

Ho Chi Minh:

**TO THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE, THE FRENCH PEOPLE AND THE PEOPLES
OF THE ALLIED NATIONS**

(December 21, 1946)

We, the Vietnamese Government and people, are determined to struggle for our country's independence and reunification, but we are also ready for friendly co-operation with the French people. That is why we signed the Preliminary Agreement of March 6, 1940, and the Modus Vivendi of September 14, 1946.

But the French reactionary colonialists lacked sincerity and regarded those agreements as scraps of paper.

In Nam Bo they continued to arrest and massacre Vietnamese patriots and to engage in provocations. They bullied honest Frenchmen who advocated sincerity, and set up a puppet government in order to divide our people.

In southern Trung Bo they continued to terrorize our compatriots, attack the Vietnamese army, and invade our territory.

In Bac Bo, they provoked clashes to occupy Bac Ninh, Bac Giang, Lang Son and many other localities. They blockaded the port of Haiphong, thus making it impossible for Vietnamese, Chinese, other foreigners and also French residents to carry out their businesses. They tried to strangle the Vietnamese people and wreck our national sovereignty. They used tanks, aircraft, heavy artillery and warships to massacre our compatriots, and occupied the port of Haiphong and other towns along the rivers.

That was not all. They put their naval, land and air forces on the alert and sent us ultimatum upon ultimatum. They massacred old people, women and children in the capital city of Hanoi itself:

On December 19, 1946, at 8 p.m. they attacked Hanoi, the capital of Viet Nam.

The French colonialists' aim to reconquer our country is obvious and undeniable.

The Vietnamese people are now facing these alternatives: either to fold their arms and bow their heads and fall back into slavery, or to struggle to the end for freedom and independence.

No! The Vietnamese people will never again tolerate foreign domination.

No! The Vietnamese people will never again be enslaved. They would rather die than lose their independence and freedom.

French people!

We are your friends and want sincere co-operation with you within the French Union because we share a common ideal: freedom, equality and independence.

It is the reactionary French colonialists who have sullied France's honour and sought to divide us by provoking a war. As soon as France clearly understands our aspirations to independence and reunification and calls back the bellicose French colonialists, friendly relations and co-operation between the peoples of Viet Nam and France will be restored immediately.

French soldiers!

We have no grudge against each other. Only selfish interests have driven the reactionary colonialists to provoke clashes. Profits are for them, death for you, and decorations for the militarists. For you and your families, only suffering and destitution. Think the matter over. Are you going to shed your blood and lay down your lives for the reactionaries? Join us, you will be treated as friends.

Peoples of the Allied nations!

At a time when the democratic countries are striving to organize peace following the end of the World War the French reactionaries are trampling underfoot the Atlantic and San Francisco Charters. They are waging an aggressive war in Viet Nam for which they must bear full responsibility. The Vietnamese people ask you to intervene.

Fellow-countrymen!

The war of resistance will be a long and hard one. What ever sacrifices we must endure and however long the war of resistance will last, we are determined to fight to the end, until Viet Nam is completely independent and reunified. We are 20 million against 100,000 colonialists. We are bound to win.

On behalf of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, I give the following orders to the Army, self defence corps, militia and to the people of all three parts of Viet Nam:

1. If the French troops attack us, we must fight back hard with all available weapons. Let our entire people stand up to defend their Fatherland!
2. We must protect the lives and property of foreign residents and give the prisoners of war good treatment.
3. Those who collaborate with the enemy will be punished. Those who help the resistance and participate in the defence of their country will be rewarded.

Fellow-countrymen!

The Fatherland is in danger, let all of us stand up!

Long live independent and reunified Viet Nam!

Long live the victorious war of resistance!