

Presented by Senior Lieutenant General NGUYEN VAN DUOC
President, Head of delegation of the Veterans Association of Viet Nam (VAVN)
At the 18th GA. VECONAC, Vientiane-Lao, 10-14 Dec. 2018

- Honorable Brig. Gen. Som-phone Keo-Mi-Xay, VECONAC President,
- Honorable VECONAC Vice Presidents, distinguished guests,
- Ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the Veterans Association of Viet Nam (VAVN) and on my own behalf, I would like to extend our warmest greetings and best wishes to Excellency Brig. Gen. Somphone, VECONAC's President; to Vice Presidents, Head of Delegations, distinguished guests, delegates, observers, all ladies and gentlemen attending this GA. I would also like to express our deep gratitude to the President and members of the Lao National Veterans Federation (LNVF) for hosting two Meetings (EBM 31st in June and the 18th General Assembly) in the same year and for giving us very friendly welcome and excellent conditions to attending meetings and visiting your beautiful and hospitable Laos.

Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me summarize some basic features of the new development of VAVN from the VECONAC GA 17th, November, 2017 up to date (and may I authorize Senior Col. Tran Ngoc Dan, Head of the Foreign Relation Department of VAVN to present).

The Association continues to carry out its tasks comprehensively in all fields. Particularly in politics, the Association actively contributes to the protection of social and political stability, protection of the regime, the country and the people; VAVN is highly appreciated by the public, deserved the trust of the Administrations and people, especially in the grassroots.

In December 2017, VAVN held its sixth term Congress to review the work of the fifth term (2012-2017) and set the direction and tasks for new term (2018-2022). The top leaders of the Party, the State, the Government, the National Assembly, the Fatherland Front and other ministries and central agencies attended, delivered speeches and presented it many noble awards. Indeed, It is a high appreciation and great encouragement to VAVN.

The VAVN's organizational work continues to be strengthened and developed. In addition to 63 provinces and cities, there are now 47 associations in central ministries and agencies with a total membership of 3 million.

On the task of developing economy: The Veterans Movements help each other reduce poverty, improve living standards, participate in local socio-economic programs,

etc. continued being promoted*. In Aug. 2018, VAVN help the Business Association of Vietnam Veterans (BAV) held successful second term convention (2018-2023). To date, 41 provinces have formed the BAVs. Nationally, VAVN members give each other loans without or low interest rates or materials, fertilizers, plant seed varieties ... estimated at US\$ 3.5 million. Veterans Businesses, Cooperatives always performs its duty of paying taxes, protecting the environment and engaging in charitable activities and gratitude very effectively.

The VAVN at all levels actively participate in movements, coordinated programs, campaigns ... in the locality such as: "The whole people unite to build new countryside, urban civilization", "maintain traffic order and security", etc.; organizing many training courses on protection of environment, social policy bank loans effectively; mobilizing donations for the disaster prevention fund. The VAVN has jointly with the Ministry of Defense summed up the coordination work in the period of 2012-2017 and set out the task orientation for 2018-2022; Signed the Coordination Program with Co-operative Alliance 2018-2022, the Coordination Program with the 1237 National Steering Committee (now numbered 515) on improving the effectiveness of providing information about martyrs ... In 2018, VAVN provided 386 information of the burial site of martyrs, coordinated to the collection of 265 remains of martyrs and brought them to their home cemetery.

The VAVN has trained and implemented the Government's Decree 157/2016/ND-CP on amending and supplementing Decree 150, thereby guiding the implementation of new policies that are more beneficial to veterans (such as raising the level of health insurance, social assistance etc.). VAVN and its branches have provided legal aid, help solving the letters and complains to protect the legitimate interests of the veterans.

The mobilization, gathering Ex-servicemen to promote the nature and tradition of the "Uncle Ho's soldiers" is still well implemented, there are 36,330 clubs with 1.13 million veterans participated.

The cooperation with the HCM Communist Youth Union in the education of young generations is further promoted.

The People's External Relations work continues to be actively implemented. VAVN signed the MOU of Friendship and Cooperation with LNVF; Promote friendly relations with Lao and Cambodian veterans in various forms such as enhancing visits to former battlefields, thereby promoting bilateral exchanges, exchanging experience and cooperation in all sides. In 2018, the VAVN at the Headquarters has welcomed 26 delegations with 441 foreign veterans and guests to visit, exchange experiences, contribute to resolving the consequences of the war (such as giving information of martyrs) or enhance economic cooperation. These guests including the Deputy Commander of US' PACOM or US Ambassador, Deputy Director General of South

African Veterans, veterans groups from Russia, China, ROK, USA etc. and we are very happy to welcome you all.

In general, VAVN has completed the mission objectives in 2018. Now, 4 levels of VAVN are also actively preparing to sum up the 5 years of the Patriotic Emulation Movement 2014-2019 in combination with the 30th Anniversary of VAVN Day (06 Dec. 1989 – 6 Dec. 2019); Making preparation for ready to host the VECONAC's 20th GA in 2020.

At the end, may I wish this 18th General Assembly a great success; good health and happiness to you all.

Thank you for your attention!

** In the whole country, there are 8,713 enterprises (an increase of 728 enterprises compared to 2017), 3,800 cooperatives, 74,637 farms etc. owned by veterans. These businesses attracting more than 604 thousand labors, most of them are vets and their children. In 2018, the whole Association has removed 5,100 dilapidated houses, reduced 20,800 poor veterans households; To date, there are 3,332/11,158 communes (accounting for 28.97%), 108/703 Districts (accounting for 15.36%) and 25/63 provinces (39.68%) without any poor veterans households.*