to be fully capable of having advisory ideas and proposals for policies on agricultural development, farmers and rural development.

Officials of the Farmers' Union from the Central to the local levels should strive to build on the traditions and achievements, to be active in learning, improving the professional level and the capacities in organizing the mobilization of farmers, to firmly grasp the directions, policies and laws of the Party and the State, and the programs and plans of government offices at all levels systematically so as to be served as the basis to make these guidelines and policies

specific in realities. Together with Party committees, government offices at all levels and farmers, they can contribute in finding the shortest way to improve the farmers' life and make our countryside more prosperous and beautiful.

To this end, it is necessary to build the contingent of the Farmers' Union officials to have the political competence, good moral qualities, creative thinking, enthusiasm and dedication with the Union's work, and

- To have the professional knowledge and skills in mobilizing the farmers to meet the work requirements in the new situation;
- To timely overcome the difficulties and impediments, inadequacies in the organizational model, in the operational mechanism, and improve the Union's performance at all levels; and
- To review the work completed and replicate the model of rallying farmers into the occupational branches and teams under the Union.

Fourth, we need to further improve the operational capacity of the Executive Committee of the Vietnam Farmers' Union in its leadership of the Union and the farmers' movement. The Resolution of the 7th Plenum, the 9th tenure, on the promotion of the strength of the national unity for a prosperous people, a strong country, and a democratic, equitable and advanced society has determined: "*The Farmers' Union is the center, the core for the farmers' movement and the building of new rural.*"¹ The Resolution of the 7th Plenum, the 10th tenure, on agriculture, farmers and countryside, emphasized: "To create favorable mechanisms and conditions for the Vietnam Farmers' Union in

1. The Communist Party of Vietnam (2016), *Complete Party Documents*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 62, p. 32.

directly implementing some programs and projects in service of production and improvement of the farmers' life."¹

The directions and policies of the Party and the State are the important orientation for the Farmers' Union to well fulfill its glorious tasks. Success depends on the unity and efforts of all the Union members and the peasantry, in which the contingent of the Union's officials play a very important role. Members of the Executive Committee of the Farmers' Union, the new tenure, should look at their own tasks and those of the Union to build specific action plans, practically and effectively deploying the implementation of the Resolution of the Congress to avoid being superficial.

From this Congress, the delegates will elect the Executive Committee of the Union. The Congress should uphold the spirit of responsibilities, democratically discuss and carefully select those people who deserve to be elected to the Executive Committee of the Vietnam Farmers' Union for the 2018-2023 tenure.

On this occasion, I also propose that local Party committees, Party organizations, government offices, the Fatherland Front and socio-political organizations at different levels should thoroughly understand, improve their awareness and responsibilities for, and focus all resources on agricultural development, rural building, improvement of farmers' life, and create more favorable conditions for good performance of the Vietnam Farmers' Union at all levels.

Dear delegates,

In his lifetime, President Ho Chi Minh placed great importance on the role of farmers, agricultural production and on building cultural life in the countryside. Seventy years ago, on April 11, 1946,

1. *Ibid.*, Vol. 67, p. 842.

in his letter to landowners and farmers of Vietnam, he pointed out: “When our farmers are rich, our country will be rich. When agriculture is prosperous, our country will be prosperous.”¹ His instructions have been realized in the countryside, in every corner of our Homeland and have shown us the way. I believe and expect that after this Congress, the Union’s work and the farmers’ movements in our country will have new developments which will be stronger, more creative and effective, making a worthy contribution to the successful implementation of the resolutions of the Party, together with our Party, people and armed forces to contribute to building and defending our beloved Homeland to be more prosperous, beautiful and stronger.

I wish the Vietnam Farmers’ Union always be worthy of being the firm political and social foundation of the Party and the State. I wish the peasantry of Vietnam to grow stronger and to be the true driving force of the process of agricultural development and the building of new rural.

I wish the 7th Congress of the Vietnam Farmers’ Union be crowned with success. I wish the delegates good health, happiness and success.

1. Ho Chi Minh (2011), *Complete Collection*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 4, p. 246.

TAKING CARE OF THE YOUNG: RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PARTY AND OF SOCIETY*

Distinguished delegates and guests,

Dear colleagues, Youth Union members and young people,

Today I am delighted to attend the 90th founding anniversary of the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union (March 26, 1931 - March 26, 2021) and the ceremony to bestow the Ho Chi Minh Order for the third time. This solemn ceremony occurs at the time when the 13th Party Congress has just been crowned with success. All levels and sectors are actively and urgently preparing to build their action programs and plans on deploying the implementation in order to soon bring the Resolution of the Congress to life. The whole country is actively preparing for the election of deputies to the 15th National Assembly of the delegates to the People's Council at all levels for the 2021-2026 tenure on May 23. Therefore, this is particularly very meaningful.

* The speech was delivered on March 23, 2021, at the 90th founding anniversary of the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union (March 26, 1931-March 26, 2021) and the ceremony to bestow Ho Chi Minh Order.

First of all, on behalf of the leaders of the Party and the State, I would like to send the delegates, distinguished guests, colleagues and officials of the Youth Union, and through you, all officials, Youth Union members, young people and children nationwide my cordial greetings, sincere regards and best congratulations.

Dear colleagues and friends,

As we all know, young people are an important part of the nation, the backbone of the country. If young people are strong, the nation will be strong. In national strength, there is the strength of the youth. All through the length of our national history, young people have always upheld the patriotic tradition, the heroic, undaunted will of the nation. They are enthusiastic to be the vanguard in all fields and have made many great contributions to the national building and defense.

Founded and led by the Communist Party of Vietnam and President Ho Chi Minh, they were trained through many periods of the revolutionary struggle. Especially at the crises when our country was in danger, our people faced foreign invasions, or at the time when our country had to shift to recovery in order to be able to advance forward in development, the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union has always been steadfast in political competence, and firmly upheld its role as the revolutionary and pioneering force. They have always dedicated themselves in the trying places and dared to take upon the difficult tasks. Together with the whole country, they have overcome all the challenges to record historical victories, gaining complete independence and reunification for our Homeland, taking our country to a new era, the era of national independence and advancing towards socialism.

The history of our nation and Party has recognized and highly valued the revolutionary movements of the youth in the cause of

national liberation, such as the movements in the resistance against French colonialists named “Determined to sacrifice for the survival of our Homeland,” “Joining the army to eliminate the enemy on a great feat” and those in the resistance against the U.S. imperialists labelled “Three Readies” (*Ba sãn sãng*) in the North (to fight, to work, to be anywhere as needed), “Five Volunteers” (*Nãm xung phong*) in the South, and so on.

Today, during the process of renewal, enhanced industrialization, modernization and international integration, the youth of our country has been continually promoting the precious tradition of the previous generations to keep pace with the new period, to have the will to build their careers, to be pioneers and creative people, and ready to be present anywhere with difficulties and hardships, and ready to accept new tasks. From the movements of “Youth to establish careers,” “Youth to defend our country,” “Youth to volunteer,” two subsequent movements “Five initiatives for socio-economic development and defense of our Homeland” and “Four accompaniments with young people to establish careers” have been made specific step by step, becoming more in-depth and widespread into everyday life of Youth Union members and young people. This has been recognized by society, and has attained important results. It has addressed the legitimate needs and aspirations of the majority of Youth Union members and young people, and promoted the pioneering role and voluntariness of the youth for having effectively implemented the Party’s guidelines and directions and the State’s policies and laws with a view to accelerating economic development, firmly maintaining national defense, security and ensuring social security.

Through practical activities, the Youth Union and Fatherland Front organizations rallying and uniting young people have been

constantly built, strengthened and expanded. They have paid attention to the care and education of children. The Youth Union has taken an active part in building the Party and the political system to be pure and strong. Millions of advanced young people have stood in the rank of the Youth Union, and hundreds of thousands of merited Youth Union members and young people have been admitted into the Party. The contingent of the Youth Union officials has become the rich source of young officials of the Party, the government offices and the mass organizations at different levels. Many good examples of young people who are role models in their study, work and production in economic development and socio-cultural activities, science and technology, defense of our Homeland, maintenance of political security, social order and safety. Thus, they have made a contribution to further beautifying the glorious tradition and the pride in the young generation of Vietnam in the new revolutionary period.

It is not a coincidence that in recent times, the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union and the Vietnamese youth have been awarded twice the Gold Star Orders, twice the Ho Chi Minh Order, the first-class and the second-class Independence Order, 13 Labor Orders, 10 Resistance War Orders and many other noble awards. And also at today's ceremony, the Party and the State have decided to confer the Ho Chi Minh Order for the third time on the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union. On behalf of the leaders of the Party and the State, I would like to extend my warm congratulations, commendations and compliments to the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union for its remarkable achievements and recognize the great contributions of the generations of the Youth Union officials and members, the endeavors of young people and beloved children in our country.

Dear colleagues and friends,

As we all know, in any historical period, in any country, or any nation, young people are always an important, massive force who make great contributions to society. History has eternally inscribed the names of K. Marx and F. Engels, two great thinkers of the world who had given birth to scientific socialism, who had written the immortal *Manifesto of the Communist Party* at the age of 28-30. In ancient Vietnam, we take pride in having so many heroes, eminent people and celebrities such as Ba Trung, Ba Trieu, Dinh Bo Linh, Ngo Quyen, Le Hoan, Ly Thuong Kiet, Tran Quoc Tuan, Le Loi, Nguyen Trai, Nguyen Hue, and so on, for making resounding victories in their youth.

In the 20th century, we had Nguyen Ai Quoc (Ho Chi Minh), “a hero of national liberation and great man of culture,” who at the age of 21 left Vietnam in search of ways to save the country from French colonialists. At 35, he established the Vietnamese Revolutionary Youth League, and at 40, he founded the Communist Party of Vietnam. He trained many outstanding students like Tran Phu, Le Hong Phong, Ha Huy Tap, Nguyen Van Cu, Ngo Gia Tu, Le Duan, Truong Chinh, Pham Van Dong, Vo Nguyen Giap, and with them to win glorious victories and drive away foreign aggressors, to bring our country out of slavery to become an independent, free, peaceful and reunified country and to firmly move towards socialism.

I mention the points above in this solemn hour to affirm that our national history always has bright pages for our youth, and the bright prospect of our nation is in the hands our youth and awaits them. Our Party has affirmed time after time: “Young people are the backbone of the country, the future masters of the country,

the pioneering force in building and defending our Homeland, one of the decisive elements of the success or failure of national industrialization and modernization, international integration and socialist building.”¹ Young people are placed at the center of our strategy to foster and promote the human strength and human resources. Taking care of and developing young people are both the goal and the motivation to ensure the stability and sustainable development of the country. President Ho Chi Minh affirmed many times: “Whether the country of Vietnam can be developed, whether the Vietnamese people can step to the stage of glory comparable to powerful nations in the five continents, depend a large part on your studying efforts.”²

Dear colleagues and friends,

In the coming years, the world situation continues to have the complex developments. Peace, cooperation and development are still major trends, yet, we are facing many impediments and difficulties: the strategic competition among the major powers, local conflicts continue to happen in various forms which are more complex and fiercer, thus increasing the risks for the international economic, political and security environment. Domestically, we are continuing to comprehensively and simultaneously accelerate the renewal; to enhance the building and rectification of the Party and the political system to be pure and strong; to promote democracy and strength of national unity; to develop the economy rapidly and sustainably, to improve the people’s material and spiritual life; to firmly maintain

1. The Communist Party of Vietnam (2018), *Complete Party Documents*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 67, p. 759.

2. Ho Chi Minh (2011), *Complete Collection*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 4, p. 35.

the socio-political stability; to enhance the foreign relations activities; to solidly preserve the peaceful environment and national independence and sovereignty; and to strive to become the socialist-oriented developed country by the mid-21st century.

However, we have also faced difficulties and challenges, particularly the impacts of the economic and financial recession, social evils and negative practices, the issue of protecting the sovereignty over the sea and islands. This has certain impacts on the people's ideology and life, including the young people.

To successfully achieve the goal of the national building and development, it is necessary to further promote the vanguard and creative role of young people in a capacity as the massive social force with young age and rich potential. This requires the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union to continue to further renovate and improve the quality, program and method of implementation, enhance the effectiveness of movements, expand the front of uniting and rallying young people. To this end, I wish young people and the organizations of the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union should pay their special attention to the following issues:

First, you should urgently study, grasp, communicate, and put the Resolution of the 13th Party Congress into the Youth Union's major orientations for its work, considering it the guideline to deploy the Youth Union's work and the movements of young people and children. You need to build the programs and plans which clearly specify that each Youth Union organization, each youth and each child should implement so that they will join hands with our Party, people and armed forces to enthusiastically emulate to build and defend our Homeland.

Second, the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union should enhance the education for the young generation concerning

the revolutionary ideals, morality, cultural lifestyle, foster patriotism and national pride, especially nurture the aspiration and ambition of national building and be well aware of their mission and responsibilities in building and defending our Homeland. We need to continue to be persistent and place importance on communication, education, learning, study and application of the Party's guidelines, directions and resolutions to realities; to be creative and essential in organizing the Youth Union officials, members and children to learn and follow Ho Chi Minh Thought, morality and style.

It is necessary to place importance on education through the realities of the movement, to select the educational method suitable to each age group. Besides, each young person himself should always cultivate the revolutionary morality, modesty, simplicity, and aspiration to be progressive; nurture to be pure at heart, train clear-sighted mind and build great ambition. We need to make great efforts to fight against the manifestations of negativity, social evils and the wrong allegations of hostile forces; to resolutely struggle against individualism, opportunism, pragmatism and selfish lifestyle, against the fear of difficulties and hardships.

Third, it is necessary to build the environment and conditions of learning, training, work and entertainment for the development of young people to be healthy, comprehensive and harmonious in terms of physical health, mind and soul, and to have great love and high responsibilities for families and the country. We need to create motive force for young people to have initiatives in learning, creative work and career building, and to promote their important role in national sustainable development and in the defense of our Homeland. Young people should be the pioneer in implementing the orientations of enhancing the national digital transformation;

developing digital economy based on science, technology and innovation. The youth should be the first and most active people in the intensive and extensive integration in the world. It is necessary to further uphold the spirit of voluntariness and sharing with the community, and taking care of children; to volunteer to go to the remote, isolated and disadvantaged areas, to care for the poor and underprivileged people.

Fourth, we need to give care to build and consolidate the Youth Union to be truly solid and strong in ideology, politics, organization and action, to really become the pioneering troop of the revolution, the core force of the youth, the reliable reserve force of the Party. We need to enhance the international youth work; expand the front of uniting and rallying young people; to pay much attention to and take charge of the Ho Chi Minh Young Pioneers and to protect, care for and educate children. The Youth Union should create an equal, pure and compassionate environment for the Youth Union officials, members and young people to train their political competence, moral quality, working and professional style so as to nurture of qualified young officials for the Party.

Dear colleagues and friends,

The Party, the political system and each family should be responsible for taking care of young people and the young people's work. Therefore, I propose that the Party committees and the government offices at all levels, ministries, departments, sectors and mass organizations should enhance their leadership, guidance and coordination to well carry out the young people's work; to continue to pay attention to, support, create favorable conditions and mechanism for the organization of the Youth Union and young people to work, train, build and consolidate the Youth Union

organizations, build the contingent of the Youth Union officials and the youth who are enthusiastic, steadfast, exemplary and able to lead and to inspire others.

Our Party, State and people have always placed the trust and expectation on the young generation. In his lifetime, Uncle Ho always had special love for young people and children. He once said: “As a person who had observed the youth organization since it was 8-member body, and now I could see millions of the Youth Union members and millions of children, which are developing as fresh as spring flowers ... I am very proud and happy and found myself young again, found that our nation’s future is very bright and glorious.”¹

Much obliged to our Uncle Ho, learning and working as he had taught us, at this sacred time, I wish young friends, especially the Youth Union members, young Party members should always bear in mind the significance of the badge you are wearing ceremoniously on the labels of your coats with his precious words: “Let’s advance forwards with the golden-starred red flag in your hand.”² Advance forward as pioneers in study, work, production, fighting, pooling your efforts in building our Homeland, our country to be stronger, more beautiful, being worthy of the expectation, confidence and affection of the Party, Uncle Ho and the people for the young generation.

I would like to wish all the distinguished delegates, guests, colleagues and friends good health, happiness and success!

1. Ho Chi Minh (2011), *Complete Collection*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 15, pp. 78-79.

2. *Ibid.*, Vol. 7, p. 66.

DEVELOPING CULTURAL ARTS ON PAR WITH NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE NEW ERA*

Today, I am delighted to attend the 70th anniversary celebration of the Vietnam Union of Literature and Arts Associations, predecessor of the Vietnamese Association of Arts and Literature – the professional and socio-political organization of patriotic and revolutionary arts and literary creative activists who have worked alongside and in close connection with the Party, the nation and the people over the decades. On behalf of the leaders of the Party and the State, I would like to send our delegates, distinguished guests, writers and artists present here today, and to all people employed in creative arts and literary works across the country my cordial greetings, sincere regards and best congratulations. I wish you, colleagues and friends the best of health, much creativity, happiness and new achievements in your noble cause.

Also, on this solemn and festive occasion, we will pay our respects and deepest gratitude to the writers and artists - the fighters

* The speech was delivered on July 25, 2018, at the 70th founding anniversary of the Vietnam Union of Literature and Arts Associations (1948-2018).

who have contributed their great works and sacrificed their lives in the revolutionary cause of the nation, to those who have passed away and left us with many valuable treasures, thus enriching and glorifying the arts and literature of our country.

Dear delegates, colleagues and friends,

As we all know, in our history of development over the millennia, Vietnamese arts and literature have forged a profound and unique tradition. It is the arts and literature of patriotism and humanity with a flesh and blood connection to the people and the nation. It has become a great internal strength, making a direct contribution to the founding, the defense and the development of the country.

It is not a coincidence that right from the start, our Party affirmed that arts, culture and literature are an important front, a unique strength of our nation in the course of liberating ourselves. In the Soviet Nghe-Tinh uprising (1930-1931), in the Democratic Front (1936-1939) and the League for the Independence of Vietnam, or the Viet Minh Front (1941-1945), the communists and patriots used arts and literature as weapons to mobilize the revolution from the prisons to the public and the Party's open press. Especially, the establishment of *the 1943 Framework of Vietnamese Culture* – the first strategy on culture by the Party – attracted and rallied the contingent of intellectuals, writers and artists to the “Cultural Association of National Salvation.” The association was a part of Viet Minh Front, contributing to mobilizing and encouraging our compatriots nationwide to make the historic victory of the 1945 August Revolution [to overthrow France and Japan.]

To build on the achievements of the Cultural Association of National Salvation, in July 1948, facing new challenges in the resistance

war against French recolonization which was at a turning point, the Vietnamese Association of Arts and Literature was established and became a place to rally many writers and artists nationwide to directly participate in the resistance war in a capacity of “artists as fighters” and “fighters as artists.” The association played a key role in building new, revolutionary arts and literature, as Uncle Ho instructed: “*Revolutionize the culture, culturalize the revolution,*” and “*Arts, culture and literature are an important front. You are the fighters on that front.*”¹

Our contingent of writers and artists were formed, grew and developed during the time when our entire country was resolutely fighting, with much sacrifices and hardships, against the French colonialists, the U.S. imperialists, and firmly defended borders and territories of our Homeland. They are immensely loved, protected and respected by our people. Many went to the front, one hand with a pen and the other with a rifle. Many have heroically died as soldiers. Our writers and artists were present in all fronts – political, military, economic, cultural and diplomatic, in any challenges and situations, and they always fulfilled remarkably their tasks.

Today, as we look back, although there might have been a few unavoidable limitations due to historical circumstances, we can still be proud that the arts and literature at that time made worthy contributions to our glorious national revolution for independence and freedom, for our reunification and the territorial integrity of our Homeland, and for our people’s happiness and aspiration for socialism. We are grateful to the previous generations of Vietnamese writers and artists for these achievements! Our thanks to

1. Ho Chi Minh (2011), *Complete Collection*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 7, p. 246.

the Vietnam Union of Literature and Arts Associations which has truly become a creative entity, a common roof warming the generations of writers and artists of this great and heroic historical period of our nation!

In the peaceful period of building and defending our Homeland, our arts and literature continue to build on their achievements in the period of the resistance, and at the same time, to be the voice of responsibilities and dedication. Together with our Party and people, since 1986, they contributed to the implementation of the renewal of profound revolutionary significance. Over the past 30 years, with the strong impact of the thinking of renovation, our arts and literature have overcome many difficulties and challenges to continue to grow, and to make great efforts to truly reflect the struggle, the work and the creativity of people's lives. They have initially created a new image of modern Vietnamese arts and literature, in which, on the one hand, to continue to promote the fine values in the tradition of national arts and literature of patriotism, humanity, and national identity. On the other hand, it is to closely reflect the people's realities in their diverse and complex struggle of today and their endeavors to strive for comprehensive, modern development of tomorrow, using diversified content and forms of expression. Many writers and artists are persistent in improving themselves and in working creatively on their own to affirm the new values of Vietnamese arts and literature in the period of industrialization, modernization and international integration.

With the above proud achievements, the Vietnam Union of Literature and Arts Associations and the specialized and local Arts and Literature Association have been awarded with many noble

titles by the Party and the State. Thousands of writers and artists in the country have been presented with the Ho Chi Minh Award, the State Award, and the titles of People's Artists, Merited Artists, Folklore Artisans and Merited Artisans. Many have been conferred with the titles of Armed Forces Heroes and Labor Heroes, which show the high regard, respect and appreciation of the Party, State and people towards the contingent of writers and artists. And at today's solemn ceremony, the Vietnam Union of Literature and Arts Associations has the great honor to be awarded with the Gold Star Order – the noblest order of our Party and State.

On behalf of the leaders of the Party and the State, I warmly congratulate, commend and thank the contingent of writers and artists and the Vietnam Union of Literature and Arts Associations for their great contributions.

Dear delegates, writers and artists,

During these days and months, our entire Party, people and armed forces, including the contingent of writers and artists, are striving hard to implement the Resolution of the 12th Party Congress to take our country to be further developed. Recently, the Secretariat of the Party's Central Committee has provided the guidance to summarize our 10 years of implementing Resolution No. 23-NQ/TW on June 16, 2008 of the Political Bureau on the continuity of building and developing arts and literature in the new era. Our Party continues to affirm: "Arts and literature are a very important area, a special subtlety of culture; they are the necessary requirements, expressing the aspiration of the true, the good and the beauty of human beings; they are one of the great, direct motivating forces, contributing to building the spiritual foundation of society and

the comprehensive development of the Vietnamese people,”¹ in the stage of industrialization, modernization, international integration and national development.

To best fulfill the great role of arts and literature, we need to place it in the overall requirement and task of our country. Special importance is to be placed on:

- Rapidly and sustainably developing the economy;
- Firmly protecting independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of our Homeland;
- Building and rectifying the Party, and building the contingent of officials who are sufficiently qualified, capable and respectable, on par with their tasks; and
- Expanding foreign relations.

These efforts are to create a new impetus, new driving forces for our renovation and for comprehensive and synchronous development.

We can say that the central and cross-cutting position of these main directions is still *the issue of building Vietnamese culture and people*, meeting the requirements of sustainable development for the country in the new era.

Dear colleagues, writers and artists,

The above is not about theory, but rather about great and extremely profound practical experience in nearly 90 years of the Party’s leadership of the revolution. This is also closely related with *the mission, function and role* of arts and literature: *literature is anthropology*, as M. Gorky affirmed. *The writer is the voice of his/her century*, as Honoré de Balzac once put it.

1. The Communist Party of Vietnam (2018), *Complete Party Documents*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 67, p. 653.

The main tasks of arts and literature in Vietnam today and years to come are to directly participate in the renewal, to provide interesting, honest, lively and convincing descriptions of the new and the beautiful in life, and to have the courage to critically condemn the bad, the degeneration, corruption, vices and social ills. With this, it can make an active contribution to the success of the building of people, the renewal and national development. This is also the unique power of arts and literature in the new era, as Uncle Ho once said: *“Your pens are also sharp weapons in the cause of supporting justice and warding off the evil spirits; this is the task that artists and intellectuals must do.”*¹

This means that the struggle to protect, nurture and affirm the novelty, the positive, the beautiful things and fight against the bad, the evils are the functions and tasks of arts and literature *in itself*, without any pressure from above or from outside. The Party has not put any pressure or imposition of a dry, simple, temporary “political” task on arts and literature. Rather, this should be understood as a mission and an inherent strength of any genuine arts and literature, especially in the struggle of today.

To effectively implement that mission, the Vietnam Union of Literature and Arts Associations, which comprises of specialized professional associations at the Central and local levels, should promote the creativity of generations of writers and artists and the advantageous characteristics of art forms such as literature, music, dancing, fine arts, photography, cinematography, stage, architecture, folk literature, theory and art critics in order to create diversity in the discovery and creativity of life and people. At the same time,

1. Ho Chi Minh (2011), *Complete Collection*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 5, p. 157.

they need to find suitable ways to converge these creativities to the highest goal: *To nurture and build the Vietnamese people of the new era.*

Together with that task, I propose to all colleagues and friends to frankly discuss and exchange ideas, with the spirit of deep criticism and self-criticism in order to overcome the limitations and weaknesses arisen in writing, theory and critics of arts and literature in recent years. For example:

- Being distant from real, important issues of the country, and pursuing small, insignificant topics to satisfy mediocre entertainment of a certain part of the public;
- Too much emphasis on the entertainment function, without sufficient focus on the educational and consciousness functions;
- Being too heavy on the negative, dark side of life, even distorting history; and
- Lack of proper selection of foreign arts and literature, thus leading to imitation and improperly pursuing foreign style.

Have the above limitations led to high numbers of works and authors, but with few works of quality regarding artistic content, thus reducing the public's interest in and passion for arts and literature? What is the measure to overcome these limitations and weaknesses?

I believe that the revolutionary arts and literature of Vietnam together with the contingent of writers and artists who have been trained and tested in the revolutionary struggle and in the renewal, with our glorious national tradition and building on the achievements of arts and literature in the past 70 years, will definitely overcome all difficulties and challenges in order to have more works to be worthy of the people and country of Vietnam, thus satisfying the expectation of our people.

To facilitate the development of arts and literature, our Party and State have always encouraged exploration, respected the freedom

and creativity of the writers and artists, built the mechanism and special policies for arts and literature, for writers and artists to be consistent with the socio-economic development of the country. The Party, the State and the people expect that the contingent of writers and artists will have many works of high value in artistic content that reflect truthfully, deeply and comprehensively the realities of our country in the renewal period, as well as the intensive and extensive integration that is happening actively and rapidly. There have been many new issues which are very different from the past in wartime and the centrally-planned, bureaucratic and subsidized period [before the renewal.]

This requires that *writers and artists should change themselves, with courage and attentiveness, with new ways of seeing, thinking and expressing in their art and literary works* consistent with the realities of development of Vietnam today. More than ever, the writers and artists should be close to people's lives, have the courage to go into important areas in agriculture and industry, in the market, on the security and national defense front; to remote areas and those of ethnic minority people, the border, sea and island areas in order to be able to discover and reflect the new elements, the good ways of doing things, the new issues arisen in society, take an active part in and have responsibilities for the social tasks, especially the struggle against corruption and negative practices, thus contributing to building the Vietnamese people who "are patriotic, humane, compassionate, loyal, united, diligent and creative." Only in this way, our arts and literature could give birth to good works that move human hearts and are necessary for the public.

As well, I would like to discuss and have a frank talk with the young writers and artists. As we all know, in our time, there are many things in life around us to speak and to write about, but

what is important is how to speak, how to write. Many people say that arts and literature should illuminate life, not just describe it; that arts and literature should foster and uplift human beings rather than a place to narrate personal stories, to devalue human beings. It is hoped that writers and artists are well aware of this and express it very clearly, so as to be worthy of the people's new hope. Never be content with mediocrity. You should learn constantly and draw good lessons from the previous generations so as to be able to move farther with firmer steps.

This lesson remains: Have great aspirations and a noble ideology, let our heart beats in sync with those of the country, live and experience the rich and excited realities of people's lives. Do not limit yourselves in your personal world, gnawing at pessimism, using small tricks to replace real talent, having a narrow-angled outlook on life, or even seeing arts and literature as simple things such as pleasure, entertainment, a game or a mediocre passion. The realities of literary life in our country and the world show that great authors are the ones with great aspirations and ambitions, visions far and wide, and the deep mindset. Only with great aspirations and ambitions of creativity can we go far with sustainability. The ultimate goal of the writers and artists is having good works, the works of high ideological and artistic value. They should reflect the soul and characteristics of the nation, the great and strong things of people and predict the future.

On this occasion, I also propose that Party committee and the government from the Central to the local levels should have deeper awareness of the important role and position of arts and literature in the renewal cause, in the building and defense of our Homeland. They should always encourage and create the most favorable conditions for the activities of arts and literature through

mechanisms and policies such as the financial support, the launching of writing camps, the field work, the discovery, training and fostering of the talents in arts and literature; the mobilization of all the resources, both material and spiritual, so that arts and literature can develop fast and make many more contributions in the coming years. This should be considered both as the responsibilities and the sentiment originating from the requirements of life, from the common cause of all of us.

Once again, I would like to wish the delegates, the distinguished guests and all of the writers and artists the best of health, happiness and success!

I wish the arts and literature of our country will have new development, full of thriving successes in the future!

FOLLOWING THE ROLE MODEL OF HO CHI MINH TO IMPROVE OURSELVES*

Our Party, people and armed forces strive to record the achievements to celebrate President Ho Chi Minh's 131st birth anniversary, the 110th anniversary when he left our country to seek ways for our national salvation, and the 80th anniversary when he returned to lead us for the Vietnamese revolution. With the joy, confidence and pride of our people across the country about the success of the 13th National Party Congress; the election of the deputies to the National Assembly, 15th legislature and of the representatives of the People's Council at different levels for the 2021-2026 tenure, today we are solemnly gathered at the National Conference for the preliminary summary of five years of implementing Directive No. 05-CT/TW of the Political Bureau on "Enhancing the learning and the following of Ho Chi Minh Thought, morality and style." This is very necessary and meaningful work to do. On behalf of the Party's Central Committee, I warmly welcome you and send to the leaders of the Party and

* The speech was delivered on June 12, 2021, at the National Conference for preliminary sum-up of five years of implementing Directive No. 05-CT/TW of the Political Bureau on "Enhancing the learning and the following of Ho Chi Minh Thought, morality and style."

the State, the role-model collective units, individuals and the delegates to the Conference my cordial greetings, my sincere regards and my best wishes.

As we all know, President Ho Chi Minh was a genius leader, “a hero of our national liberation and great man of culture,” the great teacher of the Vietnamese revolution, the exemplary international communist fighter. He passed away long ago, but the legacy that he left for our Party and people is extremely monumental and precious: It is the Ho Chi Minh Era; the Ho Chi Minh Cause; Ho Chi Minh Thought, morality and style; a brilliant example for us to learn and follow. He is the noblest symbol of patriotism and revolutionary heroism; the crystallization of the values of morality, mind, courage and conscience of our nation and our era.

He dedicated his whole life to our Homeland, our compatriots, to the cause of national liberation, class liberation, social liberation and human emancipation. It was a life full of sacrifices and hardships, and also an extremely glorious, noble, extremely pure and beautiful life. A great man has gone into history and become a legend right when he was still alive. His life and cause have become the revolutionary symbol, fostering the aspiration and confidence for the Vietnamese people and the progressive people worldwide in the struggle for independence, freedom, peace, democracy and social progress. “Our nation, our people, our Homeland have given birth to President Ho Chi Minh, the great national hero, and it is he who has glorified our nation, our people and our Homeland.”¹

1. Ho Chi Minh (2011), *Complete Collection*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 15, p. 627.

Thought, morality and style of President Ho Chi Minh are the priceless treasure of our Party and our people. It shines the revolutionary cause, which led each step to advance forward and win the victory of the Vietnamese revolution. Learning and following the thought, morality and style of President Ho Chi Minh are the necessary work to do and an extremely important, regular and indispensable task for our Party and people. First of all, it is for Party organizations, State agencies and government officials and Party members in fostering, training, contributing and serving our Homeland and the people.

We would like to ask: (1) What do we understand about *Ho Chi Minh Thought*? (2) *What is Ho Chi Minh morality?* and (3) *What is Ho Chi Minh style?*

Speaking in brief:

(1) *Ho Chi Minh Thought*: It is a system of very fundamental viewpoints, insights and the leading ideology of President Ho Chi Minh about revolution and the path to advance forward the Vietnamese revolution in the present time. It is the result of the creative application and development of Marxism-Leninism to the specific conditions of our country, the inheritance and development of the fine traditional values of the nation, the reception of the cultural quintessence of humanity.

He affirmed many times:

*“The country of Vietnam is one. The people of Vietnam are one.”*¹

*“Rivers can dry up and mountains can be worn down, but this truth will never change.”*²

1. *Ibid.*, Vol. 11, p. 264.

2. *Ibid.*, Vol. 4, p. 280.

“We would rather sacrifice everything than lose our country, than return to slavery.”¹

“Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom.”²

“Even if we have to burn the Truong Son mountain range, we are determined to gain independence at all costs.”³

“I have only a wish, a burning wish, to achieve complete independence for our Homeland and freedom for our people so that our compatriots can all be properly fed, clothed and educated.”⁴ Today our country has a worthy position in the international arena.

“If the country is independent but the people do not enjoy freedom, then independence can become meaningless.”⁵

That is why, independence must be connected to socialism, and national liberation must be closely associated with class liberation, social liberation, human emancipation. In other words, a socialist revolution must be carried out. Whether our country of Vietnam can become glorious, whether the Vietnamese nation can be comparable with the powers of the five continents, the important thing is to promote the strength of national unity, and to rally all the forces, ethnic groups, religions and all the patriotic Vietnamese:

“Unity, unity, great unity; Success, success, great success!”⁶

“If we want to save the country and liberate the nation, there is no other road than the road of proletarian revolution.”⁷

1. *Ibid.*, Vol. 4, p. 534.

2. *Ibid.*, Vol. 15, p. 130.

3. General Vo Nguyen Giap (2018), *The Historical Stages*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, p. 224.

4. Ho Chi Minh (2011), *Complete Collection*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 4, p. 187.

5. *Ibid.*, Vol. 4, p. 64.

6. *Ibid.*, Vol. 13, p. 119.

7. *Ibid.*, Vol. 12, p. 30.

“Now there are many doctrines, many –isms, but the most genuine, firmest and most revolutionary –ism is Leninism.”¹

Revolution is the cause of the people, by the people and for the people under the effective leadership of a genuine revolutionary party. Once the Party is strong, the nation is strong, because the Party is the vanguard, the leader of the working class, the working people and the whole nation.

(2) *Ho Chi Minh morality*: It is the revolutionary morality, the noble qualities of a revolutionary: hard working, thrifty, honest and upright, public-spirited and selfless. *Hard working*: It is diligence, devotion, wholeheartedness for the common good, for the country and for the people. *Thrifty*: It is the saving, without luxury and waste, particularly for the public property. *Honest*: It is decency, honor and purity. *Upright*: Straightforwardness, no servility, no cringing, keeping the pride of a good human being and an official. *Public-spirited and selfless*: It is to work for the common cause, placing the public interest above all else; without being selfish and self-serving. We are determined to fight against individualism, “sweeping away individualism.” Because “individualism is the internal enemy,” it is “the cruel enemy;” “it is very tricky, sly, it pulls people downhill without a break,” and so on.

President Ho Chi Minh paid special attention to the education and training of revolutionary morality. He often said: “It is like the river; it wants to have water, there must be a source; without a source, the river will run dry. The tree must have the roots; without the roots, the tree will get withered. The revolutionaries must have the morality; without morality, they cannot lead the people, in spite of their talents.”²

1. *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, p. 289.

2. *Ibid.*, Vol. 5, p. 292.

- *Ho Chi Minh style*: It is the way of life, the simplicity, modesty, progress-seeking, keeping close contact with the people, respecting the people, learning from the people, whatever you do, you do it for the benefit of the people; being the servant of the people, not the “mandarin of the people,” not “thinking you are a revolutionary mandarin.” Each government official and Party member should learn with self-consciousness, to strive hard to nurture and train so as to constantly improve the level of awareness, becoming the cultured and decent people who “are loyal to the country, filial to the people, to fulfill any duties, to overcome any difficulties and to win against any enemies.”¹

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In his lifetime, President Ho Chi Minh had paid special attention to the education and training of government officials and Party members. He often said: “Our Party is the party in power. Each Party member and official should really instill the *revolutionary morality*, really practice hard work, thrift, honesty and uprightness with public spirit and selflessness. We should preserve the Party to be truly pure, and should be worthy of being the leader, the loyal servant of the people.”² It should be clearly understood, “*All the successes or failures are due to the qualification of officials.*”³ “*Officials are the root of all work.*”⁴

That is why, special importance should be placed on education, training and fostering of the contingent of officials and

1. *Ibid.*, Vol. 14, p. 619.

2. *Ibid.*, Vol. 15, pp. 611-612.

3. *Ibid.*, Vol. 5, p. 280.

4. *Ibid.*, Vol. 5, p. 309.

Party members, and on building many examples of good people, good deeds. He recommended: “Good people, good deeds” (*Người tốt, việc tốt*) are like the spring flowers, setting a bright example of revolutionary heroism.”¹ “Take the examples of good people, good deeds to educate each other daily and this is the best way to build the Party, the revolutionary organizations, to build new people, new life.”²

In recent times, the Party has given guidance to promote the learning and the following of Ho Chi Minh Thought, morality and style very early with many instructions and resolutions through various periods. Of the latest, it is Directive No. 05-CT/TW of the Political Bureau, the 12th tenure, on “Enhancing the learning and the following of Ho Chi Minh Thought, morality and style” together with the implementation of the Resolution of the 4th Plenum, the 12th tenure, on “enhancing the building and rectification of the Party; preventing and pushing back the degeneration of political ideology, morality, lifestyle, the manifestations of “self-evolution,” “self-transformation” in the internal Party.” Many important, relatively comprehensive results with many new, creative and effective ways of doing things, creating the strong and positive changes with the intensive and extensive spillover in our Party and society, highly valued by the 13th Party Congress, notably: The leadership and guidance in learning and following Ho Chi Minh Thought, morality and style have been carried out seriously, methodically with good quality.

The training and fostering of morality in combination with the responsibility of setting good examples have shown positive changes.

1. *Ibid.*, Vol. 15, p. 542.

2. *Ibid.*, Vol. 15, p. 672.

Local Party committees, government officials, Party members, the heads of agencies and units, particularly the members of the Political Bureau, members of the Secretariat, members of the Party's Central Committee, have carried out the setting of examples by their concrete actions, with the motto "the senior level first, the junior level later," "the inside first, the outside later," and "learning is combined with practice." The creative communication work with strong impacts on and spillovers to the consciousness and actions of government officials, Party members and people has made Ho Chi Minh Thought, morality and style gradually become the spiritual foundation of society. Importance has been placed on the inspection and supervision, serving as an education and a deterrent, thus helping prevent wrongdoings.

These positive results have made a contribution to the struggle to prevent effectively the state of degeneration of political ideology, morality and lifestyle, the manifestations of "self-evolution," "self-transformation" among some government officials and Party members, particularly the leaders, managers and the heads of the organizations, agencies and units; to the building of the contingent of officials who have solid political competence, pure moral quality, have the responsibilities and correct motivation, are the vanguards in setting good examples and well fulfilling the assigned tasks, contributing to creating the breakthroughs in the socio-economic development, in building and defending the country.

Many difficult and complex issues in Party building, particularly in combination with Party rectification, have been mentioned in many tenures, and until the 12th Party Congress, they were resolved with recorded results.

From the movement of learning and following Uncle Ho's example, there have been many exemplary and outstanding collective

units and individuals that have positive impacts on the society, fostering the enthusiasm, motivating force, patriotism, national consciousness and the desire to dedicate and serve the country among social strata, encouraging the entire Vietnamese people to persistently and enthusiastically strive to successfully implement the goal of national independence in close association with socialism.

On behalf of the Party's Central Committee, I warmly welcome and commend the role-model collective units and individuals in learning and following Uncle Ho's example. These exemplary and outstanding collective units and individuals are the "beautiful flowers," who are culturing every day to create "a forest of beautiful flowers" for the country. The Party and the State recognize these results with high regards and wish that all of you continue to promote the recorded achievements, setting bright examples to lead and replicate them so that all the people can follow for mutual progress.

However, besides the above results, the implementation of Directive No. 05-CT/TW still has many limitations that need being overcome. These limitations are:

- The leadership, guidance, organization of implementation are somewhere, sometimes not yet resolute, not yet timely, not yet close to reality, not yet reflecting clearly their role and responsibility as the heads.
- The commitment of nurturing and training in combination with the responsibility of setting their examples of a part of government officials and Party members is yet to have a good result.
- The determination of the breakthrough link is still in confusion somewhere.
- The struggle to refute the wrong, hostile viewpoints is sometimes in the passive position.

- The discovery and commendation of the outstanding collective units and individuals in learning and following Uncle Ho's example are not yet timely and sufficient; the communication, promotion and encouragement of the examples of good people, good deeds still run short of persuasiveness.

- The struggle with the manifestations of degeneration of the political ideology, morality and lifestyle is yet to be strong; the criticism and self-criticism somewhere, sometimes have been carried out perfunctorily and superficially; the state of lacking self-consciousness to admit mistakes, buck-passing to objective reasons or treating somebody with indulgence and avoiding disagreements has happened in many places still. The inspection and supervision have been irregularly and irresolutely carried out; the scope and aims are still narrow; the effectiveness of warning and prevention of violations is still not high.

Dear colleagues,

After 35 years of renewal, from a poor country with underdeveloped material and technical foundation, socio-economic infrastructure, Vietnam has striven to record many great achievements of historic significance, *“our country has never enjoyed such fortunes, potentials, international status and prestige as they are today.”*¹ However, in the context of rapid, complex and unpredictable events of the world and domestically, the advantages and opportunities are intermingled with disadvantages and challenges, there are many complex and urgent new problems to the construction, renovation and development of the country.

1. The Communist Party of Vietnam (2021), *Documents of the 13th Party Congress* (English version), National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, p. 73.

Four dangers that our Party has warned about still exist and are even more acute to some extent. Hostile forces have tried to seek ways and means to accelerate their sabotage against the revolutionary cause of our Party and our nation, to negate the Party's leadership role, and to split the Party from the people in an attempt to overthrow our Party, our system. This situation has exerted strong, multi-dimensional impacts on the contingent of government officials, Party members and people, requiring us to further promote the learning and the following of Ho Chi Minh Thought, morality and style, to protect the Party's ideological foundation and struggle against the wrong, hostile viewpoints, thus meeting the requirements of the revolutionary cause in the new era.

The Resolution of the 13th Party Congress has pointed out: "In the coming years, special importance is to be paid to pushing further ahead Party building and rectifying in all aspects - politically, ideologically, ethically, organizationally and in term of personnel."¹ "Resolute and consistent to implement the Resolution of the 4th Plenum of the 11th tenure, the Resolution of the 4th Plenum, the 12th tenure, on Party building in connection with the enhancement of learning and following of Ho Chi Minh Thought, morality and style with the strong, resolute and concerted measures so as to prevent and push back the degeneration of political ideology, morality and lifestyle and the manifestations of "self-evolution" and "self-transformation" in the internal Party."²

Local Party committees, government offices and agencies, units should promote the results obtained in the past years, continue

1. The Communist Party of Vietnam (2021), *Documents of the 13th Party Congress* (Vietnamese version), National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. I, p. 180.

2. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 236.

to accelerate stronger learning and following of Ho Chi Minh Thought, morality and style. To seriously, effectively and self-consciously implement the requirements and tasks already pointed out in Conclusion No. 01-KL/TW on May 18, 2021 of the Political Bureau on the continuity of implementing Directive No. 05-CT/TW of the Political Bureau on “Enhancing the learning and the following of Ho Chi Minh Thought, morality and style.” To pay attention to thoroughly grasping and focusing on carrying out three issues: Learning from and following Uncle Ho and setting good examples of government officials and Party members.

Learning from Uncle Ho: It is to learn ideology, world outlook and revolutionary outlook, revolutionary morality and style of the genuine communist fighter. Enhancing the learning of Uncle Ho has become a way of life, the habit of thinking and the way of doing things of government officials, Party members and people. It has made the Ho Chi Minh Thought, morality and style deeply absorbed into the social life, really becoming the solid spiritual foundation, the great source of strength for the entire Party, the people and armed forces to promote the internal strength to overcome difficulties and challenges to fulfill all the revolutionary tasks in the new stage. It has made each government official and Party member imbued with Uncle Ho’s thought, unified between ideology and action, between words and deeds.

Anyone can be able to find there the moral standards that need to be learned, nurtured and trained to become the requirements and rules of life, wishing to strive to improve ourselves: Courage, commitment, absolute loyalty with the goals, revolutionary ideals; hard work, thrift, honesty and uprightness, public spirit and selflessness; keeping close connection with the people, to trust the people, to love the people, to learn from the people, to keep the flesh

and blood relationship with the people, to wholeheartedly serve our Homeland and people. We need to foster patriotism, the will of national self-reliance and self-resilience, the aspiration for developing a prosperous and happy country, thus making our country more developed, our nation more prosperous and everlasting.

As for the contingent of government officials and Party members who have been trained and matured, our Party will promote the strength, the resiliency and the purity to be worthy of the role and mission of leading revolution and the confidence and expectation of the people, “to be worthy of being the leader, the truthfully loyal servant of the people.”¹

Following Uncle Ho: To promote and create the strong changes from the “learning” to the “following,” to actualize it by the concrete action programs, the concrete and practical work in implementing the political tasks in localities, agencies, units and Party building and rectifying, in connection to upholding the responsibilities and morality in public services of each government official and Party member; to settle effectively the breakthrough links and the important, urgent issues in realities, on the foundation and lodestar of Ho Chi Minh Thought together with Marxism-Leninism in all actions.

To be imbued with Ho Chi Minh Thought on Party building and rectifying in terms of political, ideological, moral, lifestyle, organizational and personnel fields; to enhance the Party’s leadership capacity, governance and resiliency; to build the socialist law-governed State to truly be “of the people, by the people and for the people.”

1. Ho Chi Minh (2011), *Complete Collection*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 15, p. 622.

Setting examples: To implement simultaneously the connection of learning to following Uncle Ho and setting good examples. To promote effectively the relationship between these three tasks, in which upholding the role and responsibility of *pioneer, and example setting* of government officials and Party members, particularly the heads of the Party committee levels, governments, agencies and units and above all, the members of the Political Bureau, of the Secretariat and of the Party's Central Committee.

Each government official and Party member has to seriously exercise their responsibility of setting examples; those who hold higher posts and titles must all the more set good examples in nurturing and training their moral qualities, lifestyle and working style for the masses and the people to follow; must express their firm ideology, correct viewpoints, dare to think, dare to do, dare to bear responsibility and dedicate themselves wholeheartedly to the country and the people; to have the scientific and democratic leading style, close to the reality, really being the nucleus of unity, convergence, creating the motivating force and promoting the collective mind in the spirit of Uncle Ho: "A living example is more valuable than a hundred speeches."¹

"To improve revolutionary morality, sweep away individualism," to resolutely, persistently and actively prevent and push back corruption, negative practices, degeneration of political ideology, morality and lifestyle of government officials and Party members, the signs of "self-evolution," "self-transformation" in the internal Party, to make the learning and the following of Ho Chi Minh Thought, morality and style the regular work to do, the spiritual and cultural requirements in the Party, creating the clear imprints on

1. *Ibid.*, Vol. 1, p. 284.

building the Party culture so that it can really become a moral, civilized party.

In the process of implementing the above tasks, it is necessary to combine closely between “building” and “fighting,” in which “building” is fundamental and strategic; “fighting” is important and urgent.

- To display the spirit of “words going along with deeds,” “training for a life time,” regularly “conduct self-criticism” and “self-correction;”

- To struggle to prevent and push back the degeneration of political ideology, morality, lifestyle, the manifestations of “self-evolution,” “self-transformation” in the internal Party; to persistently and resolutely prevent and combat against corruption and negative practices with the spirit that “no forbidden zones, no exceptions, no pressure by any organization and individual;”

- To enhance inspection and supervision; and

- To raise the warning and deterrence in terms of the negative ideology and manifestations; at the same time, to encourage government officials and Party members to think and take action for the common interests, for the people’s happiness, thus making the Party truly pure and strong.

Dear colleagues,

Our people have a saying that “The Party members should go first, and the people will follow suit.” Having been through many periods of the revolutionary history, our people always believe that: “Our Party is very clearly-sighted in leading our nation to advance forward constantly to win one victory after another.”¹ “Our Party has

1. *Ibid.*, Vol. 15, p. 546.

trained a generation of revolutionary youth, men as well as women, who are very enthusiastic and brave in all the works they do. They are the “fresh flowers” of revolutionary heroism.”¹

I wish that after this conference, the learning and the following of Ho Chi Minh Thought, morality and style will continue to be promoted, to go deeper and to be more practical and effective, thus making an active contribution to successfully implementing the Resolution of the 13th Party Congress and the renewal, to building and defending the country. We strive to take our country to the mid-21st century, on the 100th founding anniversary of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, now the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, to become a developed country with high income, implementing the burning wishes of President Ho Chi Minh, taking Vietnam to be on par with the powers of the five continents.

I would like to wish all colleagues the best of health, happiness and success.

1. *Ibid.*, Vol. 15, p. 546.

THE 13TH NATIONAL PARTY CONGRESS: PERSONNEL ISSUES THAT REQUIRE SPECIAL ATTENTION*

1. Position, significance and importance of personnel preparatory work for the Congress

As we all know, in any revolutionary stage, in any field, in any locality, officials have always played a decisive role. Personnel work is not only the key link in Party building, but also an important link in the overall activities of the Party and a decisive element of success or failure for a revolution. It is not a coincidence when the Party was founded that Uncle Ho began with training officials. He affirmed: “Officials are the root of all work.”¹ “Success or failure of all work depends on the competence of officials.”² “Training officials is the root of the Party’s work.”³

In the process of leading the revolution, our Party has always affirmed that personnel work is under the stipulations of political

* The writing was published on *Nhan Dan Newspaper*, April 27, 2020, pp. 1, 3.

1. Ho Chi Minh (2011), *Complete Collection*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 5, p. 309.

2. *Ibid.*, Vol. 5, p. 309.

3. *Ibid.*, Vol. 5, p. 280.

direction to serve political tasks. Therefore, along with preparing political direction, it is necessary to actively prepare the direction of organizing and strategizing personnel work. Currently, together with preparing and starting the congresses of local Party committees, our Party is preparing the 13th National Party Congress, which is expected to be held in the first quarter of 2021. At the 8th Plenum, in October 2018, the Party's Central Committee, the 12th tenure decided to set up five sub-committees to prepare for the 13th Party Congress: (1) Documents, (2) Socio-economic, (3) Party Statutes, (4) Personnel, and (5) Congress organizers. On May 30, 2019, the Political Bureau issued Directive No. 35-CT/TW on the congresses of local Party committees in transition to the 13th National Party Congress.

Two most important contents of each Party Congress are: (1) the discussions and decisions of the political directions and tasks of the Party (to call it, in short, as the approval of documents); and (2) election of the Party's leading agencies (the personnel work, for short). These two contents are closely related to each other. They have to be well prepared, especially the personnel for the Congress which has an extremely important position and significance to ensure the success of the Congress and the effective implementation of the resolutions of the Congress.

The preparation for the personnel of the 13th Party Congress is the preparation for the personnel of the Party's Central Committee, the Political Bureau, the Secretariat, and the personnel for the main leaders of the Party and the State. The Party's Central Committee is the top agency between the two tenures of the Party Congress, an advisory division being battle ready, the heart of political leadership, and the center for harmony and unity of the Party and the country.

This is the contingent of strategy-level officials, the essence of the Party. Therefore, it must truly be strong, with the abilities, qualities, minds and reputation to be able to conduct strategy-level works, and to timely, properly and effectively resolve complex situations related to the building, development and defense of the country and the survival of our system.

The reality shows that in any circumstance, particularly at a decisive or historical turning point, the country's destiny is placed entirely into hands of the contingent of strategy-level officials. As Lenin once put it: "Give us an organization of revolutionaries, and we will overturn Russia!"¹ The collapse of the socialist system in the Soviet Union and some Eastern European countries was due to many causes, in which the very important one was the wrong selection and arrangement of some strategy-level senior officials, particularly the highest senior officials. We must affirm and deeply understand the importance and significance of this crucial work. It is not just about the organization of a Party Congress, but the work of strategic significance closely linked to the fate of our Party, the existence of our system and the development of our country.

After nearly 35 years of renewal and after more than 20 years of implementing the Resolution of the 3rd Plenum, the 8th tenure on the strategy of officials, our contingent of officials at all levels in our country have matured and developed in many aspects. The quality of officials has been improved, step by step meeting the requirements of the period of higher industrialization, modernization and international integration. The composition, age, gender, ethnicity, sector, profession and area of work of officials have

1. V.I. Lenin (2005), *Complete Collection*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 6, p. 162.

been more balanced and appropriate. The sources of officials have increasingly met higher requirements, ensuring the succession between the generations.

In general, the contingent of officials of our country have a strong ideological viewpoint, political competence, morality, simplicity and exemplary way of life, respect for organizational discipline, and constant self-improvement. Their qualifications and competence have been improved, and they have strived to fulfill the assigned tasks. Many officials are dynamic and creative, adaptable to the trend of international integration, and thus have the capabilities to work in the international environment. Most officials in leadership roles of the Party, the State, the Fatherland Front and socio-political organizations at all levels have the required competence, qualification and reputation. Strategy-level officials have political competence, persistence in pursuing Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Thought, as well as in the objective and ideology of national independence and socialism. They have the mindset for renovation and the capacity to plan for directions and policies, and to provide leadership and guidance for the organization of implementation.

Most officials in leadership positions of the armed forces have been trained and tested through practical work. They are loyal to the Party and ready to fight and make sacrifices for our Homeland and our people. Many scientific officials are dedicated to and passionate with their research, and have made positive contributions to national development. A number of economic leaders and managers are able to quickly adapt to the market mechanism, open-door policy and international integration, and organize the ever more effective production and business.

However, we should also say that our current contingent of officials is large but not yet strong. The issues of having a shortage and also a surplus of officials at the same time still occur in many places. The collaboration among different levels and sectors remains limited. The percentages of young officials, female officials and officials from ethnic minorities have not reached the target. There is a shortage of well-qualified leaders, managers, scientists and experts in many areas. The competencies of the contingent of officials are yet to be all-round, with limited skills and weaknesses in certain areas. Some officials, including senior officials, still lack professionalism or work in the wrong fields. Many lack foreign language skills, communication skills and the ability to work in an international environment. Many young officials lack courage and avoid training. Some officials do not maintain the ideology and will, avoid working hard, shy away from difficulties and hardships. Some even degenerate into political ideology, morality, lifestyle, with manifestations of “self-evolution” and “self-transformation.”

A number of officials in leadership and managerial positions, including senior officials, do not have exemplary behaviors and good reputation, and do not have the competence and virtues on par with their tasks. They have also violated organizational rules and regulation. They talk more than do actual work, and do not walk the talk. They are bureaucratic, distant from the people, fall into individualism, corruption, wastefulness, negative practices and group interests. Many officials managing State-owned enterprises lack self-training and Party ethics. They took advantage of loopholes in the mechanisms, policies and laws to do wrong and seek profit. They caused great losses to the State budget and property with serious consequences, and have been disciplined by the Party and tried by the law.

Since the early 12th tenure, the Party's Central Committee, the Political Bureau, the Secretariat, the Party's Central Committee's Inspection Committee have disciplined nearly 100 senior officials under the management of the Party's Central Committee. Some officials were tried criminally. The problems of buying jobs, titles, positions, promotion, votes, certificates and degrees, awards, and shielding from criminal prosecution, including among senior officials, have been prevented but still not completely fought back. These officials always think about themselves and their families first in everything they do and in any position they hold. They degrade their own reputation and honor.

We need to affirm that the growth and development of the contingent of officials throughout the past few decades are the main factor that decides our great achievements of historical significance in renewal, and in the construction and defense of our Homeland. Our country has never enjoyed such fortunes, potentials, position and prestige as they exist today. However, the shortcomings and weaknesses of some officials, and the limitations and inadequacies in personnel work, are important reasons that our national development is not yet at the level of our potential and strength as we wish, thus reducing the people's confidence in the Party and the State. The current situation of the contingent of officials, particularly those at the strategy level as mentioned above, has certain impacts on the preparation of the personnel for the 13th Party Congress.

2. Requirement for personnel work of the 13th Party Congress

The 13th Party Congress is a very important political event. The Congress has been organized at the time when our country has experienced 35 years of implementing the renewal, 30 years of

carrying out the Platform on National Construction in the Period of Transition to Socialism (1991), in which 10 years of implementing the amended and revised Platform in 2011 and 10 years of implementing the 2011-2020 Socio-Economic Development Strategy, in the direction towards the 100th anniversary of the Party's founding in 2030 and the 100th anniversary of the State's founding in 2045. The 13th Party Congress will be a very important milestone, with the significance of providing directions for the future. It encourages our Party, people and armed forces to continue to comprehensively and simultaneously promote the renewal, taking our country to a rapid and sustainable development towards the goals of "a prosperous people, a strong, democratic, equitable and advanced country," firmly advancing towards socialism.

The Party Congress is held in the context that the regional and global situation has experienced rapid, complex and unpredictable developments. Peace, cooperation and development remain the main trends, however, the threats to traditional and non-traditional security and climate change have been more serious. The Fourth Industrial Revolution, the intense development of the knowledge-based and digital economy, and the trend of globalizing human resources are both opportunities and challenges to our country. Domestically, the renewal and international integration have deepened, and our overall strength, international prestige and position have been remarkably improved, thus creating the foundation for our country's rapid and sustainable development.

However, the revolutionary cause of our Party and people still faces many difficulties and challenges. The four dangers (lagging further behind economically, straying off the path toward socialism, corruption and bureaucratic red-tape, and "peaceful evolution") which have been pointed out by the Party still exist and are even

more acute in some aspects. Political security, social order and safety still face potential elements that can cause instability. Hostile, reactionary forces' attempts to sabotage have become more sophisticated, dangerous and complex in the context of developing market economy, open-door policy for international integration, the expansion of global information and communications system, cyberwarfare and so on. Now is also the time of transition from the generation of officials who were born, grew up, trained and matured in the years of the resistance war, who were mainly trained at home and in post-socialist countries, to the generation of officials who were born, grew up and matured during peaceful times, who were trained from different sources and in many countries with different political institutions.

The ideological situation within the Party and the feelings of people are mainly positive, but there are indications that are cause for concern. Particularly, the degeneration of political ideology, morality and lifestyle, and bureaucratic red-tape, corruption and negative practices among some government officials, Party members and public servants have only been partially prevented and pushed back. The above situation shows that our Party's upcoming task is very heavy. To resolve important issues of the country in the coming time, the Political Bureau, the Party's Central Committee must make good preparations for the Congress to discuss and make a decision on the personnel for the Party's Central Committee of the 13th tenure in order to ensure the success of the Congress and of the implementation of the Congressional Resolution. This is very important work. This is also the issue that has received serious and legitimate concerns of our Party and people.

We can find that in any place, government officials, Party members and people are interested in, observe, express their

concerns and worries, and put forth the questions: How does our Party plan to select and arrange the contingent of officials in leadership positions (the Party's Central Committee, the Political Bureau, the Secretariat, particularly key officials) who are able to shoulder the great revolutionary tasks assigned by the history? The bad, opportunistic and hostile elements also take advantage of this occasion to distort information and spread rumors to divide the Party. These are manipulative and dangerous attempts to sabotage our personnel work in particular, and our Party building work in general.

It is clear that the personnel work for the Congress is very important but also extremely complex, difficult and heavy. It requires the Party's Central Committee, the Political Bureau, the Secretariat and the political system to work with the spirit of high responsibility and great determination and efforts, in a truly impartial, unbiased, objective and scientific manner, putting the interests of the country, the Party and the people above all.

3. The content, method and implementation

To prepare the personnel for the 13th Party Congress, the most important issue is to determine the right requirement of building the Party's Central Committee with the Political Bureau, the Secretariat and key leaders of the Party at the center. The building of the Party's Central Committee of the 13th tenure should ensure the following requirements:

- The Party's Central Committee of the 13th tenure should be a truly united, pure and strong collective unit with high consistency in will and action, firm political competence, pure moral qualities, and persistence with the goals of national independence and socialism. It should have a strategic vision, high intellect and mindset of renovation

and creativity, and represent the Party's resilience and discipline. It should closely connect with the people and bring about the unity and harmony within the Party and among the people. It should have the reputation and capacities to lead the country in the new period of development.

- To meet the personnel criteria, the Party's Central Committee of the 13th tenure should have sufficient quantity and proper structure to ensure comprehensive leadership, and to increase members of the Party's Central Committee in important positions, areas and sectors. It is important to ensure continuity, stability, renewal and constant development.

- In general, the introduction of personnel must be based on proper planning, along with: firmly maintaining the principles, regulations and stipulations, promoting responsibility, democracy, openness, transparency in assessing, introducing and selecting the personnel to take part in the Party's Central Committee, the Political Bureau, the Secretariat and the key leadership positions of the Party, the State for the coming tenure. We must consider political virtues, morality, lifestyle, multi-faceted competencies, reputation and work effectiveness as criteria for assessing, selecting and assigning officials to appropriate work. We need to fight against all forms of opportunism, thirsts for power, lobbying for personal gain, sectarianism, factionalism and interest groups, and to be vigilant against hostile forces' plots and deceptions to sabotage and create internal problems for the Party.

Members of the Party's Central Committee of the 13th Party tenure must be excellent Party members in terms of political competence, morality and professional competence. We must ensure the common criteria when selecting officials, with special importance placed on the following issues:

+ Have strong patriotism, political competence, commitment to the goals of national independence and socialism; absolutely loyal to Marxism-Leninism, Ho Chi Minh Thought, the Political Platform and directions of the Party, the Constitution of the State and the interests of the country and the people. Have high resiliency, be exemplary in implementing the principle and discipline of the Party, the law of the State; dare to think, to speak, to do, and to bear responsibility; to walk the talk, have close relationships with the people, dare to confront the difficulties and challenges, and be determined in action.

+ Have the pure and exemplary moral quality and lifestyle, trusted by government officials, Party members and people. Have high spirit of responsibility, dedication and passion towards work; no corruption, bureaucratic red-tape, opportunism, bribery or cronyism, and resolute to struggle against negative practices, bureaucratic red-tape and corruption; not allow spouses, children or relatives to take advantage for personal gain. Pay attention to maintaining the unity and harmony in the Party, be a role model in complying with assignments and organizational principle and discipline of the Party, particularly the principle of democratic centralism, criticism and self-criticism; be fair and transparent in assessing and assigning officials.

+ Have intellect, vision and strategic mindset and comprehensive knowledge so as to take part in making directions and policies and in the collective leadership of the Party's Central Committee. Have the capacities of making specific plans and leadership, guidance, organization of successful implementation of the Party's directions, policies and tasks, the strategy for national development in the new era in assigned sectors and areas; have proven through realities political competence, absolute loyalty to

our Homeland, the Party and the people, have creativity, devotion and work effectiveness, with clear, specific “products;” dare to think, to speak, to do, and to bear responsibilities; unite, rally and promote the contingent of officials in the assigned sectors and areas. Understand the responsibility for and be capable of participating in discussions, contributing to the common decisions of the Party’s Central Committee; and have good health to fulfill the tasks.

In short, the officials must have both virtue and talent, in which virtue is the root, as expressed in the poetic verse: “*Virtue is worth three times of talent.*”*

We must be determined not to overlook those with true virtue and talent and meet the criteria. At the same time, we must not allow people with one of the following shortcomings in the Party’s Central Committee of the 13th tenure:

1) Those without political competence and commitment to the Party’s directions and viewpoints; those with signs of political opportunism, seeking power, flattery, buying favors, corruption, bureaucratic red-tape, sectarianism, lobbying for personal gain, factionalism and “group interests;” and those with political apathy who do not defend the good and do not fight against the evil;

2) Those who violate the principle of democratic centralism, engage in demagoguery, abuse power and act as authoritarians; who are biased in assessing and assigning officials, taking revenge on people who provide frank and constructive criticism;

3) Those who allow serious disunity in their organizations, or let corruption, losses with grave negative cases happen in localities, agencies or units under their watch;

* “*Chữ Tâm kia mới bằng ba chữ Tài*” in the poem “*The Tale of Kiều*,” symbol of Vietnamese literature, by poet Nguyen Du.

4) Those who do not regularly study and learn, who are change-averse, stagnated, ineffective in their work, and do not walk the talk; do not either respect organizational discipline or follow their organization's appointment and assignment; and damage their own reputation;

5) Those who are dishonest in asset declarations, with signs of fast wealth accumulation including many houses, land lots and other assets without proper explanation. They and/or their spouses and children have shameful lifestyles. They take advantage of their positions and authority for illegal profits; and

6) Those who violate political stipulations of the past or the present.

Together with clearly determining and grasping the requirements, we must rigorously think out and specify the criteria for members of the Party's Central Committee in terms of structure, quantity of the members of the Party's Central Committee. We must balance well the relationship between *quantity and quality*. This is the issue of great concern in the process of preparing the personnel for each Congress. The overall and consistent viewpoints in the Congresses are: To meet the criteria, the Party's Central Committee should have a reasonable structure to ensure comprehensive leadership, succession and development. It is not necessary to have members representing each area or sector in the Party's Central Committee if there are no qualified people. Do not lower the criteria to fill the structure.

We need to introduce colleagues with sufficient qualifications for election to formally become members of the Party's Central Committee, who will then be assigned work in the Party, the government, the Fatherland Front, socio-political mass organizations, important agencies of the State at the Central and local levels and

the armed forces. Divisions under the Party's Central Committee and some ministries, sectors and localities with important positions, areas and fields need a higher number of members in the Party's Central Committee.

In the structure of the Party's Central Committee, the 13th tenure, we need to pay attention to ensuring the reasonable percentages of young officials, female officials and officials from ethnic minorities. Some scientists, writers and artists, leaders of State-owned enterprises and big corporations with full criteria can take part in the Party's Central Committee. Learning from previous tenures, the number of members in the Party's Central Committee, the 13th tenure, needs to be mainly based on the requirements, tasks and the demands of the situation, and on the need for comprehensive leadership in the areas and sectors. We must ensure the quality of leadership and the criteria of members, rather than trying to meet the target in quantity.

4. Our responsibility

At the 8th Plenum of the 12th tenure in October 2018, the Party's Central Committee decided to set up the Personnel Sub-committee of the 13th Party Congress. The Secretariat decided to set up the Assistant Team of the Personnel Sub-committee. The Personnel Sub-committee issued the stipulations on functions, tasks, power, principles, mechanisms and work methods of the Personnel Sub-committee and the Assistant Team. However, to well execute this important work, on ideology, guidance, method and way of doing things, we must pay attention to some of the following issues:

- The personnel preparatory work for the 13th Party Congress is not only the task of the Personnel Sub-committee, of the Political Bureau,

of the Secretariat, of the Party's Central Committee, but also the important task of the political system, Party committees and Party organizations, agencies, units and localities. We must effectively do the personnel work right at the congresses of Party committees at all levels so as to contribute to the preparation of personnel for the 13th National Party Congress. Party committees, Party organizations, agencies and units, particularly the organizations' heads, and where there are officials taking part in the strategy-level officials plan to be introduced to the Party's Central Committee, the 13th tenure, are held responsible to the Personnel Sub-committee, to the Political Bureau and the Party's Central Committee concerning the personnel they introduced.

- The relevant agencies and organizations, first of all, the Political Bureau, the Party's Central Committee, must make great efforts to plan the personnel preparatory work. They must be clear that this is an exceedingly important task, the "key of all keys," and closely linked to the existence of the Party, the fate of the system, and the development and strength of the country. Each agency, locality, each official who has direct part in the preparation should be fully and deeply aware of their responsibility, wholeheartedly taking care of the common work. They should put the interests of the Party, of the country and of the people above all. They should organize the review and draw experience, pointing out the strength and good results as well as the shortcomings and limitations of previous tenures, particularly the 12th tenure, in order to have the basis to map out the directions, requirements and tasks of building the contingent of officials for this 13th Party tenure.

The human resources work in general and the personnel work of the Congress in particular is of special importance as mentioned above. However, this work is extremely complex and difficult,

because it is related to human beings, the “human work.” As Russian writer Maxim Gorky said: ““Man” – it has a proud ring!” But human beings also have weaknesses. It would be quite delicate and sensitive to talk about these weaknesses. That is, how to properly evaluate and comment on each other, especially about each other’s shortcomings: when and where to say it, whether it is related to their honor, the system and policy on benefits, their positions and benefits and so on, and how to compare them with other people. This is very complex and sensitive issue, easy to cause problems and to make people feel tormented, and it could cause disunity.

Therefore, the personnel work of the Congress must be carried out in a thorough, scientific and consistent process to truly ensure impartiality, purity and objectivity. There should be “sharp eyes” in evaluating, introducing and selecting, in using the criteria of political virtue, morality, lifestyle and work effectiveness, personal and family reputation.

We must properly evaluate officials based on the criteria, select the right people and assign them to the right positions in order to build a strong team that is “in sync” and united. We need to truly promote democracy in identifying and introducing the personnel, and clearly determining the authority and responsibility of the relevant units and individuals. We must seriously carry out the principle of democratic centralism, upholding the role and responsibility of Party committees, Party organizations and especially the heads. We must fight against parochialism, sectarianism, nepotism and “group interests,” and avoid doing things in over-simplified, haphazard and unprincipled ways.

We must take every possible measure not to let in leadership agencies those who are unworthy, unqualified, especially those who have committed wrongdoings or are degraded in moral virtues,

those involved in corruption, buying positions and titles, arrogant, patriarchal, “kiss-up and kick-down,” shielding criminals, causing disunity, thus negatively impacting the Party’s reputation. Having these people in leadership positions means causing a disaster for the Party and enabling them to do more harm to the country and the people.

This work must be regularly inspected, supervised and followed up. The way to do this is to be cautious and to complete each link and each stage in a thorough process. We must be sure after completion of each task before moving on the next, starting with the personnel task of the Party’s Central Committee, then move on to the Political Bureau, the Secretariat and finally to the key leadership positions. If certain stages of work that need to be carried out simultaneously, they must be closely examined to ensure the tasks to be implemented synchronously and scientifically. We must have a thorough, proper and careful preparation, and try our best to avoid mistakes.

- More than anyone else, members of the Personnel Sub-committee and the Assistant Team of the Sub-committee should firmly grasp the functions, tasks and power and strictly comply with the principles, mechanisms, regulations and work methods. Those colleagues who provide advice to build and organize the process of personnel introduction, the review of the results of personnel introduction and the implementation of other works as guided by the Party’s Central Committee, the Political Bureau, the members of the Personnel Sub-committee and the Assistant Team must truly be reliable and absolutely loyal, honest, pure, impartial and objective. Especially, they must be vigilant, alert and astute, as in the Vietnamese sayings: Don’t “confuse chicken with bird,” “Don’t assume a fruit turning red is ripe” and

“Don’t be fooled by the good appearance, because it covers the imperfections on the inside.”

They must absolutely maintain the principle and work relationship, coordinate closely with relevant agencies and individuals to combat against negative manifestations right among officials in charge of personnel, the Congress delegates and the members of the Personnel Sub-committee and the Assistant Team. Especially, we must have thorough and concerted regulations and stipulations to ensure proper implementation of the principle of democratic centralism, objectivity and impartiality under the leadership of the Party, that is, the Party’s Central Committee, the Political Bureau, the Secretariat, the Presidium of the Congress.

- It is also necessary to add that in the process of selecting and assigning personnel, we should agree that there is no need to be perfect. Our ancestors once put it: “No one is perfect.” Humans have strengths and weaknesses, as the Vietnamese saying goes: “Even a jewel has scratches.” What is important is that we need to differentiate and accurately evaluate the nature and extent of the strong and weak points so as not to select the wrong people. We must organize personnel in suitable ways to promote each member’s strong points and limit the weak ones and to complement each other. This is to create a strong team, a relatively perfect leadership unit that does not cause harm to the interests of the Party, of the country, of the collective.

Our principle is “the collective leads,” “collective-based leadership,” and “leader of collective.” We need to pay attention to building, improving, adding and supporting each other so that members can improve themselves, and promote strengths and overcome weaknesses. As such, when each individual is in the collective unit, the unit will become better, more comprehensive and

stronger. In turn, each individual will also become better and further develop their qualities and capacities. We must make efforts to avoid the problem of “crabs rely on their claws, fish rely on their fins,” arrogance, looking down on others, and refusing to coordinate and cooperate with others.

Our objective and responsibility are to build a strong Central Committee, a strong Political Bureau, and a strong Secretariat that are truly united and highly unified around the top leader in order to have full energy to shoulder the glorious but heavy and important burden of leadership to fulfill the historical mission and political task. That is to organize our Party, people and armed forces to strive to overcome all difficulties and hardships to build our Party to be purer and stronger, our country to be more developed, our people to be wealthier and happier, deserving to the confidence and expectation of the entire Party and entire people.

PERSONNEL ISSUES: CRUCIAL TASKS TO ENSURE SUCCESS FOR THE NATIONAL CONGRESS*

Dear colleagues,

By implementing the decision of the Political Bureau, today we organize the National Officials Conference to review the organizational work of the local Party committees' congresses of the 2020-2025 tenure. This is the first time we have this review, aiming to timely assess and affirm the good work, to acknowledge our limitations, to share experiences among Party committees and Party organizations across the country, thus helping the Party's Central Committee prepare and organize successfully for the 13th Party Congress.

With this goal, we can affirm that this is a very important conference. Within the scope of more than 500 participants comprising all the members of the Party's Central Committee of the 12th tenure, the key leaders of provinces, cities, committees, ministries, sectors at the Central level and armed forces, this is the largest

* The speech was delivered on November 19, 2020 at the National Officials Conference to review the organizational work of the congresses of local Party committees for the 2020-2025 tenure.

National Officials Conference since the beginning of the tenure. Once again, on behalf of the Political Bureau, I would like to extend my warm greetings and thanks to colleagues for managing to attend the Conference. You are present here and ready to contribute your dedicated, responsible and useful opinions, bringing to the Conference a spirit of enthusiasm, unity, responsibility and high unity.

Dear colleagues,

After one day of serious and highly responsible work, the Conference has listened to the Report by the Political Bureau and various opinions of a number of delegates. All the opinions expressed highly agreed with the Report by the Political Bureau. At the same time, they have added, clarified and emphasized the contents and shared the rich, lively and useful real-world experience. Regrettably, we had limited time. Otherwise, I firmly believe that many other colleagues would have expressed their interesting and thoughtful opinions about the issue.

To conclude the Conference, on behalf of the Political Bureau, I would like to discuss some ideas to review the main results and further emphasize some issues to which we should pay attention, in order to focus on leading, guiding and deploying the implementation in the future. The immediate task is to continue to properly prepare and to successfully organize the 13th Party Congress.

Through the Report by the Political Bureau, the Reports by Party committees under the Party's Central Committee and the advisory agencies, the opinions expressed at the Conference and recent public opinion, we can affirm that in the overall context in the world, the region and of our country in 2020, and especially due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, natural disasters,

climate change, droughts, salinization, storms and flash floods in the Central region, but with our high determination, great efforts, resolute actions and the responsibility of our political system, we have successfully prepared and organized Party committees' congresses at all levels according to our plans, objectives and requirements. This has ensured safety and savings for the people, and left many good imprints and profound sentiments among government officials, Party members and people. Specifically,

- The building of the Political Report has been paid attention to and invested with much efforts with the scientific way and the serious attitude by Party committees, gathered the intellect of most officials, Party members and people of all strata. Based on the major orientations and the spirit of renovation in the draft documents of the 13th Party Congress, the Reports of almost all Party committees have made proper assessments of the results as well as the limitations, shortcomings and causes, particularly the internal causes. Especially, they have critically analyzed the opportunities and challenges, the strengths and weaknesses, the potentials, opportunities and competitive advantages of their localities. This is to work out suitable directions, tasks and solutions that are close to the reality and with high feasibility for the coming tenure, and also for the period up to the year 2030 and the vision to the year 2045.

The outstanding features of these political reports are that they have emphasized the comprehensive leadership role of the Party, further deepened Party building and rectifying, the prevention and fight against corruption, wastefulness and negative practices. The self-reflection report of Party committees have expressed political competence, resiliency, the spirit of self-criticism and criticism, self-examination and self-correction, self-improvement, frankness, modesty, honesty and responsibility, and overcoming the problem

of excessive deference and avoidance. The report shows enhanced unity and unification in the internal organization, overcoming the problem of focusing only on strengths and overlooking weaknesses, while the contents still repeat after the Political Report.

The study, discussion and contribution to the draft documents of the direct superior agency and the Documents of the 13th Party Congress have truly become broad political activities in our Party, people and armed forces. This shows the unification between the Party's will and the people's heart.

- The personnel work of the Congress has been much renewed, with focus on promoting democracy, impartiality, objectiveness, openness, transparency, carefulness, following the principles, process and stipulations, and ensuring the Party's leadership. The personnel work has been prepared in detail in all stages, making a contribution to improving the personnel quality at Party committees and to preparing the personnel for the Party's Central Committee. The issue of taking advantage of votes has been mainly overcome. The problems of buying jobs and titles, sectarianism and group interests have been sharply reduced. The requirements of standards, structure, quantity and quality of personnel have been mainly ensured. The percentage of members who are women and ethnic minorities in Party committees is much higher when compared to previous tenures.

- The organization of the Congress has been carried out seriously, solemnly, with renewal and according to the stipulations and realities. This shows the spirit of democracy, unity, enthusiasm and confidence. All the cultural, performing arts, sport activities and the activities to welcome the Congress have been adjusted to save costs and to be effective. They do not show unnecessary glamor and formality, reflecting the practical situation

of the COVID-19 pandemic and overcoming the consequences of storms and flash floods. No festivals and events that could cause waste were organized before, during and after the Congress. Many places have timely launched the mobilization of and support to the people in Central region to overcome the heavy losses caused by the storms and flash floods during the Congress. This shows the spirit of responsibility and unity, mutual love and assistance, and fine customs and traditions of our people.

- In the complex context of the COVID-19 pandemic, natural disasters, storms and flash floods, and with the responsibility to implement many other important and urgent tasks, the congresses of Party committees have been still held as planned, according to Directive No.35-CT/TW of the Political Bureau. Many localities have completed it ahead of schedule. By October 20, 2020, 100% of the congresses by Party committees have been held. As of October 29, 2020, 100% of the Party committees under the Central Party have been organized.

However, besides the strengths and successes, we also have to look objectively at the limitations and shortcomings in the organization of the congresses of Party committees, as pointed out in the Report by the Political Bureau. They are: the leadership, guidance, inspection and follow-up of the implementation by some Party committees which are yet to be regular and thorough. They have not timely and completely resolved complex problems that arise. In some localities, there is still the problem of spending too much time in the preparation of personnel, and not seriously placing importance on preparing documents.

The political reports by some Party committees do not have a strong overview and still lack focus. They do not highlight the leadership role and mode of the Party, or if they do, it is still

very general, thus difficult for implementation. The self-review reports by some Party committees do not objectively look at the reality, address the shortcomings, or point out the responsibility of the collective body and individuals.

The opinions contributed to the draft documents of the direct superior organization and the draft Documents of the 13th Party Congress are not in-depth. Specifically, some places have not carefully prepared the personnel work due to the problems of sectarianism and nepotism, in which family members without proper qualification, competence and reputation were brought into Party committees. In many places, the number of young officials is still low and does not meet the requirements stipulated in Directive No. 35-CT/TW of the Political Bureau.

Dear colleagues,

Until now, we can strongly affirm that the congresses of Party committees of the 2020-2025 tenure are crowned with success and met the set goals and requirements. This has left many prominent imprints and good feelings among government officials, Party members and people. But some questions have been put forth: how was this success possible, and what is the lesson learned from experience? In the Report by the Political Bureau, they have been pointed out quite clearly and specifically.

I would like to emphasize some of the main reasons: The Political Bureau and the Secretariat have spent much time, effort and thought to focus on comprehensive leadership and guidance; to pay attention to inspecting and following up the preparatory work and organization of the Congress; to timely issue Directive No. 35-CT/TW of the Political Bureau together with a series of the guiding documents of the Political Bureau and

the Secretariat and the advisory boards of the Party, to ensure timeliness and synchrony. The contents identify many renewals and are specific, concrete and reflect the realities. The documents are highly evaluated and strongly supported by Party committees and Party organizations.

Party committees, standing Party committees, particularly the heads, have upheld their responsibilities, are proactive, active and creative in thoroughly grasping and guiding the implementation of the instructions of the Political Bureau, in guiding, inspecting and following up the work consistent with the practical situation in the localities, agencies and units.

The success of building and rectifying the Party, preventing and combating against corruption, and that of the personnel work in this tenure, have made an important contribution to creating favorable premises to the organizational work of the Congress. A very important factor that should be mentioned is that they are great achievements of historic significance through 35 years of renewal, the comprehensive results of our country since the beginning of the tenure; the unity, unanimity and high determination of our Party, people and armed forces and the political system, the confidence and support of government officials, Party members and people across the country.

In addition to the reasons above, it is also necessary to draw the precious lessons of experience having the value of guiding the realities and contributing to adding the development of theory in the preparation and organization of the congresses of the Party committees recently. It is necessary to place special importance on the unity and consistency of will and actions in the Party, and the examples set by government officials and Party members in the spirit that the higher the position, the better the example that must be set.

This must start with members of the Party's Central Committee, the Political Bureau, the Secretary, and the Party committees at various levels, particularly the heads.

The preparatory and organizational work of the congress must be put under the focused and unified leadership and guidance of the Party's Central Committee and Party committees. They must conduct regular inspection and supervision and timely discover and resolve complex problems that arise in accordance with the motto: discover early and quickly, handle totally and effectively. They must properly implement Party Statutes, stipulations, regulations and organizational principles, particularly the principle of democratic centralism throughout the process of preparing and organizing the Congress.

Facing difficult, complex and sensitive problems, we have to maintain firmly the principle, consistently implement and promote democracy and collective intellect in the common interests of the Party, with the interests of the country and the people above all. In building the documents, we need to be fully aware of and to deeply grasp the viewpoints and the ideology of leadership of the Party, to promote the role and intellect of Party committees and Party organizations, government officials and Party members and people from all walks of life.

We need to closely grasp the realities, to place importance on reviewing the practice, to learn and build on the lessons of experience of previous tenures. We need to pay attention to the ideological work, to timely grasp the situation and direct public opinion using diverse and rich forms, particularly with sensitive and complex problems. We need to timely provide full information on the results of the Congress to government officials, Party members and people.

The personnel work is an extremely important issue to ensure the success of the Congress. We need to be deeply conscious of and carefully carry out this work. We need to organize the implementation in accordance with the principle, stipulations, regulations, process and to carry it out step by step, in each task, at each stage in an elaborate and cautious way, ensuring democracy, objectivity, impartiality, transparency and to keep doing each work with certainty.

Dear colleagues,

We are happy and proud of the recent achievements and successes. It is the efforts and mind of our Party, people and armed forces who have been consistently striving to prepare and work throughout the past tenure. It is the building on precious experience from the previous tenures. However, we are definitely not laid-back and self-satisfied. The 13th Party Congress is approaching, and the year 2020 is almost ended. There are still many heavy and complex works to complete. This requires us to always strive harder, with higher determination and more effective action. In this context, I propose that in future, we need to focus on doing well the following things:

First, with the experience and lessons drawn from the preparatory work to organize the congresses of Party committees, together with the results of this National Conference, Party committees and Party organizations should organize the study, thorough discussion, communication and promotion far and large in order to contribute to improving and enhancing the operational quality of Party committees. At the same time, they should serve as the basis for the next tenures, the next generations of officials in leadership to make references, inherit and develop so as to do this work more effectively.

Second, we need to quickly add, improve and issue the documents of the Congress. We need to assign officials according to the approved personnel plan, to do well the political and ideological work, and to pay attention to the policy towards officials who are not re-elected as stipulated. We need to timely issue working regulations, action program, working program, inspection and supervision program of the tenure of the Party committees so as to deploy the implementation and to quickly bring the Resolution of the Congress into life.

Third, we need to strive to fulfill at the highest level the political tasks in the localities, agencies and units in 2020 and of the whole tenure, to be proactive to continue the prevention and effective control of the COVID-19 pandemic, to be active to overcome the consequences of natural disasters, and to stabilize people's lives in the storm-and-flood-hit areas. We need to continue to enhance Party building and rectification, the prevention and battle against corruption, wastefulness and negativities, to further socio-economic development, to firmly maintain national defense and security, social order and safety, and to satisfactorily fulfill the tasks of important external relations.

Fourth, we need to continue to grasp thoroughly and to enhance the communication of the viewpoints and the leading ideology of the Party's Central Committee, the Political Bureau and the Secretariat concerning the preparatory work and organization of the 13th Party Congress, the outstanding achievements of the country in the past 35 years of renewal, of the 12th Party Congress and the success of the congresses of the Party committee levels. We need to foster and encourage patriotism, the spirit of the national unity, the will of self-reliance and self-resilience, the aspiration for the development of a prosperous and happy country; to be proactive

and resolute in the struggle to foil reactionary schemes by hostile forces to sabotage our Party and State and the 13th Party Congress.

Fifth, you need to bring the experience and precious lessons drawn from the leading, guiding work to successfully organize the congresses of Party committees, the result of this National Conference, the spirit of responsibility and great confidence from each of us in the success of the 13th Party Congress to contribute to the success of the Congress. This is an important political event in the political life of the Party and of the country, taking the country to a new development stage, ushering in the prospect and bright future of our country and our people.

The 14th Plenum of the 12th Party tenure will soon provide its opinion to approve the content of the documents, and continue to discuss the personnel work of the 13th Party Congress. A few days ago, the Political Bureau and the Secretariat gave their opinions to the draft Election Regulations at the Congress, the Working regulations of the Congress and the Stipulations of the rules of work of the delegates to the 13th Party Congress. The main content is to promote democracy, intellect, creativity, the rights and responsibilities of each delegate. At the same time, it is to seriously implement the principles, stipulations and regulations of the Party, of the Congress, firmly maintain the discipline, uphold the responsibilities of individuals, especially the heads of delegations.

As I said at the beginning, this is a very important Conference. It is important because of the contents being discussed, the number of delegates and especially the composition of the participants. I am told that about one-third of the delegates to the 13th Party Congress will be those who are attending today's Conference. They are members of the Party's Central Committee of the 12th tenure,

secretaries of provincial and municipal Party committees, heads of departments and ministries, and key officials of the armed forces. I propose that all of you bring the essence and energy, uphold the spirit of responsibilities before the Party, the country and the people, making an active contribution to the success of the Congress.

With your examples and experience in organizing the congresses of Party committees, contribute your efforts to improving the documents of the Congress, seriously abide by the working rules and regulations of the Congress and resolutely fight against opportunistic attempts, against individuals lobbying for votes, factionalism and group interests in the personnel work. We need to resolutely handle units and individuals who have committed crimes, be vigilant with plots of sabotage aiming to cause internal disorder by hostile forces and political opportunists. We must not let any negative acts, any unworthy things to happen, thus making a positive impact on the success of the Congress and on the love and hope for our Party and our system by government officials, Party members and people.

Dear colleagues,

We have been living in the last months of the year 2020 – a year with so much unpredictable turmoil and innumerable difficulties and challenges. It is a year filled with important political events, particularly the focus on the preparation and implementation of the congresses of the three-level party committees, and the preparation for the National Party Congress. Early in the year, we celebrated the 90th founding anniversary of the Party. In the middle of the year, we commemorated the 130th birth anniversary of President Ho Chi Minh. And yesterday, we celebrated the 90th founding anniversary

of the Vietnam National Unified Front – the traditional day of the Vietnam Fatherland Front. From now until the 13th Party Congress, there will be many more important political events. The whole country is enthusiastically holding many activities, many patriotic emulation movements to welcome the 13th Party Congress, which shows the harmony between the Party's will and the people's heart.

In this enthusiastic and heroic atmosphere and in this sacred moment of great significance, I want to express myself and make further emphasis with you – *the key and centered officials of our Party, the precious assets of our revolution, and the fine children of our people* – a few fundamental and key words of decisive significance for all works. That is, how to maintain the character, morality and honor, and to act properly as Party members, as revolutionary officials, especially as leaders.

1/ I want to repeat a famous, very emotional and profound sentence of the character Pavel Korthagen in the novel, *How the Steel was Tempered* – a famous literary work, the “bedside book” of young people and teenaged children in 1960-1970, by Soviet author Nikolai A. Ostrovsky: “Steel has been tempered by red fire and cold water, then it becomes hard and fearless.” I am told that all of you here have more or less been tempered and tested in reality and have fundamental education. I believe that you have enough capabilities, knowledge and courage to remarkably fulfill the assigned tasks as Pavel said: “fearless.”

The most precious things for human beings are *life and life's honor*, because humans live only once. Therefore, we have to live in such a way as not to regret wasting the years and months going by; so that we don't feel ashamed for the vile things we have done, the bad reputation and the contempt we are held by everyone; so that when we die, we can be proud that we lived a useful life when we

devoted our whole lives to the noblest cause in this world: for the glory of our Homeland and our Party, for the happiness of our people and all human beings; so that our children in the future will be forever grateful to us, respect us, learn from us and follow us.

2/ Uncle Ho always advised and spoke a lot about the characters of the revolutionaries, in which he strongly emphasized *morality and talent*, with *morality as the root*. It is not a coincidence that Uncle Ho spoke about 12 points on the character of the revolutionaries, including “Loyal to the Party, filial to the people ... Any tasks can be fulfilled, any difficulties can be overcome, any enemies will be defeated.”¹ Especially, Uncle Ho reminded that we have always to self-improve to maintain revolutionary ethics, to resolutely struggle against individualism, to see individualism as the cruel enemy, an internal invader without swords or guns.

In his lifetime, he wrote an immortal work named *Improve revolutionary ethics, sweep away individualism*. He emphasized: Individualism is a tricky, sly behavior; it pulls people downhill without a break; it spoils people, it corrupts morality; thus, we have to be determined to sweep it away. He himself practiced it and set a bright example. It made him a great man, a great leader respected and loved by the entire Party and people and international friends. I remember that after he passed away, writer Nguyen Dinh Thi wrote a very deep comment in the film titled *Ho Chi Minh – Portrait of a Man* (on the occasion of his 100th birth anniversary): “On this coat chest, there is not a medal; under this thin shirt, there is a heart!” And poet To Huu glorified: “So hazy is his cotton dress, there is a great soul. It is more than the bronze statue standing in the beaten tracks!”

1. Ho Chi Minh (2011), *Complete Collection*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 14, p. 435.

Dear colleagues,

Our National Conference has completed the contents of the planned program and has been crowned with success. We firmly believe that the success of the congresses of the Party committee levels of the 2020-2025 tenure is the basis, the very important premises to contribute to the success of the 13th Party Congress. On behalf of the Party's Central Committee, the Political Bureau and the Secretariat and on my behalf, I would like to send you my sincere sentiments, my wishes of good health and happiness. I wish that you uphold the spirit of duty, remarkably fulfilling your important responsibilities before the Party, the people and the country.

PARTY LEADERSHIP: PARAMOUNT FACTOR TO OUR NATIONAL SUCCESS*

*Distinguished Political Bureau, Secretariat,
Dear colleagues chairing the Conference,
And all colleagues,*

To implement the Resolution of the 13th National Party Congress, recently the 4th Plenum of the Party's Central Committee discussed and highly unified the promulgation of the Conclusion on enhancing the building and rectifying of the Party and the political system; on resolute prevention, push back and strict handling of government officials and Party members who are degenerated in political ideology, morality, lifestyle, with signs of "self-evolution," "self-transformation," and the Regulation on what Party members are not allowed to do.

To deploy good implementation of these new Conclusion and Regulation, the Political Bureau has soon built and issued the plan on the organization of implementation. Today the National Officials Conference is held online to disseminate and provide

* The speech was delivered on December 9, 2021 at National Officials Conference to scrutinize and implement the Conclusion and Regulation of the Party's Central Committee on the work of Party building and rectification.

thoroughly the key contents of the 4th Plenum of the 13th tenure Party's Central Committee and the plan on the organization of implementation in order to create a high unification in awareness and action in our Party. The presence of all colleagues of the Political Bureau, the Secretariat, the members of the Party's Central Committee and main leaders of the commissions/committees, ministries, sectors from the Central to provincial and municipal levels nationwide has reflected the serious and highly determined spirit of the entire Party right at the beginning of the plan on deploying the implementation of the Conclusion and the Regulation of the Party's Central Committee.

On behalf of the Political Bureau, the Secretariat and with my own sentiments, I would like to warmly welcome and congratulate all colleagues who have participated in the Conference in the center of Hanoi as well as the heads at the TV networks nationwide. I wish you good health, deep understanding and good organization of the new Conclusion and the Regulation of the Party's Central Committee so as to meet the requirements of the planned task.

Dear colleagues,

The Organizing Committee of the Conference has reported and fully popularized to you about the program, content and mode of carrying out the Conference. The Conclusion and the Regulation of the Party's Central Committee have also been sent to all colleagues and been disseminated in the mass media. Their contents are very succinct, clear, and understandable. You should study them directly and in detail. To help you understand more clearly and profoundly, I would like to emphasize and clarify some of the following issues. I focus only on the answers to three questions:

1/ So far, we have discussed and implemented much of Party building and rectifying work. Why does the Party's Central Committee still continue to discuss them this time, and why has the resolution been made on this issue?

2/ What are the new issues and contents this time?

3/ What will we have to do, and how will we effectively implement the Resolution of the 4th Plenum this time, turning the Resolution into lively realities?

1. Why does the 4th Plenum continue to discuss the enhancement of Party building and rectifying?

As we all know, the Party's leadership is the decisive element for all the victories of our country's revolution. Party building is always the Party's key task of extremely important significance for our country's revolution. Right from the beginning of the proletarian revolution in Russia, V.I. Lenin said: "Give us an organization of revolutionaries, and we will overturn Russia!"¹ In the theory of the new-type Party, V.I. Lenin pointed out the ideology: Party building must always go along with rectification and strengthening of the Party. To fulfill the role of political leadership, the advisory division being battle ready and the revolutionary vanguard, the Party must always be pure and strong politically, ideologically and organizationally.

Before leaving this world, in his sacred *Testament*, our President Ho Chi Minh recommended: after liberating the South and reunifying the country, the first thing we must do is to rectify

1. V.I. Lenin (2005), *Complete Collection*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 6, p. 162.

and strengthen the Party.¹ “The Party must be strong for the revolution to be successful, like the captain must be strong for the ship to move forward.”²

In the past 90 years, our Party has established and strengthened, and increasingly enhanced its leadership role, its strength and prestige by its own courage, vigor, intellect and advanced theory; by the proper directions that have brought about the vital benefits for the people and the country; by example setting, self-sacrifice, tireless efforts by the contingent of government officials and Party members; by a united, closely and solidly unified organization; by the flesh and blood relationship with the people, and it is trusted, loved, supported and protected wholeheartedly by the people.

The fact shows that ever since the Party was founded, our people have had an effective and wise leader. Thanks to that, we have won one victory after another, achieving many miracles in the 20th century. In the renewal period, our Party has led our people to overcome all difficulties and challenges, attaining great achievements of historic significance. Our country has never enjoyed such fortunes, potentials, international status and prestige as they exist today.

We have every right to be proud of the fine nature, heroic tradition and glorious history of our Party – the Party established and trained by President Ho Chi Minh, who epitomize the heroic Vietnamese nation.

Since the beginning of the renewal in 1986, our Party has issued many resolutions on Party building and rectifying, such as the Resolution of the 3rd Plenum of the 7th-tenure Party’s Central

1. Ho Chi Minh (2011), *Complete Collection*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 15, p. 616.

2. *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, p. 289.

Committee of 1992 on a number of tasks of renovating and rectifying the Party; the Resolution of the 6th Plenum (second time), the 8th-tenure Party's Central Committee of 1999 on "A number of fundamental and urgent issues on the current Party building," and so on.

For the past 10 years, right at the beginning of each tenure, the 4th Plenums of the Party's Central Committee have discussed and issued the important resolutions, conclusions and regulations on Party building and rectifying. This time is more profound, comprehensive and concrete than previous. If the 4th Plenum of the 11th tenure only focused on the discussion and promulgation of the Resolution on "A number of urgent issues on Party building," then to the 4th Plenum of the 12th tenure, there was a very fundamental addition and renewal on the scale and content, comprising all issues on "enhancing Party building and rectifying; preventing and pushing back the degeneration of political ideology, morality, lifestyle, the signs of "self-evolution," "self-transformation" from within."

The implementation of the Resolution of the 4th Plenum, the 11th and 12th tenures, together with the implementation of Directive No. 05-CT/TW on May 15, 2016 by the Political Bureau on the acceleration of learning and following Ho Chi Minh Thought, morality and style; Regulation No. 08-QĐi/TW on October 25, 2018 on the responsibility of government officials and Party members to set good examples, starting with members of Politburo, of the Secretariat and of the Party's Central Committee; Regulation No. 47-QĐ/TW on November 1, 2011 on what Party members are not allowed to do, and especially the establishment, addition and improvement of the functions, tasks and effective operation of the Central Steering Committee on Anti-Corruption all have brought

about clear and positive changes in the building and rectification of the Party and the political system to be pure and strong, and to be trusted, loved and supported by the people. This has made an important contribution to implementing political tasks in general, and the tasks of socio-economic and cultural development, ensuring national defense, security and international integration of the country in particular.

However, besides the positive results and achievements, the implementation of the Resolution of the 4th Plenum, the 12th tenure of the Party, still has limitations and shortcomings. Some government officials and Party members, including heads and managers are not fully aware of the importance of Party building and rectifying. They are yet to uphold the spirit of responsibility and to set good examples, with a faded ideology and lowered resilience, especially falling into individualism, not walking the talk, violating Party discipline and State law. Leadership capacity and resiliency, criticism and self-criticism, and the tasks of inspection and supervision of many Party organizations, government officials and Party members still have limitations.

The political system in our country is not yet really as pure and strong as we wish. Some Party members, particularly those who have titles and authority in the sectors and areas which easily breed corruption and negative practices, have not self-trained and fallen into individualism. They violated the stipulations of the Party and the law of the State, and have been handled with the Party discipline and criminally tried. The system of checks and balances and the sanction to handle the violations in many areas are yet to have, or if any, are yet to be specific, and the implementation is yet to be strict. The supervision activities of the Fatherland Front, the socio-political organizations and the people relating to the self-training

of government officials and Party members are still not effective. The synergy of the political system in protecting the ideological foundation of the Party and fighting to refute the wrong, hostile viewpoints is yet to be fully promoted.

There are many causes for the above limitations and shortcomings. The main cause is that the organization of implementation is yet effective. Some Party committees, Party organizations, leaders and managers, particularly the heads, are yet to realize the serious extent of the degeneration, “self-evolution,” “self-transformation” in their own localities, agencies and units. They are yet to be determined and to have sufficiently strong measure for guidance. They are still passive and wait for the guidance and instructions from their superior. They have not implemented the principle of democratic centralism, not setting good example, not being frank in criticism and self-criticism, and not fighting against the signs of degeneration, “self-evolution” and “self-transformation.” They have even fallen into individualism, sectionalism and group interests, tempted by material interests, indifferent and lack empathy for people experiencing difficulties and frustrations.

The 13th National Party Congress has determined the overall goals: To enhance the Party’s leadership capacity, governance and resiliency; to build the Party and the political system to be comprehensively pure and strong; to consolidate the people’s confidence in the Party, the State and the socialist system; to foster the aspiration for developing the prosperous and happy country, promote the will and the strength of the national unity in combination with international opportunities; to accelerate the renovation, industrialization and modernization in a comprehensive and synchronous manner; to build and protect solidly the Homeland, firmly maintain the environment of peace and stability;

to strive to the mid-21st century, our country will become a socialist-oriented developed country.¹ To implement this great, noble goal, together with the urgent, serious and thorough organization of implementing three strategic goals and the tasks and solutions set out by the 13th Party Congress, we also have to continue to grasp and effectively resolve major relations: between stability, renewal and development; between economic renovation and political renovation; between compliance with market laws and ensured socialist direction; between the development of productive forces on the one hand and the building and gradual improvement of the socialist relations of production on the other; between the State, market and society; between economic growth on the one hand and cultural development, social progress and equity, and protection of the environment on the other; between building and defending our Homeland of socialist Vietnam; between independence, autonomy and international integration; between the Party's leadership, and the State's governance and the people's ownership of the country; and especially, the relationship newly added at this Congress is the relationship between practicing democracy, enhancing legislation and ensuring social order.²

We have deployed the implementation of the above goals and the great and heavy tasks in the context that the world and regional situation continues to have many rapid, complex and unpredictable changes. Peace, cooperation and development would remain the major trends, but filled with multiple hurdles and difficulties.

1. The Communist Party of Vietnam (2021), *Documents of the 13th Party Congress* (English version), National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, p. 212.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 221-222.

Globalization and international integration will move on, but being defied by the rise of extreme nationalism and strategic competition, economic rivalry, and fierce trade wars. Impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, the world has been falling into a seriously multi-faceted crisis. The Fourth Industrial Revolution has developed vigorously, creating breakthroughs in various fields, bringing about both opportunities and challenges to all countries.

The disputes of sovereignty over the East Sea are still ongoing and complex. Climate change, environmental pollution, natural disasters, epidemic and the other non-traditional security issues, particularly the cyber security, have made stronger and multi-faceted impacts, seriously threatening the stable and sustainable development of the world, the region and our country.

Domestically, although we have achieved many important and pride-worthy results, our country still faces many difficulties, challenges, limitations and weaknesses. The reactionary, hostile forces, the political opportunists still continue to frenziedly sabotage us with very vile, subtle, dangerous and devious plots.

The above situation has required our Party to further enhance our capabilities and intellect, to be truly “moral and civilized.”¹ We have to make greater efforts in Party building and rectifying, in building our Party and our political system to be purer and stronger, to be on par with Party’s tasks. The Party must be strong to lead national building and development more rapidly and more sustainably, in which positive impacts must be promoted and negative impacts of the market economy, open-door policy and international integration must be overcome. The Conclusion of the

1. Ho Chi Minh (2011), *Complete Collection*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 12, p. 403.

4th Plenum this time on Party building and rectifying has closely followed the Resolution of the 13th Party Congress in order to build on and develop many important contents of previous resolutions, especially the Resolution of the 4th Plenum of the 12th tenure on Party building and rectifying.

2. What are the new essence and contents of the 4th Plenum?

There are four noteworthy points:

First, it is broader in content and in scope, and more proactive in launching stronger guidelines of thought. The Conclusion of the Party's Central Committee has expanded not only in Party building and rectifying, but also included the building of the political system. It is not only for Party members, Party committees and Party organizations, but also expanded to government officials, public servants and civil servants, all-level governments, agencies and units in the political system. This is particularly in agencies of law enforcement, those with titles and authorities, places where there are many privileges and special advantages, including agencies responsible for prevention and combat against corruption and negative practices, in the spirit of the Resolution of the 13th Party Congress: to build the Party and the political system to be comprehensively pure and strong.

Together with the deterrence and push-back, it is also necessary to be proactive in prevention, to resolutely fight and strictly handle the degeneration in political ideology, morality, lifestyle and the behaviors of corruption and negativity. At the same time, we need to add and clarify signs of the degeneration in the political ideology and morality, lifestyle, "self-evolution," "self-transformation," "negativity" to reflect the reality more closely. We emphasize that the most dangerous is the faded revolutionary ideals,

not committed to the socialist path, vagueness, wavering and lack of confidence; speaking and acting the opposite of the Party's viewpoint and direction; a decline in resilience, lack of courage to defend the good and fight against the evil; or even promoting the wrong viewpoints and distorted thinking. They no longer have the thought and desire to dedicate wholeheartedly to the country, to the people. They do not fulfill their obligations and responsibilities, and not to properly follow the principles of Party building and the organization of Party activities.

The degeneration of morality and lifestyle is shown by living a selfish life; being greedy, opportunistic, profit-seeking, power hungry, corruptible and negative. It is the factionalism, sectionalism, disunity, bureaucracy, distance from the people, and lack empathy for the people who experience difficulties and frustrations. From the decline in political ideology, morality, and lifestyle to “self-evolution,” “self-transformation” is only a short, even very short distance. It is unpredictably dangerous and could lead to lending hands for bad elements, hostile forces and the opportunists who have betrayed the ideology and the revolutionary cause of the Party and the nation.

The Conclusion of the 4th Plenum of the 13th Party tenure has affirmed that the degeneration of the political ideology, morality, lifestyle, corruption, negative practices, “self-evolution,” “self-transformation” from within has been attributed to both internal and external causes. The internal is the main cause, originating from the officials and Party members themselves who lacked self-improvement. Their ideological stand is not firm, and they have fallen into individualism and forgotten their responsibilities and obligations before the Party and the people. The principle of

democratic centralism has been loosened, the principle of self-criticism and criticism has not been strictly implemented.

There are still many points which are not yet conforming to the study, amendment and promulgation of mechanism, policies, laws suitable to the socialist-oriented market economy. Many documents still lack concrete sanctions and not yet been strictly implemented. The management of government officials and Party members is still loose. The assessment, appointment and assignment of government officials in many cases have still been treated with indulgence and sectionalism. Political and ideological education for officials and Party members has not been attached with proper importance, which sees slow renovation and ineffectiveness. The inspection, supervision, maintenance of discipline and order in many places have not been regularly and strictly carried out. The role of the people in inspection, debates and opinion contribution to the building of the Party, the building of the government through the Fatherland Front, socio-political organizations among other forms has not yet been fully and effectively promoted.

Second, the goals determined this time are higher and closer to the new reality. We need to meet the new demands and tasks in the context that the domestic and international situation has seen many changes as mentioned above; to build on and promote the results and achievements of historic significance recorded by our Party, people and armed forces in the past 35 years, in which there are the very important results and achievements and the experience and lessons learned in 10 years of implementing the Resolution of the 4th Plenum of the 11th Party tenure and in 5 years of implementing the Resolution of the 4th Plenum, the 12th Party tenure on Party building and rectifying. The Conclusion of the 4th Plenum this time has

profoundly grasped the essence of the Resolution of the 13th Party Congress in order to determine the new goals:

- To promote the building and rectification of the Party and the political system with a view to improving the Party's leadership capacity, governance and resiliency, and efficiency and effectiveness of the State governance;

- To renew the content and method and improve the quality of activities of the Vietnam Fatherland Front and socio-political organizations;

- To resolutely struggle against individualism, and to prevent, push back and strictly handle government officials and Party members who are degenerated in their political ideology, morality, lifestyle, and with signs of "self-evolution," "self-transformation;"

- To clearly and harmoniously combine "building" with "combating," in which "building" is the long-term, strategic and fundamental task, and "combating" is the urgent, frequent and important task;

- To newly develop the Party's intellect and political competence in order to be truly moral and civilized, to remain close with the people and loved by the people; and

- To have the leadership capacity and prestige to successfully implement the Resolution of the 13th Party Congress and the cause of building and defending our Homeland.

Third, we need to add and clarify in a more synchronous and sharper manner a number of tasks and measures in the coming time. The Conclusion has built on, added, clarified and requested to implement more simultaneously and resolutely many specific and effective works by focusing on four groups of tasks and solutions set out by the 4th Plenum of the 12th Party tenure on (1) political and

ideological work, self-criticism and criticism; (2) mechanisms, policies; (3) inspection, supervision and discipline of the Party; and (4) the promotion of the role of the people, the Fatherland Front and socio-political organizations.

At the same time, we need to add and emphasize groups of tasks and solutions on “focusing on building the contingent of officials at different levels, particularly those at the strategic level and the heads, in combination with renovation, arrangement of the organization and apparatus of the political system to be streamlined and able to operate efficiently and effectively.”¹ We need to ensure the principle of the Party’s unified leadership in the personnel work and management of officials, to thoroughly grasp the role of the personnel work as “the key of all keys.” This has had decisive significance for all the successes of our revolution, both in the immediate and in the long terms.

The personnel work must be combined with the implementation of the Party’s guidelines on the apparatus organization of the political system and firmly maintain the governing position. We need to ensure the Party’s role in direct and comprehensive leadership, and the State’s efficiency and effectiveness in governance, and to renew the content and method and improve the quality of the activities of the Fatherland Front and socio-political organizations.

We need to continue to seriously and effectively implement Resolution No. 26-NQ/TW of May 19, 2018 by the Party’s Central Committee, the 12th tenure, “focusing on building the contingent of

1. The Communist Party of Vietnam (2021), *The Documents of the 4th Plenum of the Party’s Central Committee, the 13th tenure*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, p. 96.

officials at various levels, particularly the strategic level, with the required virtues, competence and reputation on par with their tasks,” with the strong political competence, pure revolutionary morality, wholeheartedly serving our Homeland and people.

Officials in all positions must always be aware of their own responsibilities, to “play the right role, perform the right task,” to have true qualities and effectively fulfill their assigned tasks. They must closely connect to the people and be trusted and loved by the people. They need to effectively implement the direction of encouraging and protecting officials who are dynamic, creative, daring to think, to speak and to do, and those who always act for the common interests. They have to pay attention to building the contingent of scientists, managers, female officials, young officials, and officials from the ethnic minorities.

They must seriously carry out the principle of democratic centralism, promote democracy together with enhancing the responsibilities of the Party committees and the heads in the personnel work. They have to truly and effectively improve the system of checks and balances in the personnel work; to ensure the stipulations, process, impartiality, objectiveness, thoroughness and carefulness in each stage of the personnel work. They must not let those who are not qualified, those with signs of political opportunism and power-hungry to stand in the rank of leadership and management officials at all levels.

They need to pilot the direction such as:

- The heads have the authority to select, recommend and be responsible for their recommendation of officials in the planning, to elect and appoint their deputies;

- The secretaries at Party committees recommend members to be elected to the standing committee and must be responsible for their recommendation; and
- The heads have the authority to appoint officials in the planning, to release the responsibility of the heads right below their level, and will be responsible for their decision.

The pilots of competition and selection of leaders and managers at various levels would then need to be summarized and evaluated.

They need to improve the quality of the evaluation of officials to ensure impartiality and objectivity, with clear criteria and concrete outputs, and to link individual with collective evaluation with specific outcomes in implementing the tasks in their localities, agencies and units. They need to timely remove, ask to resign and replace officials who do not have the required competence and ethics or those who violated the rules. There is no need to wait until their terms expire or the end of their appointments. We must absolutely fight against sectionalism and factionalism, “group interests” and other negative practices.

They need to renew and enhance the effectiveness of the planning and rotation of officials. They have to be proactive to identify the sources of leadership and management officials at different levels, particularly strategic-level officials, for the 2025-2030 tenure and prepare for the next tenures. It is important to ensure the continuity, stability, renovation and development towards improving the quality and ensuring the proper quantity and structure. The rotation of officials has to be consistent with planned titles, and the balance and harmony between the rotation of officials and the development of current officials in the organization have to be ensured. They need to improve horizontal and vertical rotation,

and the rotation of officials of the Fatherland Front and socio-political organizations to other fields, and vice versa. They need to increase the quantity of officials with competence, knowledge and capabilities to key localities and challenging and complex areas, and to avoid situations of staying put in the personnel work. They need to continue to effectively implement the directions of appointing key leadership positions to those who are not local people.

Fourth, we need to comprehensively complement and improve the mechanisms and institutions of building and rectifying the Party and the political system, and preventing and fighting against corruption and negative practices. The new Conclusion and Regulation examined and promulgated by the Party's Central Committee at this Conference aim at making an important contribution to building on, complementing and developing the Party's stipulations on building and rectifying the Party and the political system, and preventing and fighting against corruption and negative practices, based on an effective combination of building and combating, of building revolutionary morality and combating against individualism.

To build the revolutionary morality, together with the Resolution of the 4th Plenum, the 12th Party tenure on Party building and rectifying, we already have Directive No. 05-CT/TW of May 15, 2016 and Conclusion No. 01-KL/TW of May 18, 2021 by the Political Bureau, the 12th tenure on the continuity of implementing the aforementioned Directive No. 05; Regulation No. 08-QĐi/TW of the Party's Central Committee on the responsibility of government officials and Party members to set good examples, starting with members of Politburo, of the Secretariat and of the Party's Central Committee.

To combat against individualism, together with the Resolution of the 4th Plenum, the 12th tenure, on Party building and rectifying

and the Conclusion of this Plenum, we have another new Regulation on what Party members are not allowed to do – the important basis to consider and handle violations of government officials and Party members, and to prevent and combat against corruption and negative practices.

We need to focus on two groups of problems:

(1) The group of regulations on degenerated behaviors in political ideology, morality, lifestyle, and signs of “self-evolution,” “self-transformation,” such as distorting and denying Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Thought; not complying with the principles of organization and operation of the Party; not fulfilling responsibility in setting good examples; falling into individualism, opportunism and materialism; “tenure mindset,” false unity, superficial democracy, not defending what is right and not fighting against what is wrong; authoritarian, abusing power, bureaucratic, and distant from the people.

(2) The group of regulations on wrongdoings in the personnel work, such as buying jobs and titles, covering up, aiding and abetting; influencing organizations or individuals to have themselves or their friends and relatives to be hired, recruited, planned, rotated, appointed, nominated, rewarded, awarded with titles, admitted to school, sent to study or work abroad; improperly implementing personnel rules and policies that go against the regulations; intervening and influencing the inspection, supervision, audit, investigation, prosecution, trial, execution and pardon; covering up and abetting behaviors that violate the stipulations of the Party, the law of the State; pressuring and bribing organizations and individuals in order to lessen responsibility and penalty for other people; taking advantage of their titles, authority and positions for financial gains, embezzlement, bribery, wastefulness, negative practices – specifically,

intervening and influencing for their spouses and friends to receive project funding and government procurement, and so on; and covering up profit-driven crimes, corruption, negative practices, “group interests,” factionalism, sectionalism and so on.

On the other hand, there are new regulations on the supervision of certification and recognition of diplomas and degrees, citizenship, income, money transfer and asset buying abroad. These new regulations can be seen as “special medicine” to help us prevent, fight against and treat the diseases in the body of the Party and the political system. They help government officials and Party members increase their resistance to corruption and degeneration in political ideology, morality, ethics and lifestyle, which contributes to the protection and handling of degeneration and negative practices more strongly and resolutely, firmly maintaining the discipline of the Party.

Especially on November 3, 2021, the Political Bureau issued Regulation No. 41-QĐ/TW “on the dismissal and resignation for officials,” which stipulates the principle, authority, evidence and process of considering the dismissal and resignation for those who commit wrongdoings and no longer have the ethics and competence to do their work. There is no need to wait until the end of the term or the time of new appointment.

With the expansion of content and scope of Party building and rectifying and the prevention and fight against corruption and negative practices to the whole political system and institution, the task of building the Party and the political system to be pure and strong has also become more comprehensive and simultaneous. Together with the Party’s regulations, we also have the State’s legal system, which is being improved step by step, particularly the law on government officials and public servants, emulation and rewards,

on the prevention and fight against corruption and negative practices, and on encouraging and protecting those who dare to think, to speak, to do and to bear responsibilities with a pure motivation for the common good. The institutions to continue to promote the implementation of the Resolution of the 4th Plenum of the 12th tenure and the Conclusion and the Regulation of this Plenum have also been expanded more comprehensively and synchronously.

Together with Party committees and Party organizations from the Central to the grassroots levels, we have the participation of the government at different levels, the Vietnam Fatherland Front, socio-political organizations, and agencies and units of the political system. Especially, to strengthen the prevention and fighting against corruption and negative practices with higher efficiency and effectiveness, besides the Central Steering Committee on Anti-Corruption and negative practices and the Party building divisions, we also have the system of State agencies, particularly judiciary agencies such as the Court, the Procuracy, Inspection, Audit, the Justice, Public Security, Army, among others.

3. What will we have to do and how to effectively implement the Resolution of the 4th Plenum on Party building and rectifying?

A very important issue of decisive significance is how to organize an effective implementation of the new Conclusion and Regulation of this Plenum with concrete results, together with continuing to enhance the implementation of the Resolution of the 4th Plenum of the 12th tenure on Party building and rectifying. From the successful and unsuccessful lessons of experience learned from the implementation of the Resolution of the 4th Plenum of the recent 11th and the 12th tenures, and in order to have a higher

unification in our understanding and to organize an effective implementation of the Conclusion and the Regulation of the Party's Central Committee this time, I would like to further emphasize the following issues:

First, you need to be fully and deeply aware of the goals, significance, requirements and content of the Conclusion and the Regulation, to firmly grasp the guiding line of thoughts and the tasks. Based on this, you need to have a high unification in the will and determination, to fully understand our responsibilities in order to set good examples in implementing and to guide and organize the implementation of the Conclusion and the Regulation in your position and at the organization in your charge. You need to organize a thorough campaign in political activities on building and rectifying the Party and the political system to be comprehensively pure and strong.

Second, right after this Conference, based on the Conclusion and the Regulation of the Party's Central Committee and the Plan of the Political Bureau, the guidance of the Central Party committees/commissions and higher-level agencies, Party committees and Party organizations at various levels, sectors, agencies and units in the political system should urgently build an action plan and a learning program to grasp and deploy the implementation of the Conclusion and the Regulation, together with continuing to accelerate the implementation of the Resolution of the 4th Plenum, the 12th tenure, consistent with specific conditions of each locality, sector, agency and unit. This task should be carried out seriously and effectively, with the clear, thorough and concrete delegation of leadership and guiding responsibilities, and avoid indifference and superficiality.

Third, you must implement the tasks and solutions comprehensively and synchronously, with emphasis on important points. This also includes the implementation of ten tasks pointed out in the Resolution of the 13th Party Congress, the resolutions, conclusions, directives and regulations of the Party and the laws of the State, in which to closely combine between “building and opposing,” “opposing and building.” You must enhance the learning and following of Ho Chi Minh Thought, morality and style, to promote role models of good people and good deeds, to prevent, warn, criticize and strictly handle the wrongdoings; and to vigorously fight against corruption, degeneration, negative practices and behaviors that violate the Party’s discipline and the State’s laws. You should strengthen the education, training and management of Party members, government officials, public servants and civil servants to carry out more strongly and resolutely the inspection, supervision, audit, investigation, prosecution and trial of functional agencies, to increase the resilience of grassroots Party organizations, and to promote the role of supervision of the people, mass organizations, the press and public opinion.

Fourth, each government official and Party member, first of all leaders and managers at all levels, especially the heads and the ones with responsibility should set good examples by starting the work – immediately after this Conference without delay. Based on the Resolution, the Conclusion and the Regulation this time, we should conduct serious self-criticism and criticism and examine ourselves, our units and our families in order to promote the positive, to overcome the shortcoming, and to correct the negative. All Party members must do this, not to stand outside and “judge,” “wait and see,” or thinking that it does not concern you.

Self-criticism and criticism must be carefully prepared, and closely and meticulously guided. You need:

- To conduct them seriously and cautiously, be sure after completion of each task before moving on the next to ensure specific and practical results;

- To avoid indifference and superficiality, and to overcome the problem of “going easy” on each other, or even turning self-criticism and criticism into praising each other;

- At the same time, to avoid taking advantage of self-criticism and criticism to fight or to degrade one another, with malicious intent; and

- To strictly handle cases of revenge on people who offer criticism, and slandering other people.

Experience shows that if we want to have good results in self-criticism and criticism, it is important to maintain the Party principle and promote democracy in the Party. The heads should do it first: they should practice democracy so that the people can give their opinions on government officials and Party members, and should seriously act on legitimate criticisms. In serious cases when the wrongdoers are not sincere and do not accept criticism and assistance from the organization, they have to be handled appropriately.

The attitudes of over-deference, avoidance, right-wing deviation, “turning a blind eye to protect one’s own interests,” extremism, taking advantage of criticism to attack other people, and causing internal problems are wrong. Self-criticism and criticism require everyone to have mindfulness (*trình thân tự giác*), high sense of responsibility, true love of fellowship and the courage to provide honest and sincere criticism. This is also an occasion to better

understand officials, to have evidence to evaluate officials, and to examine and prepare for the personnel planning in the time to come.

Fifth, we must place the implementation of the Conclusion, the Regulation of this Plenum and the Resolution of the 4th Plenum, the 12th tenure on Party building and rectifying in the overall implementation of other resolutions of the Party's Central Committee, the National Assembly and the Government. In a broader sense, it is the overall implementation of regular political tasks of the political system to ensure the accelerated completion of the economic, cultural and social development tasks, and to firmly maintain political, security and national defense stability and enhance external relations. It is not to close the door to rectify the Party.

The task of building and rectifying the Party is aimed to make our Party stronger, our government officials and Party members more exemplary and more closely connected with the people, and to accelerate the implementation of political tasks with better results; it is not the contrary. We need to grasp and effectively resolve the organic, closely connected and mutually assisting relationship among economic and social development which is the main task, Party building which is the core task, and cultural development which is the spiritual foundation of society.

Sixth, the Party building and rectifying work is the building of organization and people, is the human work, thus it can easily touch people's honor, interests and relations. This requires each of us to self-criticize and analyze our own shortcomings, to evaluate and comment on other people. If we are not truly mindful, sincere, impartial and objective, we can easily become subjective and often see our own strength more than those of others, and only see the shortcomings and weaknesses of others.

I remember that Russian writer Maxim Gorky once said, ““Man” - it has a proud ring!” But human beings also have weaknesses, as we say: “One cannot stand having one bite of food less than others,” or “Food is thought unworthy, but losing a small piece can fly a person into a rage!” Therefore, it is often very difficult and complex. But no matter difficult, we still have to fight it, because it is related to the destiny of the Party and the existence of our system. Our Party has fought it, and fought it often, and has recorded many important achievements. If we had not fought it, we would not have had such achievements today.

However, facing new requirements of the revolutionary task, and facing the reality of the weaknesses and shortcomings as mentioned above, more than ever, our Party has placed special importance on the task of Party building as pointed out by the 13th Party Congress and the 4th Plenum this time, thus creating practical changes in this work. The important thing of decisive significance is that all of us must have great determination and high unanimity, implementation measures that are resolute and feasible, thorough guidance with proper thinking, alert and calm mindset, not going extreme and not allowing hostile forces to take advantage and distort, excite and sabotage our cause.

We must do this over and over again, not just once. They must be done resolutely and consistently, frequently and continuously, and repeatedly. Sometimes, when one issue has been resolved, another arises. If we are not aware of it, each time there is a negative situation, we might easily become worried, pessimistic, doubtful and losing confidence, not believing in common efforts and results.

Dear colleagues,

The contents submitted to the National Officials Conference this time are fundamental and important issues. The time of the

Conference is not long, so I suggest that you raise your sense of responsibility, focusing on spending time studying, discussing and contributing ideas so as to create a high unanimity in organizing the implementation of the Resolution, the Conclusion and the Regulation of the Party's Central Committee.

I believe that with the fine tradition and essence of our Party, with high political determination of the Party and the political system and with high expectations, the response and support from the people, we are certainly able to overcome all difficulties to successfully implement the Conclusion, the Regulation of the 4th Plenum of the 13th tenure and other resolutions and decisions, particularly the Resolution of the 4th Plenum, the 12th tenure, creating the new change in Party building and rectifying, making our Party comprehensively purer and stronger, truly moral and civilized, deserving to be the vanguard of the working class, working people and the entire nation.

Once again, I would like to wish all of you good health, happiness, a lot of new joys, new confidence, new impetus and new successes.

Thank you very much, with regards!

FIGHTING AGAINST CORRUPTION: AN IMPORTANT OBLIGATION FOR OUR PARTY AND OUR GOVERNMENT*

Dear colleagues,

Today, in an atmosphere that the whole country is jubilant, enthusiastic and is actively preparing for to the 13th National Party Congress, we are organizing the National Conference to review the prevention and combat against corruption in the 2013-2020 period. This is a conference of very important significance, with much attention and high expectation from officials, Party members and the people.

We held the National Conferences to discuss this issue in 2014 and 2018, but they were the annual review. This conference is different from the two previous ones, in that it assesses the work completed in the past eight years and discusses the implementation measures in the time to come, with a larger scope, greater quantity and bigger components. Nearly 700 delegates attended the Conference at the Conference Hall of the Ministry of National

* The speech was delivered on December 12, 2020 at the National Conference to review the work completed in the prevention and combat against corruption in the 2013-2020 period.

Defense, and nearly 5,000 delegates at more than 80 online centers across the country. This is the nationwide conference with the greatest scope on the prevention and combat against corruption since the establishment of the Steering Committee in 2013.

On behalf of the Political Bureau, the Secretariat and the Central Steering Committee on Anti-Corruption, I would like to warmly welcome and thank you for having attended and contributed many dedicated and profound opinions, bringing to the Conference an enthusiastic, united, responsible and highly unified spirit. I also would like to send all delegates present at this Hall and those present at the online centers my cordial greetings, sincere regards and best congratulations.

Dear colleagues,

After an urgent and serious working session, our Conference has listened to the Report of the Central Steering Committee on Anti-Corruption, and the opinions contributed by the delegates. The opinions have shown a high level of agreement with the content of the Report. At the same time, they have complemented and clarified many issues, identified additional important experience, improved methods in leadership, guidance and implementation, and proposed and emphasized tasks and solutions in order to further enhance the prevention and combat against corruption in the coming time. To conclude the Conference, on behalf of the Central Steering Committee on Anti-Corruption, I would like to present some ideas to summarize our main achievements and clarify a number of issues in order to unify our leadership, guidance and implementation.

I – REVIEW OF THE PREVENTION AND COMBAT AGAINST CORRUPTION IN 2013-2020, PARTICULARLY AFTER 5 YEARS OF IMPLEMENTING RESOLUTION OF THE 12TH PARTY CONGRESS

In response to the demands and tasks of the new situation and with a strong determination to create a new and more profound change in the prevention and combat against corruption, in May 2012, the 5th Plenum of the 11th tenure decided to have a directive to establish the Central Steering Committee on Anti-Corruption under the Political Bureau with the General Secretary as the Head to provide comprehensive directions on the national scope. To carry out this plan, on February 1, 2013, the Political Bureau of the 11th tenure decided to establish the Central Steering Committee composed of key leaders of very important agencies of the Party and the State.

From the reviews and opinions, concrete results and social surveys, and assessments of international organizations, we can affirm that since the establishment of the Central Steering Committee, particularly during the tenure of the 12th Party Congress, the prevention and combat against corruption have been led and guided resolutely, methodically and intensively, making strong progress and achieving many important, comprehensive, clear and specific results. This has left many good imprints and created positive impacts, spreading good spirit in our society. It has truly “*become a movement, a trend*” supported and highly valued by government officials, Party members and the people, and recognized by the world. Corruption has been step by step controlled and prevented, making an important contribution to firmly maintaining political stability, socio-economic development, consolidating the confidence of government officials, Party members and the people in the Party and the State.

According to a survey of public opinion conducted recently by the Commission for Publicity and Education of the Party’s Central

Committee, an overwhelming majority of opinions of the people (93%) has expressed the confidence in the Party's leadership in the prevention and combat against corruption, making all the distortions and sabotages of hostile forces disgraceful and ridiculous. This is our great success in the fight against corruption. The most outstanding of all is:

1. The discovery and handling of corruption have been simultaneously, resolutely and effectively guided, creating breakthroughs in the prevention and combat against corruption, affirming a very high determination of the Party and State in the fight against corruption, with “no forbidden zones, no exceptions, no tolerance, no pressure by any organization or individual.”

- The inspection and supervision of the Party, the inspection and audit of the State have been intensified. This helps to discover and strictly handle the violations, tighten the discipline and order in the Party and the State apparatus, making an instrumental contribution to strengthening the effectiveness of the prevention and combat against corruption.

Party committees and inspection committees at various levels have enhanced their guidance and proactiveness; focused on examining and handling Party organizations and Party members when the signs of violations have been discovered, including officials who are still in position or already in retirement, senior officials, and those in the armed forces. This has been carried out in a methodical and serious manner from top to bottom, with a clear focus on key areas. The Party discipline has been implemented first, thus creating the basis and paving the way for the inspection, investigation and criminal trial according to the law. The Central Inspection Committee has demonstrated its competence, courage and determination in expanding the scope and targets of inspection

to as far as district and grassroots Party committees. It fully handled many complex cases that have prolonged through many tenures, relating to many levels, sectors and localities.

In the 2013-2020 stage, Party committees and inspection committees at various levels had disciplined over 131,000 Party members. Especially from the beginning of the tenure of the 12th Party Congress, more than 87,000 government officials and Party members had been disciplined, in which more than 3,200 Party members had been disciplined for corruption; over 110 government officials under the management of the Party's Central Committee (27 current and former members of the Party's Central Committee, 4 current and former Politburo members, more than 30 general-rank officers) had been disciplined. This is a breakthrough in the inspection and discipline of the Party.

The inspection and audit sector has shown a high level of efforts, impartiality, objectiveness and made clear all the wrongdoings; proposed and strictly handled related organizations and individuals and recovered a large quantity of assets for the State; particularly focused on the areas with a high level of negative practices, corruption behaviors, and wastefulness; strictly and openly handled the wrongdoings relating to many projects that had caused great losses and concerns in the public opinion.¹ Since 2013, through the inspection and audit, the sector has proposed to recover and handle financially more than 700,000 billion dongs and over

1. To take the Mobifone case which bought 95% shares of AVG as an example, in addition to the cases of the equitization of Quy Nhon Port; the projects, bidding packages relating to Dinh Ngoc He; the project to expand the Thai Nguyen iron and steel plant, phase II; the investment project to rebuild and expand the Ha Bac nitrogen fertilizers plant; the Thai Binh 2 thermal electric power plant, and so on.

20,000 hectares of land. It has also proposed for responsibility handling of over 14,000 collective bodies and many individuals. Additionally, it has transferred to the investigation agencies to handle nearly 700 cases with signs of criminal violation.

- The investigation, prosecution and trial of the corruption and economic cases have been resolutely implemented without compromising, without special consideration, without injustices to the innocent, and without allowing criminals to escape the reach of the law. All cases have been tried very seriously with humaneness, with both logic and emotion (*có lý, có tình*). Almost all defendants are clearly aware of their wrongdoings, admitted their crimes, promised to change their behavior, and apologized to the Party and the State. This has had strong impacts on awakening, warning, deterring, educating and guarding against future violations. The outcomes have been supported and highly valued by the public opinion and the people, thus creating breakthroughs in discovering and handling corruption. Many large, especially serious, complex cases, even the backlogged and prolonged cases from the previous years¹ with many high-ranking officials, including the Politburo members, ministers, deputy ministers, chairpersons of provincial

1. (1) The Nguyen Duc Kien and accomplices case, (2) the Duong Chi Dung and accomplices case, (3) the Vu Viet Hung and accomplices case, (4) the Vu Quoc Hao and accomplices case, (5) the Huynh Thi Huyen Nhu and accomplices case, (6) The Pham Thi Bich Luong and accomplices case, (7) the Giang Kim Dat and accomplices case, (8) the Pham Cong Danh and accomplices case, (9) the Ha Van Tham and accomplices case, (10) the Chau Thi Thu Nga and accomplices case, (11) the Trinh Xuan Thanh and accomplices case, (12) the Tran Phuong Binh case, (13) the Phan Van Anh Vu case, (14) the Dinh Ngoc He case, (15) the Nguyen Van Duong and Phan Sao Nam case, (16) the Hua Thi Phan case, (17) the Mobifone case, (18) the case at Hai Thanh Company, the Naval Force, and so on.

people's committees and generals of the armed forces have been completely handled.

Since 2013, the civil procedure agencies nationwide have prosecuted, investigated and tried at the first instance court more than 11,700 corruption, cronyism and bribery cases, in which 1,900 are corruption cases with nearly 4,400 defendants. The Steering Committee has introduced over 800 cases at three levels,¹ in which the Committee has directly followed and guided 133 cases and 94 affairs of serious and complex economic corruption, drawing much attention from public opinion, and 86 court cases and 814 defendants have been tried at the first instance court, including 18 officials under the management of the Party's Central Committee who were criminally tried (one Politburo member, 7 current and former members of the Party's Central Committee, 4 current and former ministers, 7 general-rank officers in the armed forces, to name a few).

The results of discovering and handling corruption cases over the past time have proved that we have implemented very seriously the guiding ideology and viewpoints: *"To walk the talk, no forbidden zones, no exceptions, no tolerance, no pressure by any organization or individual."* I have said many times that the serious handling of many officials, including senior officials, is not what anyone wants to do. It is very painful and heartbroken, but for our common cause, for the serious discipline of the Party, the law-governed State, the purity, strength and prestige of the Party and the State, and

1. At the Steering Committee level to follow and guide: 133 cases and 94 affairs; at the level of the Central Commission for Internal Affairs to follow: 31 cases and 5 affairs; at the levels of the provincial and municipal Party committees, the Party committees and sectors to handle: over 600 cases and affairs.

the wish of the people, that we have to carry it out with great determination. We need to discipline a few people to save millions of others. We will continue to do it more resolutely, more strongly in the coming time.

Apart from focusing on giving guidance to seriously handle the wrongdoings, the recovery of corrupted assets has also seen many positive changes. The seizure and recovery of assets in many serious corruption and economic cases have also obtained high level. The ratio of recovering the corrupted assets in the criminal cases in corruption has been increased markedly. In 2013, the ratio of recovering corrupted assets during the court case execution reached only below 10%, but it reached 32.04% on average in the 2013-2020 period. More attention has been paid to the inspection, discovery and handling of corruption in localities and organizations, and the state of “warm above, cool below” has been step by step overcome. Many localities, ministries and sectors have paid attention to preventing and handling “petty corruption.”

2. Along with focusing on giving guidance to discovering and handling corruption, the building and improving of institutions of socio-economic management and the prevention and combat against corruption have also been intensified, the mechanism of close prevention has also been step by step improved so that everyone “cannot,” “dare not,” “do not want,” “do not need” to be corrupt.

The Party’s Central Committee, the Political Bureau, the Secretariat, the National Assembly, the Government, the ministries, ministerial-level agencies, advisory agencies of the Party’s Central Committee have promulgated many new, strong and resolute

directions, solutions and stipulations on Party building and rectifying, improving the anti-corruption and socio-economic institutions. Many stipulations and resolutions have been thoroughly understood and strictly implemented and brought into life. Loopholes and inadequacies that have made negativities and corruption arise have been overcome.¹

It can be affirmed that until now, the Party's directions and stipulations, and the legal documents on the prevention and combat against corruption are fairly sufficient. What is most needed now is the self-consciousness, the consistency between will and action, and the organization of implementation. We have done it well recently, but there is still much work to do and to do much better in the coming time.

3. The implementation of the personnel work, administrative reform, openness and transparency, accountability in the operation of the agencies, organizations, and units and the solutions to prevent corruption has been led and guided in a focused way, and positive results have been obtained.

The personnel work has seen much of renewal, democracy, impartiality, objectivity, openness, transparency, in accordance with

1. Since 2013, the Party's Central Committee, the Political Bureau, the Secretariat, the advisory agencies of the Party have promulgated more than 200 documents on Party building and rectifying and on the corruption prevention and combat; the National Assembly has promulgated over 250 laws, ordinances, resolutions; the Government, the Prime Minister of the Government have promulgated over 2,600 decrees, decisions, directives; the Party committee levels, Party organizations under the Party's Central Committee have promulgated more than 45,000 documents; the ministries, sectors and localities have issued around 88,000 documents so as to make specific and guide the execution, organize the implementation of the prevention and combat against corruption.

principle, with process, the guarantee of the Party's close leadership. Many stipulations have been issued simultaneously and feasibly, and many personnel issues existed in the past have been settled. The state of title seeking, power seeking, parochialism, group interests has been gradually decreased. The success of congresses of the Party committee levels for the 2020-2025 tenure is the evidence and a precious lesson for our personnel work.

The Government ministries, sectors, localities are active to deploy the task of administrative reform, to enhance the openness and transparency, to improve the investment and business environment, to enhance national competitiveness and prevent corruption and negative practices. Attention has been paid to the reception, processing, explanation and response to the reports and petitions of the people and dialogue with the people from all walks of life. The inspection of assets, income, the transfer of work positions has been enhanced, the responsibilities of the heads have been handled, and the payment has not used cash. The system, norms, standards, the reform of salary policy, income, improvement of the life of government officials, public servants and civil servants all have made an active contribution to the prevention and combat against corruption.

4. The information and communications, education of the prevention and combat against corruption have been enhanced and seen many renewals; the monitoring of elected bodies, the role of the Fatherland Front, the people, the press and communications in the anti-corruption struggle have been promoted more effectively.

- The activities of information, communication, and education of the prevention and combat against corruption have been vigorously enhanced;

- The consciousness and responsibilities of Party committee levels, Party organizations, government officials, Party members and the people concerning the prevention and combat against corruption have been improved;

- The results of inspection, audit and handling of economic and corruption cases have been made public; and

- The information of sensitive issues in which the public is interested has been proactively provided, thus positively influenced public opinion and also reflected the openness, transparency of the Party and the State in handling corruption.

The press and news agencies have actively accompanied the Party, the State and the competent agencies in the prevention and fight against corruption. They have effectively communicated and actively fought against slanderous allegations from hostile forces concerning the Party and State's battle against corruption.

The National Assembly and its agencies have promoted the supervision of the prevention and fight against corruption. It has not only supervised this work frequently in the sessions, but the frequency of monitoring the subject on the prevention and fight against corruption has also been raised. The People's Council has paid more attention to the supervision of the prevention and battle against corruption in localities. The Fatherland Front and its member organizations have enhanced supervision of the areas where the negative and corruption acts are easy to arise, causing frustrations of the people; monitored the fostering and training of qualities and morality of the government officials and Party members; actively participated in the social debates, contributed opinions to build the Party and the government to be pure and strong.

5. Attention has been paid to improving the organization, quality, performance, and the coordination between the agencies and units having responsibility for preventing and combating against corruption; active in international cooperation and step by step expand the anti-corruption activities to the non-State areas.

The functions, tasks and regulations of the Central Steering Committee on Anti-Corruption have been amended and added with many renewals in both content and mode of operation. The Committee has focused its guidance on the weak link and difficult areas. It has worked very seriously, responsibly and methodically, and coordinated harmoniously and closely with high determination and effectiveness. It is really the “Commander-in-Chief,” the “conductor” of the prevention and fight against corruption.

The Central Commission for Internal Affairs and the re-established internal affairs bureaus under the Party committees of provinces and cities have made great efforts to improve the advisory effectiveness in the prevention and combat against corruption. The Central Commission for Internal Affairs – the standing agency of the Central Steering Committee, is proactive, resolute and consistent in carrying out the advisory task to help the Steering Committee build and organize effective implementation of the programs and plans of work, remove difficulties and handle many corruption cases of special seriousness and complexity, with special concern of the public opinion.

The relations in coordination among functional agencies and units in the prevention and combat against corruption have been enhanced. Particularly, the coordination between the inspection, supervision and internal affairs agencies of the Party and the

inspection, audit and investigation agencies; between the inspection and audit agencies and the investigation agency; between the agencies that carry out the law suits at the Central, local and ministerial levels has become ever closer, timely and more effective. The international cooperation in this regard has been strengthened. The struggle against corruption has been step by step expanded to the non-State areas.

Dear colleagues,

Looking back at the eight years since the establishment of the Steering Committee, particularly after five years of implementing the Resolution of the 12th Party Congress, we faced many difficulties and challenges. But thanks to great efforts and common hearts of our entire Party, people and armed forces, our country continues to develop and has recorded many important and comprehensive results in all areas. In particular, the areas of Party building and rectifying and the prevention and combat against corruption have seen strong changes and obtained many positive and clear results. This is the basis and the source of great motivation for us to well fulfill all the mapped-out tasks, taking our country to rapid and sustainable development.

It is not true as some opinions hold that if we focus too much on the combat against corruption and Party building and rectifying, it would lower renewal and creativity, “flinch” those who dare to think, dare to do, dare to bear the responsibility for the common interests, and “slow down” the development of the country. Yet, on the contrary, thanks to the effective implementation of Party building and rectifying, and the intensified prevention and combat against corruption, we have made an important contribution to accelerating socio-economic development, firmly maintaining

political stability, and enhancing national defense, security and foreign relations.

Moreover, we need to be more resolute in the fight against allegations of hostile forces, claiming that the prevention and combat against corruption, the handling of wrong-doing officials and Party members are “the internal fighting for positions,” “a matter of factions,” particularly during the occasion when we are preparing for the upcoming 13th Party Congress. *The intensification of the prevention and combat against corruption and Party building and rectifying has only “flinched” those who have impure motivation with their “fingers are already in the pie,” and those who have not firmly grasped the Party’s directions and policies and lacked knowledge, experience and courage.*

Through the review, we can affirm that never has the prevention and combat against corruption been guided so vigorously, simultaneously, resolutely and effectively as in recent times. It has left outstanding imprints, created high consensus in society, and consolidated and heightened the confidence of government officials, Party members and people in the Party and the State. Thus, a question can be posed: why are there such results? It has been highlighted rather clearly and concretely in the Report. *I would like to stress some fundamental causes:*

(1) The inheritance and continuity of the process of consistent, continuous, resolute struggle through many tenures, particularly in the 12th Party Congress tenure, with very high political determination of the Party and the State in the prevention and combat against corruption;

(2) The close and resolute leadership and guidance with many correct and timely policy decisions of the Party’s Central Committee,

the Political Bureau, the Secretariat, the Steering Committee, the National Assembly and the Government; particularly the example and uncompromising determination, to walk the talk by the leaders of the Party and the State, by the heads of the Party committees and the governments at all levels;

(3) The efforts of the advisory agencies and the Party committee levels and Party organizations, ministries, sectors and localities, particularly the great efforts of the agencies and units that have the functions of preventing and combating against corruption and the agencies in charge of carrying out the law suits at the Central and local levels;

(4) The resonance of the positive and visible results in Party building and rectifying; and

(5) The active participation of the Fatherland Front and socio-political organizations, the sympathy, support and encouragement of the people, the proactive participation of the press, thus creating the synergy in prevention and combat against corruption. Here I would like to emphasize the very important role of the people. It is necessary to “*mobilize the masses, to practice democracy, to make the masses understand clearly and participate enthusiastically in this work, and it is certain to be successful*”¹ as recommended by our esteemed Uncle Ho.

However, besides the recorded results, we also have to honestly recognize that the prevention and combat against corruption still has certain *limitations and problems* as pointed out by the Report. Visible changes have not been seen in certain localities, ministries and sectors. The discovery and handling of corruption

1. Ho Chi Minh (2011), *Complete Collection*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 7, p. 362.

remains limited, the ratio of recovering the corrupted and lost assets is still low; the self-inspection, self-discovery and handling of corruption in the internal offices, agencies and units are still the weak link. The state of harassment and negativity in the administrative areas and public services has not yet been prevented effectively. Corruption in various fields is still serious and complex with more sophisticated manifestation, causing frustration in society. Corruption is still one of the dangers threatening the existence of our Party and our system.

The main cause of these limitations is because of the fact that a number of Party committee levels, Party organizations, administrations, the heads of the agencies, organizations and units are yet to be deeply aware of the critical situation of corruption in the localities, agencies, units and areas under their charge. They are not yet really exemplary and resolute. Their words have not gone along with their deeds. They are not courageous. The state of deference, dodging, and lack of strictness in handling the unveiled violations and shortcomings of government officials and Party members is still available. A number of government officials, Party members, public servants and civil servants, including the leaders, managers, and senior officials, lack the fostering and training and are degenerated in the political ideology, morality, lifestyle, involving in negative and corruption acts.

Attention has not sufficiently been paid to the system of checks and balances, and the inspection and supervision of the power exercise by the persons with titles and positions. The enforcement of law in general and the stipulations of the Party and the State on the prevention and combat against corruption in particular in a number of agencies, units and localities is yet to be strict. The

apparatus organization, task, power, means and working conditions of the anti-corruption agencies and units are still inadequate and limited. Knowledge and competence of some government officials and civil servants are yet to meet the requirements, in addition to degeneration, negativity and corruption in some cases.

Dear colleagues,

From recent experience of the prevention and combat against corruption, we have many *precious lessons of significance in the theoretical and practical aspects:*

First, in the prevention and combat against corruption, there must be first of all a high political determination, and it must be put under the direct, focused and unified leadership and guidance of the Party, in which the Central Steering Committee provides direct and regular leadership and guidance in this area. The political determination must be turned into practical actions of government officials, Party members, public servants, civil servants and the people, which starts with leaders of the Party and the State, heads of the Party committee levels, governments, agencies, organizations and units in preventing and combating corruption, those who must be exemplary and resolute, and walk the talk.

Corruption has been committed internally by the people holding high posts and power. The prevention and combat against corruption is the struggle right inside each of us, in agencies, organizations, units and localities. It is related to interests, money, title, fame and prestige of organizations and individuals. That is why there must be very high political determination, expressed in the resolute, uncompromising attitude and the unyielding, specific, practical and effective actions.

The heads must be responsible for the weaknesses and wrongdoings in corruption in the organizations, agencies, units and localities under their charge. Those people who have been assigned with the titles and power must self-train regularly and constantly, must self-examine and self-correct. At the same time, they must enhance effective inspection and supervision in exercising the power of those people with titles and powers. All power must be closely controlled by mechanism, and bound with responsibilities. Where there is power, there must be responsibility. The higher power, the greater responsibility. Abusing and taking advantage of power must be tracked down, held responsible and penalized for violation. This is to “keep” power in the “cage” of mechanism.

Second, the prevention and combat against corruption is the “struggle against internal aggressor.” It is an important, regular, urgent, difficult, complex and long-term task. It must be carried out resolutely, persistently, continuously, “non-stop,” “ceaselessly” in all levels, sectors and fields. It requires synchronous implementation of political, ideological, organizational, administrative and criminal measures, together with firm, active and proactive steps, focusing on the main and important points. We must build a close preventive mechanism at all costs that leads to “cannot be corrupt,” a deterrent mechanism with strict punishment that leads to “don’t dare to be corrupt,” and a mechanism to ensure “don’t need to be corrupt.”

Corruption is “a born defect” of power, and one of the dangers that threaten the existence of our system. Corruption exists in any era, system and country, and it is impossible to wipe out corruption at its roots in a short time. Therefore, in the prevention and combat against corruption, we cannot be laidback, hasty and complacent. There must not be any avoidance, perfunctory acts, lack of

resoluteness; there must not be any “respite.” We must be determined to discover and handle corruption. We must be always vigilant in the fight against the plots and operation of hostile forces and bad elements which take advantage of the prevention and combat against corruption to excite, divide and sabotage our Party, State and system.

Third, we need to coordinate closely between the active prevention and the proactive discovery, and the timely, synchronous and strict handling of the behaviors of corruption; in which prevention is key, fundamental and long-term, and discovery and handling are breakthrough and important. In discovery and handling, it is necessary to grasp the principle: if there are any cases, it is necessary to verify them clearly and urgently and where it is clear, it must be handled; even the corruption behavior and the tolerance and cover-up of corruption, the intervention and impediment of the anti-corruption combat must be handled.

If there are any signs of crimes, they must be prosecuted, investigated; when it has been concluded that it was a crime, they must be tried according to the law. If the cases are yet to be criminally tried, they must be seriously disciplined according to the stipulations of the Party, the State and the mass organizations. It must be carried out simultaneously between the discipline of the Party, administrative discipline of the State and mass organizations, and the criminal trial.

The Party’s discipline must be first carried out, as the premises for the administrative discipline of the State and mass organizations and the criminal trial. The trial must take education, deterrent and prevention as the main in combination between punishment and leniency. At the same time, it is necessary to protect and encourage

those people who dare to think, dare to do, dare to renew and to innovate for our common cause.

Fourth, it is necessary to combine the prevention and combat against corruption with the practice of thriftiness and the struggle against wastefulness; to combine the prevention and combat against corruption and the struggle against wastefulness with Party building and rectifying, the learning and the following of Ho Chi Minh Thought, morality and style; to fight against the degeneration in the political ideology, morality and style, "self-evolution," "self-transformation" from within; to mobilize the synergy of our political system and the entire society in the prevention and combat against corruption.

- To promote fully the role and responsibility of the agencies and the elected representatives, the Fatherland Front and its member organizations, the people, the news and press agencies, enterprises and businesspeople in the prevention and combat against corruption;

- To profoundly grasp the ideology of "*the people are the roots*" of President Ho Chi Minh, to rely on the people, to listen to the people and public opinion;

- To effectively deploy anti-corruption activities in the non-State areas; and

- To enhance the international cooperation in the prevention and combat against corruption.

Fifth, we must control the implementation of State power, ensure the unified leadership and guidance of the Steering Committee; to promote the key role and the close, synchronous, timely and effective coordination of the agencies responsible for the prevention and combat against corruption. The Steering Committee must truly be the center of guiding and harmonizing the coordination of activities, the solid

mainstay for the functional agencies in this regard to implement their assigned tasks. The contingent of anti-corruption officials must have the firm will and the courage to struggle, be honest and incorruptible, “*public-spirited and selfless,*” really to be the “*precious sword*” of the Party and the State. The checks and balances and the practice of integrity must, first of all, be carried out effectively in these agencies, must combat against corruption right in the anti-corruption agencies.

Sixth, the solutions of the prevention and combat against corruption must be consistent with the socialist-oriented market economy and the cultural tradition of the nation; receive with selection the foreign experience. At the same time, it is necessary to develop the culture of public service of each sector, each agency, each unit. The culture of public service will ensure the professionalism, the responsibility, transparency and effectiveness in implementing the tasks. In different stages, it is necessary to determine the key tasks, breakthrough solutions, conforming to the situation of the country and the localities so as to focus on the effective leadership and guidance.

II- ON FUTURE DIRECTIONS, TASKS AND SOLUTIONS

Dear colleagues,

We are at a very important time. Our Party, people and armed forces are enthusiastically looking forward to and showing their firm belief in the success of the 13th Party Congress. With the participation of the whole political system and people, the prevention and combat against corruption has obtained remarkable results. However, this is a very difficult, complex and long-term struggle. Therefore, we definitely cannot be laid back, complacent and hesitated, sit and wait. Rather, we must continue to further this

work with a higher, stronger and more effective determination, in a resolute, regular, consistent, and continuous manner. The Party committee levels, Party organizations and Party members must consider the prevention and combat against corruption as one of the especially important tasks in building and rectifying the Party and the political system to be pure and strong and in consolidating our national unity.

Our Conference has had the high consensus among groups of main tasks on the solutions for the coming time, as pointed out by the Report. I propose that you should grasp thoroughly and deeply the precious lessons from the prevention and fight against corruption recently. I also want to emphasize and raise some issues as follows:

First, to further promote and improve the effectiveness in the information, education and building of the thrifty culture, without corruption within government officials, Party members and people.

This is not the new, but very important task. Because information and education are one of the fundamental measures to enhance morality, build honesty and integrity and to struggle against degeneration. It is necessary to grasp and conduct the intensive and extensive information and education of the goals, viewpoints, tasks, solutions and stipulations of the Party and the State on the prevention and combat against corruption, and on the harms of corruption, wastefulness and negative practices. This would create high self-consciousness and consensus on the will and action among government officials, Party members and people on the anti-corruption struggle, which must start with the heads and the leadership at all levels and in all sectors, agencies, units and localities to show good examples and determination.

It is necessary to be consistent in educating and training government officials, Party members, public servants and civil servants in terms of honesty and integrity, to build the thrifty culture, without corruption. Each government official and Party member must bear in mind the core issue that the Party must always rely on the people, listen to the people, and have flesh and blood relationship with the people. What is beneficial to the people, we have to be determined to do and do it at all costs. On the contrary, what the people have not concurred with, even hate and oppose it, we have to resolutely prevent it, rectify and strictly handle the wrongdoings. Government officials, Party members, first of all the leaders, must respect decency, maintain honor, to be shameful for themselves and their relatives if having committed corruption and wastefulness.

It is necessary to enhance the coordination, to be proactive in providing information of the prevention and combat against corruption in an open and timely way.

- To place importance on information and communications of the good people, good deeds, to overcome the phenomenon of one-side information, inexact information, information of exciting and causing confusion;
- To protect, reward and encourage in time those journalistic people who are active and brave to struggle against corruption;
- To be active in the struggle against the distorting allegations, against hostile forces for having taken advantage of the fight against corruption to oppose the Party and the State; and
- To strictly handle the coverage of untrue, slanderous and fabricated information, causing bad consequences.

Second, to continue to build and improve simultaneously the institutions for Party building and rectifying, socio-economic management,

and the prevention and combat against corruption; to overcome in time the inadequacies, to close all the “gaps” and “empty spaces” so that it is “impossible to engage in corruption.”

Institutions in general and institutions on prevention and combat against corruption in particular together with the moral standards in all fields and the system of checks and balances are the fundamental element that helps to stop right at the root of any corruption behavior. That is why it is necessary to build internal regulations of the Party, the moral principles and standards to be applied to government officials, Party members, particularly the heads who are tasked to maintain the moral qualities, honesty, integrity and setting good example in the prevention and combat against corruption. It is necessary to have the mechanism to control closely the building of policies and laws on the socio-economic management so as to limit the negative impacts of “interest groups,” “the backyards,” “tenure mindset,” to prevent the danger of having corruption arisen even in the process of building policies and laws.

It is urgent to improve the stipulations on the checks and balances, the accountability, and the guarantee of democracy, openness and transparency. We need to stipulate clearly the responsibility of the heads in inspection, discovery, handling of corruption, wastefulness, the protection of those who are active in the struggle against corruption; to encourage and protect the government officials, the Party members, and the heads who dare to renovate, dare to create, dare to think, dare to do and dare to bear responsibility for the common good.

Third, to enhance the inspection, supervision, and audit; to promote the investigation, prosecution, trial and execution of the sentence; to early discover, strictly handle corruption cases; to prevent

effectively the “petty corruption,” and improve the effectiveness of recovering the corrupted assets.

The inspection, supervision, and audit must be carried out regularly, comprehensively and openly, with important and main points, focusing on areas that tend to have negative practices and public opinion about corruption, on degeneration in the political ideology, morality, lifestyle, “self-evolution,” “self-transformation” from within. The prevention and combat against corruption must be closely associated with the struggle against the degeneration in the political ideology, morality and lifestyle, “self-evolution” and “self-transformation.” It is because these two aspects have close relationship with each other. It is necessary to discover in time, settle early, stop right at the beginning all the wrong behaviors, without letting minor violations to be accumulated into the major wrongdoings. All government officials and Party members who have committed the wrongdoings must be handled promptly, simultaneously, strictly and openly.

- To speed up the inspection, to handle the prosecuted economic corruption cases according to the stipulations of the Party and the laws of the State;

- To pay attention to discovering and handling new corruption cases, with “no forbidden zones, no exceptions, no pressure by any organization or individual;”

- To bring about stronger and more concrete changes in discovering and settling corruption in localities and at the grassroots level;

- To discover and handle effectively the practice of asking for bribery, harassment, “suggestion,” “under the table,” causing troubles to the people and enterprises in their affairs;

- To improve the effectiveness in recovering the corrupted assets, to pay attention to tracking and applying in time the concerted measures so as to recover the corrupted assets right from the stage of inspection, examination, audit, prosecution, investigation and trial and in the course of executing the sentence; and

- To encourage the offenders to make voluntary restitution and overcome the consequences in the corruption and economic cases.

Fourth, to further improve and strictly carry out the stipulations on the openness, transparency and accountability in the activities of agencies, organizations and units; to inspect effectively the assets and income of the people who have titles and powers; to conduct administrative reform and build the contingent of officials with all the qualities, competencies and reputation on par with the tasks in the new era.

Together with “keeping” power in the “cage” of mechanism, to be open, transparent and accountable is the first condition of checks and balances, to ensure that the power is allowed to operate correctly, without being “*degraded*.” Therefore, it is necessary to further improve and strictly implement all the stipulations on openness, transparency and accountability in the activities of agencies, organizations, units and measures to ensure that citizens can be able to carry out the right to get access to information as stipulated by the law. We need to promote the role of supervising the enforcement of power through the inspection and supervision of the Party, the inspection and audit of the State; the supervision of the elected agency and the elected representatives, of the judicial agency, the Fatherland Front and its member organizations, of the people and society.

Fifth, to further improve the organizational apparatus, to enhance the operational capacity and performance of the agencies and units responsible for fighting against corruption.

- To build and improve the mechanisms and stipulations to guard effectively against the negative, unhealthy impacts on the operation of these organizations. Especially, it is necessary to build the contingent of anti-corruption officials who must really be pure, honest, courageous, and incorruptible, without being under any impure pressure of organizations or individuals, without being under any temptation or bribery of the offenders; and
- To have the reasonable reward policy to create motivation for the contingent of officials who have done the anti-corruption job to strive harder to do their task wholeheartedly. I have many times said that the prevention and combat against corruption and negative practices should be implemented right in the anti-corruption and anti-negativity agencies.

Dear colleagues,

From the recorded experience and results in recent times, especially in the 12th Party Congress tenure, we firmly believe that with the high political determination of the Party and the State, the active and concerted participation of the Party committee levels, the Party organizations, the government, the political system and the entire society, the prevention and fight against corruption in the 13th Party Congress tenure in the time to come will see the new advances which are stronger, more resolute and more effective. Corruption will definitely be prevented and pushed back, making a contribution to building the Party and the State to be ever purer and stronger, thus meeting the requirements of the revolutionary cause and the confidence and expectation of the people.

On the occasion of preparations to welcome the New Year of 2021, in a jubilant and enthusiastic atmosphere to prepare for

the 13th National Party Congress, once again, on behalf of the leaders of the Party and the State, I would like to send you the wishes of good health and happiness. I wish that all of the colleagues, the “pillars” of the Party, and State, “Bao Gong of this day” will uphold the spirit of responsibility before the Party, the people and country, set good examples at the forefront to lead and guide the implementation of the tasks and solutions in the prevention and combat against corruption. In particular, focus on concretizing, institutionalizing and fulfilling the anti-corruption tasks according to the Resolution of the 13th Party Congress conformable to the ministries, sectors, localities, agencies and units, contributing to building our Party and State to be purer and stronger in politics, ideology, organization, morality, lifestyle, to be loved and admired by the people, for the purpose of leading and organizing successfully the building and defending of our Homeland, our immensely beloved Vietnam.

EMULATION AND INCENTIVES: FURTHER STRENGTHENING OUR PROGRESS*

Dear distinguished guests,

Dear colleagues, delegates to the Congress,

Today, in a jubilant and enthusiastic atmosphere nationwide, in emulating to record the achievements to welcome the success of the congresses of the Party committee levels so as to advance to the 13th National Party Congress, we are solemnly convening the 10th National Patriotic Emulation Congress – the event of important socio-political significance, the landmark on the development path of the nationwide patriotic emulation movement.

First of all, on behalf of the leaders of the Party and the State, I would like to extend my warm greetings to the revolutionary veterans, the Vietnamese Mothers of Heroes, the distinguished guests and more than 2,000 delegates representing the units, heroes, the emulation fighters and role models nationwide for attending the Congress. I also would like to send my cordial greetings and the warmest congratulations to all of the colleagues, compatriots and soldiers throughout the country who work tirelessly, making a

* The speech was delivered on December 10, 2020 at the 10th National Patriotic Emulation Congress.

contribution to building and defending the Homeland of our beloved Vietnam.

Dear distinguished delegates,

Dear colleagues,

As we all know, emulation and incentives have special importance, contributing to creating the motivating force to accelerate revolutionary activities. It is not a coincidence that right in early days of the resistance war against the French colonialists, when our country had to face innumerable difficulties, on June 11, 1948, President Ho Chi Minh issued the *Call for the Patriotic Emulation*. The Party's Central Committee had set up the Patriotic Emulation Mobilization Board from the Central level to the localities and launched the emulation movement so as to encourage all the forces to take part in the resistance war and national construction. He advised: "Emulating is being patriotic, and a patriot must emulate. And the emulators are the most patriotic people."¹

The success in the resistance war and national construction, in the building and defense of the socialist Homeland of our people after more than 70 years has affirmed the effective and creative value of Ho Chi Minh Thought on the patriotic emulation. It can be said that all the achievements of our country's revolution have been associated with the effective organization of the patriotic emulation movement.

Having undergone the long path of history of national construction and development, under the leadership of the Party, the patriotic emulation movement has always developed strongly,

1. Ho Chi Minh (2011), *Complete Collection*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 7, p. 407.

intensively and extensively with many renewals in content and method. It has encouraged, mobilized the whole nation to strive for emulation so as to reflect patriotism, overcome innumerable difficulties, challenges and move forward to obtain the great achievements of historic significance in the renewal, building and defense of the Homeland. Together with the national-scale emulation movements, all the levels, sectors and localities have launched emulation movements with rich organizational formats, practical contents, encouraging and attracting the majority of people to join actively.

In the past five years, our country has had many opportunities and advantages for development, and yet it also has to face many difficulties and challenges. Especially in 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic in the world in general and in our country in particular developed in a complex and unpredictable way, seriously impacting almost all sectors, areas, and socio-economic activities. The people's lives suffered great difficulties. The global economy had fallen into the heavy economic recession with negative growth. The financial market saw abnormal change, with many hidden risks. In the meantime, climate change, extreme weather, natural disasters, storms and floods had negatively impacted on the production and people's lives.

However, thanks to our unity, joint efforts with millions of people as one, the persistent and great contribution of our Party, people and armed forces, Vietnam has been highly appreciated and regarded as a bright spot in prevention and combat against epidemic and in the socio-economic development. Many effective directions, policies and measures were timely issued and well organized so as to maintain at the most reasonable level the production and business

activities, generate jobs and thus income for the people, support individuals and enterprises hit by the epidemic, ensuring social security and welfare. Our country was ranked as one out of 16 emerging economies which were the most successful in the pandemic context, having reached an estimated 2.5 to 3% growth in 2020.

Culture and society continued to see progress, social security and welfare and the people's lives had been guaranteed. Poverty reduction and social assistance for those who contributed to the revolution and those in need have been effectively implemented. Health care for the people has been deployed actively. The building and rectification of the Party and the political system have been paid special attention, achieving many positive results. The prevention and fight against corruption, negative practices and wastefulness have seen strong changes with certain breakthroughs. Foreign relations activities and international integration continue to be maintained, having achieved many impressive results. National defense and security have been firmly maintained and strengthened. National sovereignty and peaceful environment have been ensured. Our country has never enjoyed such fortunes, potentials, international status and prestige as they are today.

The achievements recorded in all fields of the socio-economic development of the country in the past five years have been attributed to the patriotic emulation movements. The movements have kept close contact with the implementation of the political tasks in connection to "Enhancing the learning and practice of the Ho Chi Minh Thought, morality and style," emulating to obtain achievements on the occasion of the grand festive days and the important political events of the country, especially emulating to

make achievements to welcome the congresses of the Party committee levels towards the 13th National Party Congress.

Sectors, levels and localities have the enthusiastic and effective emulation movements, typically *“Good Labor, Creative Labor;” “Productivity, quality and effectiveness;” “Vanguard youth;” “The entire people unite to build cultural life;” “Good teaching, good learning;” “Determined to win,” “For security of the Homeland;” “Good mass mobilization;” “Day for the Poor,”* and the movements linked to the national key projects, and so on. Especially, the movement *“The whole country join efforts to build new rural;” “The whole country join hands for the poor – nobody is left behind;” “Vietnamese enterprises’ integration and development;” “Officials, public servants and civil servants emulate to implement office culture.”* Many ministries, sectors and localities have had many good, practical and effective ways of doing things, mobilizing many resources of society and people to build the country, creating an enthusiastic emulation atmosphere that has spread far and large.

Through the realities of the emulation movement, there have appeared many examples of good people, good deeds, role models in all fields and in every corner of the Homeland. These are the outstanding models in the construction work, in the plants, production and business units as well as on the cultural, scientific, health and educational fronts. There have been many organizations and individuals who are talented, creative, and practice business ethics, who have complied with the law and done things useful for the country.

On the front of defending our Homeland, to maintain political security, social order and safety, there have been many good officials, soldiers of the army and of the public security, border forces,

customs officers and forest rangers who are ready to sacrifice on the front of preventing and combating against crimes, illegal loggers, smugglers, and so on. It can be affirmed that the patriotic emulation movement has really become a strong motive force urging the people from all walks of life to promote their talents, mind, initiatives, to successfully implement the renewal, to develop the country and build the Vietnamese people and culture.

The communication work has made good contributions to promoting the patriotic emulation movement, discovering and encouraging new success cases and role models in all spheres of social life, raising the awareness for the levels, sectors, and localities, and for the people of all strata, thus creating new impetus, new motive force for the implementation of political task of ministries, departments, sectors, localities, agencies and units.

On this occasion, on behalf of the leaders of the Party and the State, I would like to warmly congratulate and commend the results and achievements of the patriotic emulation movement and the reward over five years (2015-2020). Welcome to the delegates, the role models in attendance at today's Congress, the "fresh flowers" in the nationwide patriotic emulation movement.

Dear colleagues,

Besides the recorded results, the emulation and the reward have also got some limitations as judged in the Report from the Central Council for Emulation and Rewards, in which the biggest limitation is that there are still many role models and outstanding examples in some localities, agencies and units that are yet to be discovered and fostered in time and replicated effectively. The communication, the organization of learning and applying the new models has still been paid with less attention. The reward is

sometimes not yet in time; there are still not many rewards, particularly the high-grade ones, to workers, farmers and the direct laborers; the emblematic character, the example setting and the spillover in the reward have limitations. The emulation and rewards council in some organizations has still not well carried out the advisory work, the inspection and supervision, and it has not yet implemented the emulation and reward according to its function and assigned tasks. These limitations need to be removed in time.

I think that the Central Council for Emulation and Rewards and its affiliates at different levels, particularly the heads of the Party committee levels, government offices, agencies and units and the officials in charge of emulation and rewards, should think and hold high their responsibilities in the leading, guiding and advisory work and organize the implementation so that it is possible to make the emulation and reward really a leadership method of the Party, an instrument of the State's governance and the motive force to build the new men.

Dear colleagues,

In the time to come, it is foreseen that the regional and world situation will continue to have complex, unpredictable developments. The global economic and trade growth continues to decrease, and the competition among the major powers will become ever more acute. Domestically, we have inherited the achievements in 35 years of renewal, our position and strength have become ever stronger. The macro-economy has been stable, the next-generation trade agreements with the countries and international organizations, particularly with the European Union, have ushered in many great opportunities for development. The people's confidence in the Party and the State has been more consolidated and enhanced.

However, there remains many difficulties and challenges, particularly the further spreading and negative impacts of COVID-19 pandemic. The impacts of the natural disasters, storms and floods, and climate change have become ever more serious. There is the danger of falling into the middle-income trap and lagging behind developed countries. The resources are still limited while we have to meet simultaneously the high requirements for investment and development, ensuring social security and strengthening national defense and security.

To carry out the teaching of President Ho Chi Minh: “Patriotic emulation should have the right and firm direction,”¹ “Patriotic emulation is a benefit for us, for our families, and for our villages, our country, our nation,”² the patriotic emulation movement in the coming time should be directed towards the encouragement of ministries, departments, sectors, localities and the people nationwide to overcome all difficulties and challenges. In particular, we need to take advantage of opportunities and achievements of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, and the trend of investment and trade, digital transformation, the development of the new business models, the changes in the mode of global production, consumption and communication in order to further develop our country, and to successfully and comprehensively carry out the goals and tasks of the 2021-2025 Five-year Plan on Socio-economic Development.

In that context, I quite agree with the directions and solutions as pointed out in the Report of the Central Council for Emulation

1. Ho Chi Minh (2011), *Complete Collection*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 7, p. 146.

2. *Ibid.*, Vol. 6, p. 170.

and Rewards. I only want to further emphasize some of the main issues as follows:

First, we need to continue to grasp, deploy, communicate and organize effectively the implementation of the directions and guidelines of the Party, the policies and laws of the State on emulation and reward. Particularly, we need to grasp deeply the ideology of patriotic emulation of President Ho Chi Minh so that the emulation and reward have become the motive force and measure to contribute to enhancing the building of the Party and the political system to be pure and strong; to building the socialist law-governed State *of the people, by the people and for the people*, and

- To continue to create stronger changes in the awareness and ideology of the Party committee levels, governments offices, the responsibility to set good examples of the heads of the organizations in deploying the emulation and reward; and

- To uphold the responsibility in leading, guiding and organizing the implementation of emulation and reward of the members of the emulation and rewards council at different levels.

Second, to effectively organize the emulation movement, we need to have practical, concrete goals in combination with the implementation of political tasks and socio-economic development of each ministry, department, sector, locality and organization, and it should be implemented regularly and continuously. Together with the frequent emulation movements, we need to launch the emulation movements in phases and based on themes. We need to renew comprehensively, to promote the creativeness in the organization of emulation movements in such a way to be really useful and practical, and to avoid repeated old activities, mediocre and dull formality.

The targets in the emulation should be broad, and benefits should be ensured among different groups: employees, ministries, departments, sectors, localities, agencies and units, and the society. Emulation movements should have specific, clear objectives and criteria to facilitate implementation, inspection and supervision, and to mobilize the participation and the active response of the majority of the people.

Third, we need to improve the quality of the reward, thus creating the strong and essential changes, to ensure the precise, timely, open and transparent reward for the purposes of education and setting good examples. The attention to and concretization of the reward by the stipulations are shown through the discovery of the new role models and elements. There have been many types of reward, such as reward given directly to employees, the ad hoc reward or the thematic reward. We need to enhance the discovery of role models for timely encouragement and reward. The reward should be in line with the recorded achievements and results. Emulation is to train and build the new people. We need to avoid formality.

Fourth, we need to further accelerate the communication of the emulation movements, in coordination with the mass media agencies to discover, communicate and replicate the role models, to set examples of good people, good deeds with a view to encouraging patriotic emulation movements, contributing to creating the motive force for the emulation to fulfill remarkably the assigned tasks. President Ho Chi Minh once said: *“The emulators are the new men, the persons who always try to practice the hard work, thrift, honesty, and uprightness, the loyal servants of the people, the filial children of*

*the Homeland.*²¹ After the Congress, I propose that over 2,000 delegates who are the role models, the emulation heroes and fighters present today should continue to promote your capacities and minds to take an active part in and to be the core factors for the patriotic emulation movements in your localities and organizations so that the good way of doing things and good experience can be quickly spread intensively and extensively to the social community.

Fifth, the emulation should guarantee the Party's leadership, in combination with the review and experience withdrawal and reward. Therefore, we need to place importance on enhancing the fostering, improving the capacities of giving advice and making proposals, the practical capacity, the discovery capacity and the capacity of organizing the implementation of the contingent of members of the emulation and rewards council at different levels, the leaders and managers who specialize in or concurrently work in the emulation and reward area. The contingent of those who work in the emulation and reward sector should have the qualities, morality, firm political competence, grasp the guidelines and directions of the Party, the policies and laws of the State concerning the emulation and reward, master good knowledge and experience, have close connection to the people and the emulation movement. Especially, they must be completely impartial, objective and pure.

At the same time, to further consolidate the organization and apparatus in the streamlining direction with the efficient activities, there should be the unification from the Central to local levels. This is a decisive element for the quality of the advisory work and of

1. Ho Chi Minh (2011), *Complete Collection*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 7, p. 409.

the implementation of the emulation movement and the reward nationwide, helping to implement successfully the Resolution of the 13th National Party Congress.

Dear colleagues,

Emulation is a strategic guideline of the Party, an important and regular task of all levels, sectors, and organizations. To build on the recorded achievements and the experience drawn from the realities in the past five years, I believe that thanks to the efforts and unity of all the officials, soldiers and the people countrywide, the emulation, the reward, and the patriotic emulation movement in the coming time will surely record new successes, creating the new, important motive force, making a contribution to the process of strengthening the national building and defense.

Once again, I would like to wish all the delegates and colleagues the best of health, happiness, success and always be the bright example for all the people and society to follow.

I wish our emulation movement will continue to develop and win many new, greater successes.

OUR VALIANT PEOPLE'S ARMY: 75 YEARS OF MARCHING UNDER THE PARTY'S GLORIOUS FLAG*

Throughout 75 years of building, fighting and growing (December 22, 1944 – December 22, 2019), the Vietnam People's Army is always the core force together with the entire Party and people to achieve glorious victories in the struggle for national liberation to gain national independence, freedom and reunification, to build and defend our Homeland. These victories are the crystallization and convergence by many elements, in which the Party's comprehensive, absolute and effective leadership of the Army is the element of decisive significance. The Party, the State and the people of Vietnam are always proud of and place confidence in the Vietnam People's Army – the heroic army of a heroic nation.

Right from its establishment and throughout the process of leading the Vietnamese revolution, our Party has always applied creatively Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Thought on building a new-type army suitable to the specific situation and

* The article was written in December 2019, on the occasion of the 75th founding anniversary of the Vietnam People's Army, the 30th anniversary of the All People's National Defense Festival.

conditions of Vietnam. At the same time, it affirms the inevitability of its organization and leadership so that the Army can become the core force for the entire people to fight against the enemy, to implement successfully the national liberation and defense of our Homeland. Right from the *Brief Political Program of the Party* drafted by President Ho Chi Minh and approved at the Conference to establish the Party in 1930, it was pointed out: The Party had to “organize the Workers-Peasants’ Army.”¹ The Resolution on the Self-Defense Detachment approved at the 1st Party Congress (March 1935) determined: the revolutionary workers and peasants’ self-defense detachment was placed under the unified command of the Party’s Central Committee, the Military Commission of the Communist Party. It always maintained the strict command by the Communist Party in the standing self-defense.²

In leading, building and developing the forces, the Party determined to make guerilla units to follow correctly the “political path,” taking the political struggle as the basis for the armed struggle to seize the power. When the Vietnam Propaganda Liberation Army Team came into being (December 22, 1944), besides the command system, the Party had set up the Party unit to lead the team to carry out the tasks in an absolute and direct way in all aspects. This was an important basis for the team to promote its strength to win victory right from the first battle, ushering in the tradition of “determined to fight, determined to win” (*Quyết chiến, quyết thắng*) in our Army.

The Party’s leadership of the Army was affirmed right from the time when the Army was just established, through the close and

1. The Communist Party of Vietnam (2002), *Complete Party Documents*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 2, p. 2.

2. *Ibid.*, Vol. 5, pp. 94-95.

suitable mechanism and method, ensuring that the Army was really the “military organization of the Party,” which is unwavering in loyalty to the country and complete in filial devotion to the people. Our Army has been educated in the directions and tasks of the Party and the policies and laws of the State, grasped the functions, tasks, allies or adversaries and requirements to defend our Homeland in each revolutionary stage.

Thanks to it, the thoroughly revolutionary spirit of the working class has permeated in each Party member, government official and soldier, thus making our Army always loyal and effectively implement the revolutionary tasks mapped out by the Party, overcome all hardships and sacrifices to win over the enemy. Under the leadership of the Party and Uncle Ho, our Army together with the entire people launched the successful 1945 August General Uprising and established the Democratic Republic of Vietnam – the first workers’ and peasants’ State in Southeast Asia, ushering in a new era – the era of national independence and socialism.

In the resistance war against the French colonialist aggressors, by grasping the all-people, comprehensive and protracted resistance war line, based on our own strength as the main, promoting at the highest degree the synergy of the entire nation; from launching small battles to big battles, from guerilla combat to regular combat, from tactical attacks to campaign attacks, strategic onslaughts and counter-attacks. The more our Army had fought, the stronger it had become. Our Army had won the resounding victories in the end.

With the victory of the 1953-1954 Winter-Spring Campaign, the peak of which was the historic victory at Dien Bien Phu which was “famous all over the world and shook the globe,” forcing the

French Government to sign the 1954 Geneva Accord. For the first time in the contemporary history, an army equipped with the rudimentary weapons had defeated a modern army, paving the way for the collapse of colonialism, vigorously encouraging the movement of national liberation struggle in the world.

In the anti-U.S. resistance war for national salvation, with the spirit of “Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom,” the Army together with the entire Party and people braving hardships and sacrifices had defeated one war strategy after another of the U.S. imperialists. The great victories of our Army and people in both the North and the South, especially the victory over the B-52 strategic air raids for 12 days and nights on Hanoi and Haiphong in December 1972 by the U.S. imperialists, had forced the U.S. to sign the Paris Accord on Vietnam, and it had to commit to putting an end to the war, creating conditions for us to focus our strength to launch the General Offensive and Uprising in the 1975 Spring, the peak of which was the historic Ho Chi Minh Campaign, liberating completely the South, reunifying the country, putting a glorious end to the 30-year-long war of national liberation which was not only full of hardships and sacrifices, but also heroic and glorious.

Not only had we fought to liberate our nation, but with the pure international proletarian spirit and by implementing the teachings of President Ho Chi Minh of “helping the people of a friendly country means helping us ourselves,”¹ our Army had shouldered with the revolutionary armed forces and people of Laos and Cambodia to fight against the common enemy. Immediately

1. Ho Chi Minh (2011), *Complete Collection*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 8, p. 105.

after the successful ending of the anti-U.S. resistance war, our Army had entered the fierce fighting to defend our border and to fulfill the noble international obligation, helping the Cambodian people to get out of the genocidal disaster, leaving the fine image of “Uncle Ho’s Soldiers” in the hearts of the people of the friendly country.

In the building and defense of our Homeland during the renewal period, our Army continues to effectively perform the function of a fighting army, the working army, and the laboring and production army; and

- To play the core role in building the all-people national defense, building up relative combat power from mobilizing the entire people to defend the country together with relative combat power from mobilizing the people to protect national security, and building defense areas; always be proactive in giving advice to the Party and the State concerning military and national defense issues, making strategic directions to defend the Homeland;

- To accurately assess and forecast the situations and effectively handle them in order to be proactive and in control, particularly in the struggle to protect the sovereignty over the sea and islands and the territorial integrity of our Homeland; and

- To effectively carry out national defense foreign relations, contributing to creating a peaceful and stable environment for national building and development.

The Army has always been exemplary in implementing the task of Party building and rectification, enhancing the learning and following of Ho Chi Minh Thought, morality and style; to be proactive, sensitive and active in the forefront in protecting the ideological foundation of the Party, fighting to refute the inaccurate, hostile viewpoints, political opportunities, foiling hostile forces’ plots

of “peaceful evolution,” “non-politicizing” the Army, giving the “monitoring power to the Government rather than the Party” (*dân sự hóa*). At the same time, the Army has promoted the training, combat readiness; helped the people to eradicate hunger and reduce poverty; and guarded and combated against natural disasters, practiced the rescue and salvage, built a strong local political base and a firm “relative combat power from mobilizing people’s hearts-and-minds,” thus further enhancing the beautiful image and tradition of the “Uncle Ho’s Soldiers” in the new period.

Throughout 75 years, in any revolutionary stage, including the most difficult and complex point of time, the Communist Party of Vietnam has always had *the absolute and direct leadership in all aspects of the Vietnam People’s Army*. This is an important element to ensure the victory of the building and defense of the Homeland, and also the decisive element of the growth, the fighting power and the victory of the Army. Being cared, trained and led by the Party, our Army always has the character of the working class, the nationalism and deep humaneness, firmly maintains the revolutionary standpoint, the combat target, the political confidence, is truthfully the sharp instrument, the political force which is absolutely loyal and reliable of the Party, the State and the people, building the tradition “*Loyal to the Party, filial to the People, ready to fight, to sacrifice for independence and freedom of the Homeland, for socialism, fulfill any tasks, overcome any difficulties and defeat any enemies.*”

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* *

In the future, the world and regional situation will continue to have complex, unpredictable developments; the non-traditional challenges will increase; the strategic competition between the major

powers will become ever more acute; the East Sea situation is hidden with many unforeseeable dangers, the trend of linkage, globalization and the Fourth Industrial Revolution have been deeply impacting all the countries in various aspects. Domestically, even though many socio-economic achievements have been recorded, the macro-economy has been ensured stably, but not yet really firmly; the country's potentials continue to be strengthened, the prestige and position on the international arena have been ever more heightened, there are still many difficulties and challenges. Hostile forces have stepped up the strategy of "peaceful evolution," enhanced "self-evolution," "self-transformation" and plots of "non-politicizing" the Army, and giving the "monitoring power to the Government rather than the Party," particularly before, during and after the congresses of Party committee levels and the 13th National Party Congress.

The building and defense of the Homeland have posed the new, very heavy requirements, in which it is determined that the struggle to protect the sovereignty over the sea and islands and the territorial integrity of our people is still very difficult, long and complex. In 2020 and the following years, the tasks of the Army can become ever higher and ever heavier. To well fulfill the functions and assigned tasks, the issue of decisive significance is to maintain firmly and enhance the Party's absolute and direct leadership in all aspects of the Army, reflected in some of the tasks as follows:

First of all, to accelerate the education, to unify the awareness of the necessity to maintain and enhance the Party's leadership of the Army. Theoretically and practically, it has shown that the Army always has the class character and is under the leadership of the class that has organized it. This is the basis to determine the fighting goal and ideology, functions, tasks and the relations of the Army.

The Vietnam People's Army is directly organized, led, trained and educated by the Communist Party of Vietnam and President Ho Chi Minh, always carries in it the nature of the working class, nationalism and deep humaneness, fights for the Party's objective and ideology, for national independence, freedom, and happiness of the people.

Therefore, the Party's leadership role towards our Army is the objective inevitability, the decisive element of the development, the fighting power and the victories of the Army. In any situation, it is always consistent in the principle that the Communist Party of Vietnam has the absolute and direct leadership in all aspects of the People's Army. Without the Party's leadership, our Army would lose its fighting direction, become disintegrated in the political, ideological and organizational fields, and would not have the strength to win over the enemy. The costly lesson of the collapse of the socialist system in the Soviet Union and East Europe in the past has remained valuable.

Therefore, the Central Military Commission of the Communist Party of Vietnam and leaders of the Ministry of National Defense need to concentrate their leadership and guidance on effectively providing political education, directions for ideology, and understanding of responsibilities for Army officers and soldiers so as to constantly self-improve with revolutionary character, in the tradition of the "Uncle Ho's Soldiers," with the fighting power and as the really sharp instrument to defend our Homeland, the Party and the people. At the same time, they must actively fight the negative manifestations and incorrect awareness of the leadership role of the Party towards the Army so as to ensure that the more the Army advances as a regular and modern army, the more firmly maintained and enhanced the Party's leadership is.

Second, we need to focus on building the Military Party Committee to be truly pure and strong in the political, ideological, organizational and moral fields. This is the primary element for the Military Party Committee to improve its leadership capacity and resiliency to lead the entire Army to implement successfully the military and national defense tasks and protection of our Homeland.

- To continue to renew and raise the effectiveness of the ideological work, making Marxism-Leninism, Ho Chi Minh Thought always the ideological foundation and the compass for all activities;

- To be proactive in the struggle against the wrong, hostile viewpoints, solidly defend the ideological front of the Party, ensuring for the Army to always be absolutely loyal to our Homeland, Party and people, steady before difficulties and challenges;

- To constantly improve the organizational system, to renew the leadership methods, improve the level and capacity, particularly ability to grasp and materialize the Party's resolutions and directive;

- To build the scientific working method and style, with the spirit of renovation, close touch, resoluteness and effectiveness, without glitz and formality;

- To enhance the inspection and supervision and maintain strictly the Party's discipline. The Military Party Committee continues to be an example in the forefront in implementing the resolutions, directions and stipulations of the Party's Central Committee on the Party building and rectification; strictly comply with the principles of the democratic centralism, and "the collective leads, the individual is in charge;"

- To uphold the exemplary role of government officials, Party members, particularly the heads, the officials in charge at different levels to follow the principles of walking the talk, the superior level setting good example for the lower rank, daring to think, to do, and to bear the responsibility; the internal Party must unite and unify as one;

- To be determined to fight against the manifestations of degeneration in political ideology, morality and lifestyle, “self-evolution,” “self-transformation,” bribery and cronyism, negative practices and corruption acts.

In the immediate, the Party committee levels should focus on leadership and close guidance of the preparatory work to carry out successfully the congresses of the Party committee levels within the Military Party Committee in a move to the 13th National Party Congress. It is necessary to do better the preparation of the personnel at the congresses of the Party committee levels; connect the building of the contingent of officials at the Party committee levels with the contingent of officials in charge in accordance with the motto of inheritance, stability and development.

The preparation of the congresses should go along with the leadership in order to effectively implement the tasks of military and national defense, improve the levels of training and combat readiness and build the defense areas; to combine the building up of relative combat power from mobilizing the entire people to defend the country with relative combat power from mobilizing the people to protect national security, clearly distinguish allies from adversaries, providing effective advice, guidance and strategic forecast, in order to be proactive and in control in all situations.

Third, we need to improve the quality and effectiveness of the Party work, the political work in the entire Army, contributing to building the Army to be solid and strong in politics. The nature of the Party work and the political work is the leading of activities. To improve their quality and effectiveness is to firmly maintain and promote the Party's leadership in the activities and tasks of the Army, contributing to building the firm and strong organization and personnel, building the Army to be politically strong. The Party work and the political work in the Army must keep close touch with the realities of our country, of the Army and the impacts of the international situation. We need to be proactive in resolving issue in political awareness and ideology, to clearly see the advantages and difficulties in order to work out the content, form and measure for appropriate activities. In so doing, we can ensure that the Party work and the political work are always “the soul, the artery” of the Army.

We need to promote the mass mobilization, consolidate the people's confidence in the Party and the Army, enhance the unity between the Army and the people, to implement the Army and the people as one will, to firmly build up “relative combat power from mobilizing people's hearts-and-minds,” particularly on the strategic areas. As well, it is necessary to place importance on fully understanding and organizing the implementation of the personnel strategy, and to build a contingent of officials at all levels, particularly those at the campaign and strategic levels. They need to be firm, consistent and exemplary in the moral quality and lifestyle, with the reasonable quantity and structure, high quality, adaptable well to the development of the situation, meeting the goals and requirements of building the revolutionary, elite, regular, gradually modernized army.

At the same time, we need to pay attention to building the political agencies, the contingent of political officials to be strong in all aspects, particularly the capacities of giving advice and proposals of the strategic issues to the Party, the State, the Central Military Commission and the Ministry of National Defense in order to strengthen the Party's leadership in the tasks of building the Army and the national defense, and protecting our Homeland.

Fourth, we need to further research, complement and improve the mechanism of the Party's leadership of the Army. In each revolutionary period and stage, our Party has determined and constantly complemented and improved the leading mechanism of the Party towards the Army so as to be suitable to the situation and revolutionary task. Thanks to it, our Army has constantly grown and effectively implemented the tasks assigned by the Party and the people. The implementation of the Party's resolutions and stipulations on the Party organizations, the organization of the political agencies in the Vietnam People's Army in recent times have made a very important contribution to firmly maintaining and strengthening the Party's leadership of the Army, the leadership of the Party committee levels and Party organizations for the agencies and units.

Through it, the Party's organizational system in the Military Party Committee has been carefully built to be politically, ideologically, organizationally and morally strong; the role and responsibility of commanders and political commissars, instructors, political agencies and officials at all levels have been promoted; and the efficiency of the Party work and the political work has been enhanced. At present, the defense of our Homeland in general and the building of the Army in particular have seen new developments,

which posed many issues that require us to continue to research, complement and improve the mechanism so as to firmly maintain and enhance the Party's leadership of the Army.

Therefore, the Party committees at all levels must study and apply the lessons learned from implementing the leading mechanism of the Party towards the Army. We need to constantly renew our working method and style, clearly determine the principle and mechanism to coordinate the operation of the leading, managing and commanding apparatus in the whole Army. We need to be active in studying new issues that arise according to the rules and principles and make proposals to the Party and the State, so that they can complement, develop and improve the directions, mechanisms and policies for the Army to be consistent with the development of the new situation.

Fifth, to resolutely struggle to foil the plots and schemes of hostile forces, "non-politicization" of the Army. The Party committees levels, the Party organizations in the entire Army need:

- To pay attention to effective communication and education so that army officers can clearly see the dangers of the plot of division, the refute of the Party's leadership, and the "non-politicization" of the Army;

- To fully understand and effectively implement the task of enhancing the protection of the Party's ideological foundation, to fight against the negative, hostile viewpoints in the new situation, and to oppose the "peaceful evolution" in the ideological and cultural areas in the Army; and

- To be proactive in providing information for timely ideological direction on complex, sensitive issues, making a

contribution to improving the resistance and the spirit of revolutionary vigilance for officers and soldiers.

Leaders and commanders of different levels should regularly manage and effectively resolve the ideology of their soldiers, proactively and in control. They need to effectively and timely cope with complex situations in accordance with the Party's viewpoints and directions and the State's policies and laws. They need to effectively implement internal political protection, prevent and combat the manifestations of the "self-evolution," the "self-transformation" and degeneration so that hostile forces cannot take advantage to sabotage the Army.

The research, press, culture and art agencies of the Army must firmly maintain the political orientations, viewpoints and directions of the Party. They must actively fight to refute the wrong, hostile viewpoints and to defend the Party's ideological turf in the Army.

In short, the Vietnam People's Army is founded, led, educated and trained by the Communist Party of Vietnam and President Ho Chi Minh, and it is loved, trusted, protected and nurtured by the people. We believe that inheriting and promoting the 75-year-long tradition of building, fighting and growing, under the leadership of the Party, the Vietnam People's Army will continue writing the illustrious and magnanimous historical pages, thus glorifying the country. Our Party, State and people are very proud of the heroic Vietnam People's Army and wish that the generations of officers and soldiers will make greater achievements to be worthy of the heroic tradition which was affirmed by President Ho Chi Minh: "*Our nation is a heroic nation, our army is a heroic army.*"¹

1. *Ibid.*, Vol. 10, p. 99.

BUILDING A STRONG ARMY: DEFENDING OUR COUNTRY WITH A LONG-TERM STRATEGY*

Dear the Presidium of the Congress,

Distinguished delegates and guests,

Dear colleagues,

Today I am very delighted to attend the Congress of the 11th Military Party Committee – the political event of very important significance not only for the armed forces, but also for the people across the country. On behalf of the Party's Central Committee, the Political Bureau, the Secretariat and the Central Military Commission of the Communist Party of Vietnam, I would like to send our distinguished delegates, guests and colleagues and through you, the entire officers, military workers and civil servants, the militia and self-defense forces nationwide my cordial greetings, solicitous regards and my best congratulations. I wish our Congress be crowned with success.

* The speech was delivered on September 28, 2020 by General Secretary, State President, Secretary of the Central Military Commission Nguyen Phu Trong at the Congress of the 11th Military Party Committee.

Dear colleagues,

As I have learned recently, the preparation for the Congress of the 11th Military Party Committee has been carried out elaborately, methodically, seriously and responsibly, in the spirit of Directive No. 35-CT/TW on May 30, 2019, of the Conclusion of the Political Bureau and the guiding documents of the Party's Central Committee.

The Political Bureau also listened to the Standing Committee of the Central Military Commission of the Communist Party of Vietnam to report the preparation and have the specific guidance in order to improve the draft documents and the plan on personnel to be submitted to the Congress. Today the Congress has been organized very solemnly and practically as planned. The general report of the Central Military Commission and some presentations have initially shown that they are very profound. Now I would like to offer some suggestions to further emphasize some issues for the Congress to consider.

Dear colleagues,

The five years of implementing the Resolution of the 10th Congress of the Military Party Committee, also the five years of implementing the Resolution of the 12th Party Congress, have seen many rapid, complex and unpredictable developments of the world and regional situation. Peace, cooperation and development would remain the major trend, but filled with multiple hurdles and difficulties due to rivalries and conflicts among the countries and regions. Non-traditional security challenges have become more serious. The task of defending our Homeland, particularly defending the sovereignty over the sea and islands, is facing many difficulties

and complexities. In addition, acts of sabotage by reactionary, hostile forces against the Party, the State, the political system and the Army have also become more sophisticated, manipulative and more direct.

In that context, the Military Party Committee has led and guided the entire Army to promote the revolutionary tradition, unity, proactiveness, creativity, to strive to overcome all difficulties and challenges, completing all the tasks and targets worked out by the Resolution of the Congress of the 10th Military Party Committee. Many tasks have been well fulfilled, in which some tasks have been remarkably fulfilled, worthy of note are:

First, the Military Party Committee has led to effectively implement the function of the strategic staff with the Party and the State about the military and national defense. It proactively and effectively resolved the situations without being unprepared, contributing to defending firmly our Homeland. This served to guard against the danger of conflict, protect the interests of our country and people, to maintain solidly the sovereignty over territories, border, the sea and islands, and to firmly maintain the environment of peace and stability for the national development.

You have studied and advised to promulgate and deploy effectively many important strategies, resolutions, conclusions and programs on military, national defense, contributing to improving and developing the theoretical mindset, direction and art of Vietnamese military. This served to better meet the demands and tasks of building and defending our Homeland both in the immediate and the long-term.

In face of complex developments of the situation, the Army has always been firm, consistent and served as the solid support of

the Party, the State and the people and the core force in building up a strong relative combat power from mobilizing the entire people to defend the country, ensuring the environment of “peace at home and abroad” for the country. This is a very precious lesson which must be kept and developed better in the time to come.

Second, the Military Party Committee has led the entire army to effectively promote the core role in building the all-people national defense, building up strong relative combat power from mobilizing the entire people to defend the country, together with relative combat power from mobilizing the people to protect national security. It has closely coordinated with the departments, ministries and sectors at the Central and local levels so as to guide the readjustment of the strategic position, mobilize the resources to build the defense areas, strengthen the defense potential of the country. The officers and soldiers have always kept a flesh and blood relationship with the people, taken an active part in building a firm local political base, helped the people eradicate hunger and reduce poverty, and coordinated to effectively handle complex situations, particularly on the strategic, important areas in national defense and security.

At the same time, the Army has always been the pioneering troops, the core force at the forefront in the prevention and fight against natural disasters, epidemics, in rescue and salvage operations and in overcoming the environmental incidents. Through which the quality of “Uncle Ho’s Soldiers” has been ever deepened and shone ever more brightly in the new situation; affirming the role of the “Fighting Army – the Working Army – Labor and Production Army.” Especially, in efforts to prevent and combat against COVID-19 pandemic in recent times as well as now, officers and soldiers of the

entire Army have really become the firm, reliable support of the Party, the State and the people, deserving to be the People's Army, the army within the people's hearts.

Third, the Military Party Committee has thoroughly grasped and seriously carried out the direction of building the elite, regular, revolutionary and gradually modernized army; taking the political competence and the quality of "Uncle Ho's Soldiers" as the basis to improve the general qualities, strength, the level of combat readiness of the Army. This served to better meet the requirements and tasks of defending our Homeland in the new situation. You have actively carried out the adjustment of the Army organization in the "streamlining and strong" direction, in which priority was given to investing in some arms, services and forces so as to advance straight to modernity.

The training and educating work has seen many renovations in the direction of standardization and modernization. All large-scale military exercises have been given good organizational guidance, meeting the requirements of modern war. Some forces have taken part in international army games and have recorded high achievements, winning many collective and individual medals. For instance, the Vietnam Tank unit has won the gold medal, standing top of the Table 2 in the recently held International Army Games in Russia. The building of a regular army that abides by the law and discipline in combination with the building of the comprehensively strong, "exemplary, outstanding" (*mẫu mực, tiêu biểu*) units has made many positive changes. The logistical, technical and financial work and other fields have all reached the new developments. A number of new, modern weapons and equipment have been studied, mastered and produced, making a contribution to enhancing the

strength of our national defense. A number of the military enterprises have renewed, striven to affirm their prestige and brand at home and abroad, for instance, the Military Industry and Telecoms Group (Viettel) and the Saigon Newport Corporation.

Fourth, many renovations and creativities have been seen in international integration and the defense external relations, which have been in-depth both multilateral and bilateral. This led to practical effectiveness and became one of the pivotal foreign relations of the Party, the State diplomacy, and the people-to-people external relations, contributing to defending the Homeland early and from afar. The defense external relations have made a contribution to deepening further the relations with neighboring countries, balancing the relations with the major powers and preserving relations with the traditional friendly countries. It is proactive to take part in the multilateral military, national defense forums; to coordinate to organize the border defense friendship exchanges; to take an active part in the United Nations Peace-keeping Force, contributing to raising the prestige and position of our country and our Army in the international arena, particularly in ASEAN.

Fifth, a special importance has been placed in building the Military Party Committee to be strong in politics, ideology, organization and morality. The united and unified relations have been more consolidated; the principle of Party organization and working mechanism have been more strengthened; the leadership capacity and resiliency of the Party committee levels and the Party organizations, the vanguard and exemplary role of officers, Party members in the whole Military Party Committee have been enhanced. Especially, you are always proactive and sensitive and at the forefront in protecting the ideological foundation, firmly

consolidating the ideological front of the Party in the Army, and fighting to refute negative, hostile viewpoints.

You have resolutely, consistently and effectively deployed the Resolution of the 4th Plenum of the 11th and the 12th Party tenures on building and rectifying the Party in connection to Directive No. 05-CT/TW on May 15, 2016 of the Political Bureau on enhancing the learning and following of Ho Chi Minh Thought, morality and style with creative and suitable models and ways of doing things. The personnel work has been implemented according to the principles, stipulations, process, ensuring democracy, openness, thus creating the unity and high unification. The inspection, supervision, execution of discipline, checks and balances, prevention and combat against corruption and negative practices have been carried out strictly and closely, the wrongdoings have been seriously handled, with “no forbidden zones, no exceptions,” contributing to consolidating the confidence of the people in the Party, the State and the Army.

The recorded results of the Military Party Committee in the past tenure are great and important, helping to successfully accomplish the Resolution of the 12th Party Congress and making contributions to the great victories of historic significance in the national renovation so that our country can now have such fortunes, potentials, position and prestige as they are today.

On behalf of the Party and the State, I would like to warmly welcome and commend the Military Party Committee and the entire Army for having recorded achievements and results in the past five years.

Besides the above prominent strongpoints, in the Military Party Committee’s leadership and guidance of implementing the

tasks, there are still many shortcomings and weaknesses as pointed out in the Political Report submitted to the Congress. I propose that the Congress should continue the discussion with a high spirit of self-criticism and criticism, honesty, sincerity, progress-seeking and a deeper analysis of these limitations and shortcomings in order to continue to self-improve, overcome challenges and effectively prevent dangers. We must not be unprepared and complacent.

Dear Congress,

In the years to come, it is forecasted that the world and regional situation still witness many complex, unpredictable developments. Besides the trend of peace, cooperation and development, strategic competition, the local, racial and religious conflicts can be more severe. The world economic recession can be prolonged further, inherent with the danger of crisis in connection to the COVID-19 pandemic. Non-traditional security challenges globally have become more complex.

After 35 years of renewal, our country's position and strength, synergy and international prestige have been enhanced. Our international integration has been more intensive and extensive. However, four dangers pointed out by our Party are still in existence and some aspects have become fiercer. Protection of independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, firm maintenance of the environment of peace and stability and adaptability of climate change are the major challenges that could have direct impacts on our country in the coming time.

These situations have had direct and deep impacts on the process of implementing the military and national defense tasks. Therefore, it requires us to pay constant attention to consolidating and accelerating the strength of national defense, building the

people's armed forces and the Army, and closely combining two strategic tasks: to build socialism and to firmly defend our Homeland of socialist Vietnam.

As for the Military Party Committee, the Political Report has determined directions, tasks and goals for the 2020-2025 tenure, especially the goal to strive from 2030 to build the modern army. The most important issue is how to lead the implementation to obtain the best results. I want to discuss some contents for your study and discussion to make them clearer.

First, it is necessary to be fully and deeply aware of the favorable elements, the advantages and position, the special role of the Army, of the Military Party Committee. That is, our Army is the Army of the people, by the people and for the people and is put under the "absolute and direct leadership in all aspects" of the Party. Therefore, the Army must be absolutely loyal to the Party and to our Homeland, and to have a flesh and blood relationship with the people.

The fact has proved that since its establishment, our Army "is always loyal to the Party, filial to the people, ready to fight and sacrifice for the independence and freedom of our Homeland and for socialism; fulfill any tasks, overcome any difficulties and defeat any enemies." Our Army has a very glorious tradition both in fighting and in production, recognized and loved by our people, and received from them an extremely noble, sacred and affectionate name "Uncle Ho's Soldiers." This is very precious and pride-worthy for the Army.

The Army is the force with close organization and with strict discipline and self-consciousness. The Military Party Committee is the large Party committee. Officers and Party members are selected and fundamentally trained, regularly educated and self-improved,

with characteristics consistent with those of the Party, with high resiliency and respectable. This is truly both the foundational, core values and the advantages and fundamental driving force for the Military Party Committee and the entire Army to successfully fulfill the assigned tasks. Our responsibility is to further enhance and promote these values so that our Army will develop stronger, have higher prestige, and deeper and more shining quality of the “Uncle Ho’s Soldiers.”

Second, we need to continue to focus on building the Military Party Committee to be truly pure and strong, “exemplary and outstanding,” meeting the confidence and expectation of the entire Party, people and armed forces. To give more care to building the Military Party Committee to be ever stronger in politics, ideology, organization and morality; raise the comprehensive leadership capacity and resiliency of the Party committee levels and Party organizations; the vanguard and exemplary role of officers and Party members has to be spread to the Army and the society. We need to accelerate Party building and rectifying in the spirit of the Resolution of the 4th Plenum of the 11th and the 12th Party tenures in combination with Directive No. 05-CT/TW of the Political Bureau and the movement titled “Promote traditions, devote talents, to be worthy of the name “Uncle Ho’s Soldiers”” in the new era.

Discipline is the strength of the Army. It is necessary to enhance the inspection and supervision, to tighten discipline in the Military Party Committee and the entire Army, and to build and foster the contingent of officers, particularly those at the strategic and campaign levels. We need to attract, develop and make good use of talents, meeting the demands and tasks of building and defending the Homeland in the new situation.

Third, we need to place special importance on building the Army to be strong in politics, serving as the basis to improve the quality and combat power of the Army. President Ho Chi Minh once advised: “Army without politics is like a tree without roots; it is useless and even it is harmful.”¹ Therefore, we need to constantly place great importance on enhancing the education of Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Thought; of our national tradition and culture and the class nature of the Army; and of distinguishing allies and adversaries in the new situation. We need to ensure that in any conditions and circumstances, the Army will always be the political and combat forces which is absolutely loyal and filial to the Party and the people. It has high will and determination to overcome all hardships, and sacrifices to successfully fulfill all tasks.

The Army must further improve the quality and effectiveness of mass mobilization, consolidating more deeply the flesh and blood relationship with the people, contributing to enhancing the close relationship between the people and the Party; and effectively implement the function of “the Fighting Army – the Working Army – the Labor and Production Army.” At the same time, the Army needs to be proactive and determined to struggle more vigorously and more effectively in defending the ideological foundation of the Party; to foil all the plots and activities of “peaceful evolution,” “self-evolution,” “self-transformation,” “non-politicization” aiming to sabotage the Army; and to firmly maintain the ideological battle front of the Party in the Army.

In face of the new situation, with its condition and capabilities, the Army must be at the forefront in the struggle to strongly refute

1. Ho Chi Minh (2011), *Complete Collection*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, Vol. 7, p. 217.

the wrong and hostile viewpoints, not only in the press, but also right in the internal body as well as outside the society. We must not to let the wrong viewpoints exist in the Army.

Fourth, the Army needs to continue to grasp and deploy the serious and effective implementation of the Resolution of the 8th Plenum of the 11th Party tenure on the strategy to defend our Homeland in the new situation, the programs and strategies on military, national defense, the Resolution of the 13th Party Congress and the resolutions of the Party's Central Committee.

The Army needs to be proactive to study, grasp and accurately forecast the situation and give timely advice to the Party and the State on the guidelines of the military and national defense affairs, and

- To effectively handle situations and ensure that in any conditions and circumstances, we will always be in control;
- To be ready for overall solutions, to neutralize the danger of war and conflict early and from afar, to firmly defend our Homeland and maintain the environment of peace and stability for national development;
- To enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the Party's leadership, the governance role of the State, in the military and national defense; and
- To be proactive and ready to respond effectively to the non-traditional security challenges in the new situation.

Fifth, the Army needs to coordinate closely with ministries, sectors and localities, to promote the core role of the Army in building the all-people defense, building up relative combat power from mobilizing the entire people to defend the country in connection with relative combat power from mobilizing the people to protect national security, and

- To further improve the quality of building and operation of the defense areas in the strategic arrangement nationwide;

- To enhance the national defense potentials, thus the national strength so that the national defense and security situations can be effectively responded;

- To closely combine national defense and security with the economy, culture, society and external relations, and vice versa; to build up “relative combat power from mobilizing people’s hearts-and-minds” for the building and defending of our Homeland; and

- To continue to coordinate more comprehensively, closely and effectively with the Public Security and other forces in maintaining the political security, social order and safety nationwide.

Sixth, the Army needs to implement simultaneously the solutions to build the elite, regular and gradually modernized Army, with some arms, services and forces advancing straight to modernity, and

- To create firm premises so as to strive from 2030, to build the modern Army, and to continue to adjust the personnel organization to ensure to be further “elite, streamlined, and strong;”

- To regularly renew and improve the training and educating quality; to enhance the study, development and scientific and technological application in the activities of the Army;

- To lead to carry out the logistical and technical work; to develop the national defense industry in the direction of autonomy, self-reliance, modernity and dual use, meeting the requirements of developing the Army and socio-economic activities;

- To promote the effectiveness of the labor and production activities, to build economy together with the national defense; to closely manage the military enterprises, manage and use closely the national defense’s land for economic activities; and

- To pay attention to drawing experience in the management and use of the national defense's land in recent times and in the time to come, the Army needs to manage more closely and must not have any errors and shortcomings that could make impacts on the prestige and honor of the "Uncle Ho's Soldiers."

At the same time, the Army needs:

- To continue to accelerate the international integration, national defense external relations, contributing to further enhance the prestige and position of the Army and our country on the international arena, to be proactive in defending firmly our Homeland, to protect the interests of our country and people early and from afar; and

- To enhance the bilateral cooperation, raise the multilateral external relations; to give priority to the relations with the neighboring countries and the ASEAN countries; to balance our relations with the major powers; to expand and further deepen the relations with the countries with potentials and increase the extent of common strategic interests with them.

Dear Congress,

With the spirit of "Unity – Intelligence – Competence – Democracy – Discipline," I firmly believe that the 11th Congress of the Military Party Committee will be crowned with success, leaving an important milestone in the process of taking our Army to the new development period, making a vital contribution to the success of the 13th National Party Congress.

In the process of building, growth and development, the Party, the State and the people have always reserved their special attention to the building of the Army. Having a look back at the process of 75 years of the glorious tradition of the Army, we are very proud of its

great victories and the strong developments, highly value the great efforts and achievements of the army and of the Military Party Committee. At the same time, you are also required to have the high, very high determination, will and energy in the time to come. The Party's Central Committee, the Political Bureau and the Secretariat believe that in the coming tenure, with the spirit that what you have done well must be done better, that your ideology and action have been unanimous must be more unanimous.

The Military Party Committee must be an exemplary, truly a pure and strong Party Committee, with high resilience and strong unity so as to lead the entire Army to continue promoting the glorious tradition of the Party, of the nation and of the Army, to be forever worthy as "Uncle Ho's Soldiers," to be worthy forever of a heroic army of a heroic nation, " a hundred battles, a hundred victories" (*bách chiến, bách thắng*), recording new feats of arms, making more contributions to building and firmly defending the Homeland of our beloved socialist Vietnam, deserving the trust and affection of the Party, the State and the people.

May you have good health, happiness and success!

Thank you, with regards!

**BUILDING A PURE AND STRONG
PUBLIC SECURITY FORCE:
DEVOTEDLY SERVING THE COUNTRY***

Dear delegates,

Dear colleagues,

Today, in the joyful and enthusiastic atmosphere of the early days of the New Year 2019, I am very glad to attend the 74th National Public Security Conference – the conference of very important significance, that not only appraises the work completed in 2018, but also takes a look back at the results of the work of the Public Security Force since the 12th National Party Congress, and discusses and agrees on the directions and tasks for 2019 and the years to come.

On behalf of the leaders of the Party and the State, I would like to send you, the delegates together with the generals, officers, non-commissioned officers, officials of the People's Public Security Force my solicitous regards and best wishes.

Dear colleagues,

Having a look back at 2018 and the past half a tenure, we are happy to see that our Party, people and armed forces have been

* The speech was delivered on January 3, 2019 at the 74th National Public Security Conference.

united, unified and striven to deploy the implementation of the Resolution of the 12th Party Congress and the 2016-2020 five-year socio-economic development plan, and recorded very important initial results. Our politics and society are stable; our economy has had positive changes; and the people's material and spiritual life has been improved. The building of the Party and the improvement of the political system have obtained many important results, thus creating active changes in political ideology, morality, lifestyle, professional work behavior and internal unity. Our national defense and security continue to be strengthened; political security has been firmly maintained, social order and safety have been ensured. External relations activities and international cooperation have been expanded and more in-depth. The position and prestige of Vietnam on the international arena have been further enhanced.

These results and achievements have been recorded because of the unity and efforts of the entire Party, the people, and the political system, in which there is a very important role of the armed forces in general, of the People's Public Security Force in particular. Our Party, State and people have always recognized and highly valued the endeavors and great contributions of the Public Security Force. The review report of the leaders of the Ministry of Public Security has made a comprehensive, serious and objective assessment of the sector's operational aspects. I would like to emphasize some of the following important results:

First, the People's Public Security Force has effectively implemented the core role in firmly maintaining national security, ensuring social order and safety, making a very important contribution to fulfilling the goals and tasks of the socio-economic development and foreign relations of the country, and protecting

the peaceful life of the people. In the context of terrorism, sabotage, racial and religious conflicts, power struggles, coup d'états and local wars happening complicatedly in many areas in the world, our country has still maintained its political stability, national security, social order and safety and has been appraised by the international community as a peaceful country and a safe destination of international friends.

These results have affirmed the great merits of the Public Security Force. You have proactively grasped and analyzed and accurately forecasted the situation, and effectively carried out the advisory function for the Party and the State in making the directions and policies, improving the institutions and mobilizing the resources to protect the interests of our country and people and defend our social security and safety. You have focused on resolutely and effectively fighting against the sabotaging activities of hostile forces, timely discovered and prevented terrorism, handled many sabotages and instigating cases and demonstrations causing chaotic order and security, and prevented these disturbances from prolonging, spreading and further complicating the problems. The prevention and struggle against crimes and violations of the law have been effectively performed. The quality of investigation and case solving has been improved. Therefore, the crime rate has been controlled, creating positive changes in the social order and safety.

Especially in the prevention and combat against corruption and social negativities, you have seriously complied with the leadership and guidance of the Political Bureau, the Secretariat and the Central Steering Committee on Anti-Corruption. You have organized simultaneously and effectively your work, closely coordinated with the judiciary agencies and with the Central Commission for Internal

Affairs, the Central Inspection Committee, the Government Inspectorate and the State Audit to have hit many criminal organizations, creating a strong deterrence and warning, contributing to protecting the Party, the system and consolidating the confidence of government officials, Party member and the people, maintaining socio-political stability for national development.

Second, the Public Security Force has been active in deploying the implementation of the renovation and coordinating the organizational apparatus to be streamlined, efficient and effective, together with enhancing Party building, and building the contingent of officials at different levels according to Resolutions No. 4, 18 and 26 of the Party's Central Committee of the 12th tenure. You have been proactive in giving advice and making proposals so that the Political Bureau issued Resolution No. 22-NQ/TW, the Government promulgated Decree No. 1, the National Assembly approved the Law on the People's Public Security (as amended), creating very important political and judicial foundation for coordinating the apparatus organization and consolidating and building the internal force, creating conditions for closer and more scientific leadership and guidance.

The Central Public Security Party Committee and the Ministry of Public Security have paid attention to promoting more effectively the role and responsibilities of Party committee at various levels and heads of units. You have been proactive in renewing methods of leadership and commands, enhancing the emulation movement, and building the working style which is close to the people and to the grass-roots. You have timely arranged the contingent of officials simultaneous with the renovation and streamlined arrangement of the apparatus organization. You have been frank in pointing out, handling and proposing the handling of a number of government

officials and Party members who have signs of degeneration in the political ideology, morality and lifestyle and the violations of discipline. Many problems in the personnel work in the previous years, the previous tenure, including the senior commanding officials, have been settled. You have initially prevented and pushed back the manifestations of degeneration.

The fact shows that strict handling of wrongdoing officials has definitely not decreased the position and prestige of the Public Security as some people might have worried about. On the contrary, it has further affirmed the strong political determination, the courage and the strength of discipline, and enhanced the prestige of the People's Public Security Force.

Third, attention has been paid to State governance and to the improvement of the legal system on security and order. The administrative reform and the control of administrative procedures in the Public Security sector have been stepped up. At the initial step, it is possible to consolidate more firmly and simultaneously the judiciary basis in the organization and activities of the Public Security Force, thus creating favorable conditions for the activities of organizations, enterprises and the people. The management of immigration, the management of residence, the management of education of criminals, the order and safety of communication, the fire prevention and firefighting, and drug prevention and combat have been enhanced concertedly and had active changes.

Attention has been paid to the work coordination, to the mobilization of synergy of the sectors, the levels and the people in carrying out the task of ensuring security and order, of building the Public Security Force, of building the all-people movement to protect the security of our Homeland. Attention has also been paid

to coordinating the combined operations with the Army and the judiciary and internal affairs agencies, particularly in investigation, prosecution and trial of many serious cases, to settle many complex cases concerning security and order right from the beginning and from the grassroots.

Fourth, the position of the Public Security Force has been enhanced in the region and the world through the efforts of enhancing and expanding the international cooperation, especially the effective deployment of the mechanism of security dialogue with many important partners, contributing to building and enhancing the political confidence. The Public Security of Vietnam has had a more important role in settling international issues on the prevention and combat against crimes, participated intensively and extensively with higher effectiveness and essence in the mechanisms of regional and global security cooperation. This has created the new and solid relative combat power (*thế trận*), making an effective contribution to implementing the directions and policies of foreign relations of the Party and the State, building an environment of peace and stability in the region and the world.

The above results have been obtained because of many reasons, but the main reasons are:

(1) You have grasped and seriously implemented the leadership and guidance of the Political Bureau, the Secretariat, the National Assembly and the Government in combination with the strong renovation of the leading and commanding work at all levels;

(2) You have promoted a proactive spirit, particularly in timely discovering and settling newly arisen problems, complex and sensitive problems and hot spots that have caused social frustrations; and

(3) The regular and effective coordination of the ministries, sectors, mass organizations, localities, the great support and help of the people of all strata, especially the absolute loyalty, the consciousness of maintaining discipline and order, high political determination, unity and endeavors to strive to overcome the challenges facing generals, officers, officials and soldiers in the Public Security Force.

On behalf of the leaders of the Party and the State, I warmly welcome, commend and congratulate the recorded achievements in all work aspects of the Public Security Force in 2018 and in the first half of the tenure. We have especially recognized and glorified the examples of the officers and soldiers of the Public Security Force who “sacrifice for the country, wholeheartedly serve our people,” who are wise, courageous, daring to face dangers, willing to sacrifice, and overcome all difficulties to remarkably fulfill the assigned tasks.

We are happy with the recorded results and achievements, but we also need to seriously review and make clear the shortcomings as pointed out in the Report. I propose that with a high responsibility, the Conference should point out frankly and make clear the responsibilities and the reasons for limited understanding, forecasting and handling of the situation, particularly in a number of local public security units; for the situation where a number of cases have happened without being discovered, reported in time, thus leading to confusion in handling.

The combat against economic crimes and corruption in some localities is still limited. The prevention and combat against fires and explosions, salvage and rescue work are yet to be effective as we wished. Many fires and explosions with heavy damage have still happened. The quality of the contingent of officials in some units

and localities is yet to meet the requirements, and proper attention has not been paid to performance appraisal and assignment of officials. The management of officials and the internal protection have still certain loopholes, and a number of serious negative cases have happened. A number of officials in the sector have been disciplined, deprived of their titles and handled with criminal cases, causing negative impacts on the prestige of the People's Public Security Force.

In the coming time, besides the opportunities and advantages, we also have to face many difficulties and challenges as the world and regional situation witnesses the complex developments. Particularly, the adjustment of strategic competition between the major powers has become ever fiercer. Protectionism has increased fast in many countries, with the threat of traditional and non-traditional security happening acutely. The danger of violating the territorial sovereignty in combination with the challenges in handling the relations with countries, particularly with major countries, is on the increase. The danger of "self-evolution," "self-transformation" in the internal body together with the reduction of confidence of part of the people is very worrying. The sabotaging schemes and activities of hostile forces are becoming more vile and dangerous. Crimes, fires and explosions, traffic accidents have frequently happened, causing frustration in the people and instability in the society.

The year 2019 was a very important year in implementing successfully and comprehensively the Resolution of the 12th Party Congress and the 2016-2020 five-year socio-economic development plan in preparation for the 13th Party Congress. More assignments and complications are awaiting the public security sector. There are many major and challenging tasks for the sector to do and to do

better lying ahead. Therefore, we must not be complacent with the results and achievements. On the contrary, we have to be proactive to recognize the dangers and challenges, clearly determining the internal and external causes of the challenges and limitations, thus actively conducting the renewal. We need to focus on leading with unanimity to deploy the resolute and effective implementation in order to meet the requirements and tasks in the new situation.

The main important tasks you have mapped out in the Report and in the draft Resolution are very suitable, correct and have the groundwork. I am in complete agreement with you, but I only want to emphasize a few points.

First, all the activities of the Public Security Force must comply with and closely follow the leadership and guidance of the Party and the State, serving effectively all the tasks of the socio-economic development, ensuring the national defense, security and foreign relations of the country. We need to continue to review and add the directions and solutions so as to organize the implementation with the highest effectiveness of the goals and tasks as pointed out in the Resolution of the 12th National Party Congress, the 6th Congress of the Central Public Security Party Committee.

We need to rapidly improve the mechanism, renew the leadership methods of Party committees and Party organizations in the public security forces at different levels, unify throughout from the Central to grassroots levels; to build the mechanism of close coordination between the Central Public Security Party Committee with the provincial and municipal Party committees; and to effectively plan, foster and recommend public security personnel for joining Party committees for the 2020-2025 tenure, in preparing for the 13th National Party Congress. This is to ensure the absolute and

direct leadership in all aspects of the Party towards the People's Public Security.

Second, we need to firmly maintain national security, to ensure social order and safety in all situations, and we must be in control at all times. We need to be proactive in early forecast, to accurately evaluate the situation; recognize the dangers, the threats to our national interests, political security and social order and safety; to give timely advice to the Party and State concerning major and strategic directions, policies and solutions in handling security and order issues.

We need to constantly renew the work in order to be proactive in preventing, timely and effectively combating against all schemes and sabotaging attempts of hostile forces, and to guard against terrorism, disturbances and sabotages. We need to effectively respond to the threats of non-traditional security and arisen complex issues of security and order.

In handling complex issues of security and order, we need:

- To grasp deeply the viewpoint of *"the people are the roots"* and hold high the four on-the-spot mottos: *"On-the-spot command, on-the-spot force, on-the-spot facilities, and the on-the-spot logistics;"*

- To have the sharp, timely counter-tactics conforming to each specific affair;

- To determine clearly the responsibility and authority of the levels and forces, the role and responsibility of commanders and heads of units; and

- To be proactive in the coordination and combined operations with the forces.

We need to closely combine social prevention with professional prevention; to resolutely crack down and strictly handle according

to the law, so as to reduce assorted criminals and law violations. We must not allow criminal gangs and organized crimes to “run amok” in the “criminal underworld,” to ensure the law and order and peaceful and safe lives of the people.

Third, we need to be proactive in coordinating with the functional agencies in prevention and struggle, to prevent enemies and bad elements from penetrating into our ranks to draw in, contact and make impacts with “self-evolution,” “self-transformation” in the internal body; to ensure all guidelines and directions of the Party be implemented effectively in realities. We need to be vigilant, timely discover and resolutely fight to refute hostile and wrong viewpoints; to expose the plots and actions that take advantage of some negative cases to harm our national unity and to dilute the role and prestige of the Party, the State and the people’s armed forces.

Fourth, we need to further improve the quality and effectiveness of the coordination and combined operations between the People’s Public Security and the People’s Army, together with the levels and sectors in implementing the goals and tasks in politics, economy, society, national defense, security and external relations. We need to be active in giving advice to the Party, the State, the Party committee levels and governments at all levels concerning the building of the all-people movement to defend the security of our Homeland, to build up a strong “relative combat power from mobilizing people’s hearts-and-minds,” particularly in strategic areas, border lines, sea and islands, and in ethnic minority areas, religious people’s areas, urban areas and large industrial parks.

We need to step up the activities of international cooperation, to continue to consolidate, expand relations with the countries and international organizations, to resolutely fight against hostile forces’

activities that take advantage of democracy and human rights in an attempt to sabotage our country. We need to be proactive in deploying measures to protect security, national interests, social order and safety early and from afar, from outside our border and territory, making a contribution to implementing effectively the external relations directions and policies of the Party and the State.

Fifth, we need to focus on resolutely and simultaneously guiding the implementation of solutions to continue building our public security force to be truly pure and strong, to be close to the people and the grassroots, deserving to be the loyal and reliable force of the Party, the State and the people. Importance must be placed on educating and training officers and soldiers in terms of morality, lifestyle, working style and the commitment to serve the people. We need to ensure highest efficiency and effectiveness of the apparatus after being fully set up.

Each officer and soldier of the public security force should uphold the will to fight, regularly self-criticize, and self-improve according to the requirements of responsibility and quality. They need to build at all costs the relations with themselves, with colleagues, with the Government, with the people, with allies and adversaries, as taught by Uncle Ho in his six-point teaching. It must be considered to be the regular and work become the sub-consciousness in the heart, the mind and the action in their daily work. They must always keep themselves pure and firm, not being tempted by bribery from bad elements and by “group interests,” not being lured by trivial fame and wealth, not taking advantage of their position to harm the common interests and the legitimate interests of the Party, the State and the people. In so doing, they protect the prestige, honor and promote the heroic, revolutionary tradition of the People’s Public Security.

I do believe that with the great efforts and high determination, with the new spirit, the new impetus, the People's Public Security Force will fulfill remarkably the assigned tasks, record many achievements, deserving to the trust and affection of the Party, the State and the people.

On the occasion of beginning of the New Year 2019, in preparation to welcome our traditional Lunar New Year, I would like to wish all of you, and through you, the revolutionary veterans, together with all the heroic People's Public Security Force a New Year filled with good health, happy and safe families, and success.

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