



**United Nations Office
for Disarmament Affairs**

**Remarks on the occasion of the 80th anniversary of Vietnam's
Independence – Dinner**

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As delivered



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Your Excellency Mr. Luong Cuong, State President of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam,

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is genuine pleasure to be invited to celebrate the 80th anniversary of Vietnam's independence and I am honoured to make these short remarks.

My sincerest congratulations to the people of Vietnam for achieving this milestone. Over the course of 8th decades, Vietnam has grown from throwing off the shackles of colonialism to the thriving, modern state we see today.

Drawing on its long history and rich culture, Vietnam has prospered into a modern, vibrant society and a regional leader. It is a tourist destination of choice, a robust economy and a central figure in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

And the people of Vietnam have charted their own course – one that is truly independent and truly Vietnamese.

They have every reason to be proud of these accomplishments and to celebrate this day.

It has not been an easy path for Vietnam. The world knows too well how Vietnam has endured wars and conflict on a colossal scale over the past 8 decades. It has suffered a bombing campaign larger than all of the ordinance dropped during the Second World War. Its people have witnessed the horrors of

landmines and other inhumane weapons. Its pristine environment has been ravaged. It has seen genocide on its very borders in a neighbouring country.

And yet, Vietnam has continued to display the independent spirit that has allowed it to prevail.

Indeed, these events of the last 80 years make even more remarkable the successes that Vietnam enjoys today.

Vietnam is a proud member of the United Nations. Its commitment to the UN and the UN Charter, to the principles of multilateralism, peaceful resolution to conflict, cooperation, sustainable development and equality demonstrate its standing in the international community. At a time of global turmoil and when the UN is at a crossroads, this is essential. It is essential to the continued functioning of the multilateralism, international order based on international law, and for the security and prosperity of humankind as a whole.

And of course, Vietnam is a strong supporter of my own field of work – disarmament and international security.

Nowhere is the current turmoil more evident than in this field.

The world is awash with weapons. As the UN Secretary-General's recent report on military expenditure showed, spending on weapons has reached historic highs – an outrageous 2.7 trillion dollars in 2024.

Alarming, the risk of a nuclear weapon being used is higher than it has been since the depths of the Cold War.

Here, once again, Vietnam has stepped up to the leadership role. Its Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador Do Hung Viet, will preside over the 2026 Review Conference of Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, better known as the NPT.

The NPT is a critical pillar of the disarmament and non-proliferation regime. Its continued vitality is central to the international peace and security. A successful conclusion to the 2026 Review Conference will be critical to preventing the spread of nuclear weapons and to return to the path towards their elimination.

The UN is honoured to work with and support Vietnam in this formidable and critical effort for peace and stability. We will do everything in our power to provide support to Ambassador Viet, a great example of the vibrant and dynamic Vietnam we see.

Congratulations again on your anniversary and thank you very much for your attention.