1. Impact of Climate Related Disasters on Peace and Security

Climate change is an undeniable truth that seems to be dealt with less seriousness in the international arena when it comes to application of policies by countries who are called to act. The neglect of the effects of climate change has far ranging repercussions that embeds itself into a spiral of political tensions leading to regional instabilities. **Recognizing** the fact that climate change is one of the main reasons for the political and economic insecurity crisis around the world, the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam is **deeply committed** to work domestically to ensure sustainable development and internationally to ensure peaceful negotiations with neighboring countries over the marine resource allotment which will guarantee long-term peace and security of the South East Asian region.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change 4th Assessment characterizes Viet Nam as the hotspot of key future climate impacts and vulnerabilities in Asia. Since 90% of the poor and three quarters of the population live in rural areas, drought or flooding can adversely affect the agricultural sector of Viet Nam accelerating the decline of Vietnam’s development. Vulnerabilities of Vietnam- poor water retention capacity of its extensive coastline, river deltas and highlands added on to increasing temperature, changes in precipitation and rising sea levels increases the extreme susceptibility of Viet Nam to the effects of climate changes. Moreover, the northward migration of Vietnamese fish stocks due to warming temperatures in the South China sea is bound to aggravate tensions of trespassing into the other countries’ maritime territories if the fishers follow. The environmental degradation of the Mekong River Delta- dam building, overfishing, sand mining- by the riparian countries are leading to drying up of water and conflict over the resource availability of the Mekong area. In order for countries to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), particularly SDG 13 for effective response to climate change and natural disasters, SDG 14 for the sustainable use of marine resources, SDG 15 for conservation of biodiversity and ecosystem and SDG 16 for an equitable society, more must be done by countries to collaborate and cooperate with each other so that transboundary issues maybe prevented and peace brought to pass.

Viet Nam agrees to the fact that increasing temperatures are the main cause of the atmosphere warming of the country. Hence, Viet Nam stresses for a “low carbon economy” by mobilizing several social organizations for participation in climate related SDG goals and combines international resources with international cooperation to change the current status quo. Domestically, Viet Nam legislated the Law on Environment Protection to include a cap and trade for greenhouse gas emissions for corporations, banning chemicals that lead to the destruction of ozone, rules for reporting greenhouse emissions for corporations and a database for recording the amounts of emissions and implementing measures to reduce them. Partnership with nonprofits group, one of them being Association of Southeast Asian Nations- Swiss Partnership on Social Forestry and Climate Change seeks to implement social forestry, a major community initiative which seeks to engage in massive reforestation by giving forests to the people living around them and decreasing the corporate control of forests. Internationally, Viet Nam has joined in several efforts to try to alleviate the effects of climate change. Viet Nam has fulfilled its obligations as a member of climate pacts like United Nations Framework on Climate Chane (UNFCC), Kyoto Protocol, Paris Agreement, Vienna Convention, Montreal Protocol, etc., Viet Nam has partnered with the United Nations to inaugurated the Green One UN House to save lives and stabilize communities in order to ensure that climate action addresses the needs of the most vulnerable while contributing to sustainable development. A bilateral cooperation framework has been established between Viet Nam and Netherlands to improve water management and push for more climate adaptation strategies.

Viet Nam seeks to propose the following solutions for discussion. Firstly, Viet Nam **urges** a compromise between countries on national sovereignty over shared resource development rights and controls as peace and security of maritime borders will prevail only if there is genuine cooperation between countries on transboundary environmental issues. Secondly, Viet Nam **calls** for a discussion in the UNSC on China’s unilateral action over the Mekong River in establishing 11 dams which has resulted in millions of citizens of downstream countries without access to freshwater and shortage of fishes. Thirdly, Viet Nam **encourages** countries to start with grassroots efforts to publicize effects of climate change like engage in wider education, massive public awareness to improve the apparatus of climate change response of ministries, branches and localities. Viet Nam also encourages the UN to combine forces with regional non-governmental organizations to facilitate change in smaller capacities in a country. Fourthly, Viet Nam **believes** that countries have to set up seed capital to undertake greater investment in research and development so technologies may be economically viable especially for developing countries. Lastly, Viet Nam **seeks** for the amendment of international climate pacts so that financial and technological aid may be given by other nations for helping vulnerable and developing countries to advance their climate change goals. Acknowledging the gap between countries when it comes to putting into action the climate change policies, Viet Nam seeks wholeheartedly encourage climate change actions to be systematic including the participation of the entire political system and community so that sustainable development goals can be achieved which will result in long-term peace and stability of regions.

1. International Security Implications of China’s Control Over the South China Sea

In recent years, the world has witnessed numerus attempts for peace between nations. Although great strides have ben made by international entities like the UN in the world, regional conflicts and competition are still threatening many regions around the world. One of such contested regions of the world is the South China Sea. Containing large reserve of oil and natural gas, possessing the world’s most important shipping lanes, the South China Sea has every reason to stand as a disputed area. Troubling recent events in the South China Sea is the extension of China’s military base in the waters beyond its Exclusive Economic Zone as given in the United Nations Convention on the Law and of the Sea. The Socialist Republic of Viet Nam recognizes China as a comprehensive strategic partner and seeks to maintain healthy bilateral relations with China while expecting China to respect the maritime territorial borders of the riparian countries in the South China Sea and cooperate for resolving the overlapping areas of maritime territory for ensuring economic and political stability for both the nations.

Viet Nam seeks to compartmentalize its responses to China so that other parts of the bilateral relationship may not be disrupted. China has claimed 80% of the Paracel Islands using a “nine-dash line” and overlapping the Exclusive Economic Zones of Brunei, Philippines, Taiwan, Malaysia and Vietnam. Although the International tribunal at Hague have declared China’s claims in terms of the nine-dash line, China refuses to concede and sees the verdict as noncompilable. Moreover, China has also engaged in seven land reclamation projects in the South China Sea to extend its military bases, control the sea routes and extract the natural gas and oils. This is a pure breach of the maritime territory which is unacceptable. A Code of Conduct of Parties was introduced between the governments of the member States of Association of South East Asian Nations and China to ensure continuous peace and stability in the South China Sea. Viet Nam has condemned the second set of military drills carried out by China in the Paracel islands, which have competing claims by Vietnam. Viet Nam condemns action of China and has stated that action like these could further complicate the Code of Conduct of Parties negotiations. Besides all the confrontations, the China also seeks to harass hydrocarbon survey efforts in a below sea region called Vanguard Bank. Viet Nam Block 118 which contains significant oil and gas deposits are under the claims of China. In order to ease the existing tensions, Viet Nam had conducted the annual joint-coast guard patrols with China in the Gulf of Tonkin.

Although Viet Nam strives to diplomatically resolve the tensions in the South China Sea, Viet Nam protests China’s claims of the South China Sea as the claims are a serious breach to its sovereignty. According to the Note Verbale No. 22/HC-2020, Viet Nam has released its position it the South China Sea matter. Complying International law, Viet Nam has ample historic and legal basis to assert its control over the Paracel and Spratly Islands. Viet Nam completely endorses the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law and of the Sea (UNCLOS) and opposes any claims to any maritime claims that exceed the limits set by the UNCLOS. The 2019 National Defense Report reflects that Viet Nam seeks to strengthen the security relations with the US in order to pressurize China from furthering anymore into the maritime territory of other countries in the South China Sea.

Viet Nam seeks to propose some solutions for this conflict crisis. Firstly, Viet Nam **calls** for an amendment of the 1982 Convention which would result in clarification of the territorial extent of the Gulf of Tonkin. The Gulf of Tonkin is an overlapping territory whose area of allotment still hasn’t been determined. Secondly, Viet Nam **presses** for an international call by the United Nations to condemn China for extending its military bases in the South China Sea and setting up new bases in the South China waters. Thirdly, Viet Nam **looks forward** to joint patrol exercises with Malaysia, Indonesia and Philippines, countries that are protesting Chinese behavior in the South China Sea. Lastly, Viet Nam **seeks** to take a strong stand against Chinese invasion and may move onto litigation if any more territorial expansion continues. Viet Nam aims for peace and stability in the South China Sea region and asks China to look forward to the same.