

REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM

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Communique issued by the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Vietnam dated Jan. 19, 1974 on invasion of the Paracels and Spratly archipelagos by the Communist Chinese.

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Subsequent to its preposterous claims on January 11, 1974 of sovereignty over the Vietnamese archipelagos of Hoang-Sa (Paracels) and Truong-Sa (Spratly), Communist China has sent naval units to the Hoang-Sa area and landed troops on the Islands of Cam-Tuyen (Robert), Quang-Hoa (Duncan) and Duy-Mong (Drummond)

The Communist Chinese naval task force is composed of eleven warships of various types and tonnages, including one missile-ship of the Komar type

In the face of this military aggression, and in order to defend the territorial integrity and National Security of the Republic of Vietnam, Vietnamese naval forces stationed in the area summoned the invaders to leave.

Instead of complying, the Communist Chinese vessels chose to engage since January 18, 1974 in provocative maneuvers and attempted to ram the Vietnamese ships.

This morning, January 19, 1974 at 10:20 hours, a Communist Chinese escort-ship on the Kronstadt type opened fire on the Vietnamese destroyer "Tran Khanh Du" HC-04. Vietnamese units returned fire in self-defense and damaged the Chinese vessel. The engagements are still going on causing casualties and material losses on both sides.

The military actions initiated by Communist China constitute an overt aggression against the Republic of Vietnam, they once again point to the expansionist and imperialistic policy consistently pursued by Communist China, as illustrated by its annexation of Tibet, invasion of Korea and attacks against India.

The present aggression against the Republic of Vietnam not only threatens the sovereignty and security of the Republic of Vietnam, but constitutes also a danger to peace and stability of Southeast Asia and the entire world.

As a small nation unjustly attacked by big military power the Republic of Vietnam appeals to all justice- and peace- loving nations of the world to resolutely condemn the brutal acts of war by Communist China against an independent and sovereign nation, so as to compel Communist China to immediately desist from its dangerous course of action. To allow this brazen aggression to go unchecked would only encourage the aggressor to persist in its expansionist policies which would threaten the existence of small nations, especially in Asia .

In the course of their history, the Vietnamese people had defeated many foreign aggressors. Today, the Government and People of the Republic of Vietnam are no less determined to defend the integrity of their national territory.

January 19, 1974
