

SPEECH OF THANH XUAN (PEACE) VILLAGE

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Director of Peace Village

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The founding of Thanh Xuan Peace Village shows the earnest will for peace of the Vietnamese people and is to help relieve partly the sufferings and losses caused by the war, because beneficiaries of the Village are children with disabilities relating to Agent Orange/dioxin. They are children or grandchildren of war veterans who fought in the anti-US war of resistance for national salvation to restore peace for the Vietnamese people today. This shows the tradition of “dinking water, remembering its source” and good deed of the Vietnamese people.

Ladies and gentlemen!

Millions of liters of Agent Orange/dioxin used by the US in the war in Vietnam have destroyed the environment and damaged the lives of millions of Vietnamese. In particular, they have left un-healable wounds on innocent children. Many children are living with disabilities: epilepsy, body paralysis, heart diseases, deformities and many have died after birth or premature... For this reason, we have given them check ups, medical treatment and functional rehabilitation to help them have a chance to reintegrate into their families and society and lead a useful life. After 15 years of operation, with care and attention given by the Party and State, with deep sympathy and support from organizations and kind-hearted individuals at home and abroad, who have given us encouragement and effective and practical assistance both spiritual and material, in particular, with high sense of responsibilities and great efforts of the Village leaders and staff, Thanh Xuan Peace Village has recorded encouraging achievements in medical treatment and functional rehabilitation for children with disabilities. The teachers here have persisted in fulfilling the universalization of primary education for children at the Village under a special program and given them vocational guidance with some simple jobs. Medical doctors and technicians have given medical treatment and functional rehabilitation for thousands of children with functional disability and mental retardation. This has helped them prevent

myasthenia and rigid joints. In particular, from the Village, many children have made great progress and can walk, serve themselves and earn their living.

On the occasion of this conference, we earnestly call for empathy and sharing of people of conscience all over the world and wish that all of you will provide favourable conditions and help resolve the difficulties in the lives of the victims of Agent Orange/dioxin, contributing to improving the quality of their lives – both spiritual and material.

On the occasion of the New Year, I wish the leaders and all participants the best of health, happiness and great success in all aspects of life.

Thank you for your attention.

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