

**January 25, 1979**

**Note of the Foreign Ministry of the Socialist  
Republic of Viet Nam Sent to the Chinese Embassy  
in Ha Noi on the Viet Nam - China Railway Service**

**Citation:**

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**Summary:**

The Vietnamese Foreign Ministry claims that China is violating Vietnamese sovereignty.

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Mr. President,

PO 240 SRUN (6)

I have the honour to transmit to Your Excellency herewith the texts of the 20 January 1979 Note of the Foreign Ministry of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam sent to the Chinese Embassy in Ha Noi on the Viet Nam - China railway service, and of the S.R.V.N. Foreign Ministry's condemnation of China's maintaining tension at the border between the two countries.

I request Your Excellency to have this letter and its enclosures be circulated as a document of the U.N. Security Council.

Please accept, Mr. President, the assurances of my highest consideration.

HA VAN LAU  
Ambassador Extraordinary  
and Plenipotentiary,  
Permanent Representative  
to the United Nations

H.E. Mr. Donald O. MILLS  
Ambassador Extraordinary and  
Plenipotentiary  
Permanent Representative of Jamaica  
to the United Nations  
President of the Security Council  
United Nations Headquarters  
New York

*N O T E*

*OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY OF THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC  
OF VIET NAM SENT TO THE CHINESE EMBASSY IN HA NOI  
ON THE VIET NAM - CHINA RAILWAY SERVICE  
(20 January 1979)*

*The Foreign Ministry of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam on January 20, 1979 sent a Note to the Chinese Embassy in Ha Noi stating Viet Nam's view points about the Chinese Foreign Ministry's Note sent to the Vietnamese Embassy in Peking on January 19.*

*The Note reads as follows:*

"This is a blatant distortion of happenings on the Viet Nam-China railway section at the rail connection. The Foreign Ministry of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam completely rejects the groundless allegations and gross slanders against Viet Nam contained in the said note of the Chinese Foreign Ministry. It makes clear the truth on that railway section as follows:

"1. Considering the border line set by history between Viet Nam and China and clearly pointed out in the 1887 and 1895 conventions signed between France and China's Tsing Court, the area where the present Viet Nam - China railway connection is located lies between Marker Posts 19 and 20 across Bao Lam village, Van Lam district, Lang Son province, on Vietnamese territory. In 1955, taking advantage of the Vietnamese people's friendship, and with the scheme nibble at Vietnamese territory and when helping Viet Nam restore the railway from the Viet Nam - China border to Vietnamese station of Yen Vien the Chinese side laid the rail connection more than 300 metres deep inside Viet Nam's territory compared with the historic border between the two countries. On December 31, 1974, the Foreign Ministry of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam sent a note to the Chinese Foreign Ministry proposing that the governments of both countries entrust their railway services with readjusting the rail connection in keeping with the historic border line.

- 2 -

The Chinese side proposed that this be done after the governments of the two countries had held talks on the border issue.

"2. Pending the readjustment of the rail connection in keeping with the historic border line, and to ensure normal and safe train service on the Vietnamese side has, since 1976 and at the Chinese side's request, created all favourable conditions for the Chinese side to make medium scale repair of this railway section while asking the Chinese side to refrain from building any new projects and from casting a new situation on this railway section. However, the Chinese side has taken advantage of this medium scale repair to build a number of other projects aimed at making this section similar to the Chinese railway. No wonder that the Vietnamese cannot agree with such ill-intentioned action of the Chinese side.

"At the 20th conference on Viet Nam - China border railway service in April 1978, the Chinese side again raised the problem of carrying out medium-scale repair of this railway section. The Vietnamese side agreed to let it do as usual without undertaking any new project. But throughout 1978, the Chinese side did not carry out that repair. Nonetheless, the international train operated normally.

"Suddenly, on December 22, 1978, pretexting that the railway section at the rail connection was heavily damaged, the Chinese side unilaterally suspended the transfer of passengers, luggage, packages and foods along the international railway to and from Viet Nam. This is an arrogant and wrong action of the Chinese authorities which is part of the anti-Viet Nam scheme laid bare and severely criticized by Viet Nam.

"3. Along with the odious encroachments on Viet Nam's sovereignty and territory, the obstruction and suspension of the above international railway service, the Chinese side has also repeatedly sent armed forces to intrude into Viet Nam at the rail connection area, disturbing the Vietnamese people's normal activities, carrying out provocative activities, and even causing many very bloody events.

"The Note of January 19, 1979 of the Chinese Foreign Ministry again deliberately made black white and is aimed at covering up the Chinese authorities plan to commit new crimes in this area and other places along the Viet Nam - China border.

"The Foreign Ministry of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam vehemently denounces the schemes and erroneous and arrogant acts of the Chinese authorities in the area of the Viet Nam - China railway connection and in other places on Viet Nam's Northern border line, causing difficulties to the Vietnamese people infringing on Viet Nam's territorial sovereignty, and threatening the security of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam in the border area between the two countries.

- 3 -

"The Chinese side must stop at once these hostile schemes and acts against Viet Nam, respect the relevant agreements of the Organization for International Railway Co-operation (OSZD) and restore normal activities of the international railway on the Viet Nam - China railway section.

"The Chinese side must bear full responsibility for all consequences of its wrong actions."

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FOREIGN MINISTRY OF THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF  
VIET NAM CONDEMNS CHINA'S MAINTAINING TENSION  
AT BORDER

HANOI VNA JAN. 19 -- *Tan Phong, Deputy Head of the China Department of the Foreign Ministry, today lodged a protest to Lu Ming, Charge d'Affaires of China in Hanoi, against repeated incursions by Chinese armed forces into Vietnamese territory along the Northern border.*

*Tan Phong said that the Chinese authorities kept increasing armed provocations along the Viet Nam - China border, some of which were very deep in Vietnamese territory and resulted in bloody crimes against Vietnamese.*

*Tan Phong cited the following instances:*

*At 17.30 hours on Jan. 14, ten Chinese soldiers intruded into an area near Marker Post 1, in Ban Lau village, Muong Khuong district, Hoang Lien Son province. They fired machine guns at Vietnamese border guards, killing four and wounding severely one.*

*At 5.30 hours the same day, Chinese troops suddenly attacked the Market place in Xin Cai village, Meo Vac district, Ha Tuyen province. The Chinese fired at civilian homes and used explosives to blow up a border post of the Vietnamese armed security force.*

*The intruders also set afire two houses of the local people.*

*At 18.30 hours the same day Chinese troops broke into Lung Van Chai hamlet, Xin Cai village, Meo Vac district, Ha Tuyen province and killed a civilian.*

*At 5.30 hours on Jan. 15, dozens of Chinese soldiers and militiamen tried to nibble at an area defended by Vietnamese militia at Marker Post 28, in Thi Hoa village, Quang Hoa district, Cao Bang province.*

- 2 -

At 17.00 hours the same day, Chinese forces lobbed 10 mortar shells into the same area.

At 10.00 hours on Jan. 15, a Chinese armed unit intruded into Ban Lai village, Muong Khuong district, and fired at the village's store-house.

At 20.00 hours the same day, another Chinese armed unit attacked the store-house of a geological team stationed in Tung Song hamlet, Nam Chac village, Bat Xat district.

At 8.00 hours on January 16, Chinese armed forces fired many rounds of AK machine-guns at Bat Xat Port of Entry, Muong Khuong district.

At 9.00 hours the same day Chinese troops from the other bank of the Bat Xat river opened machinegun fire at Kho Tau hamlet, Ban Vuoc village, Bat Xat district, wounding a civilian.

On Jan. 14, 15, 16 and 17, Chinese troops stationed on high positions repeatedly opened fire at Tra Linh border post and its surrounding areas, in Tra Linh district, Cao Bang province.

At 11.30 hours on Jan. 17, a large number of Chinese troops moved into Vietnamese territory at milestone 56, on Friendship road number 8, in Ta Chu Phung village, Muong Khuong district, Hoang Lien Son province, some two kilometres from the border and killed a Vietnamese borderguard.

At the same time, Chinese troops across the border lobbed mortar shells into Van Nen Su hamlet, Ta Chu Phung village, Muong Khuong district. The shelling killed a village cadre and a lumberman, and wounded two others.

At 17 hours the same day, 60 Chinese troops broke into Ngai Cho hamlet, Ta Chu Phung village, killing two Vietnamese borderguards, a Vietnamese militiaman, wounding two other and taking away many more.

At 12.30 hours the same day, eight Chinese soldiers moved into Then Pa hamlet, A Lu village, Bat Xat district, Hoang Lien Son province, about 800 metres deep in Vietnamese territory.

At the same time, many Chinese soldiers intruded into Ngai Thau village and opened fire at civilian homes.

Tan Phong said that since Jan. 8 the Chinese authorities have conducted a series of armed provocations along the northern border of Viet Nam. Intrusions and firings have been conducted by the Chinese almost every day.

Citing initial figures, he said that within the last ten days, the Chinese have made more than 50 similar incursions at more than 30 points along the border, during which the intruders killed 20 Vietnamese civilians, militiamen or borderguards, wounding 15 others and taking away many more. Alongside these serious armed actions, Tan Phong said, the Chinese side has also directed loud-speakers at Viet Nam, and round the clock, used the Viet Nam and Meo languages to slander Viet Nam and incite the Vietnamese people to oppose their government. The Chinese side has also scattered

- 3 -

*leaflets on Vietnamese territory of the same purpose and to threaten the Vietnamese people living along the border.*

*Tan Phong said that these criminal and blatant actions were hard proofs of China'S hostile policy toward the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, and the cause of the serious tension along the border between Viet Nam and China. This reality had completely rejected the false contentions and slanders made by the Chinese Foreign Ministry in its Jan. 18 Note sent to the Vietnamese Embassy in Peking.*

*He strongly protested against these criminal acts of the Chinese authorities and demanded that they put an end to armed intrusions and provocations as well as to other acts of hostility against the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam.*

*The Chinese authorities must be held fully responsible for all consequences of their acts, Tan Phong said.*

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