

## **Openning speech**

**By Mr. Dang vu Hiep, President of the Vietnam Association for  
Victims of Agent Orange/dioxin - VAVA**

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Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Vietnam Association for Victims of Agent Orange/dioxin (VAVA) has the pleasure and honor of sending its warmest greetings to all of our distinguished participants and representatives of Agent Orange/ dioxin connected victims coming from different countries and being here for purposes of this important event.

We also would like to express our warmest welcome to other participants who are social activists – enthusiastic supporters of the struggle undertaken by Agent Orange/ dioxin victims for justice.

In the past century, Vietnam was where the United States waged the greatest chemical warfare ever known in the history of human being. In which, not only Vietnamese people, but those American veterans who directly sprayed toxic chemicals, and South Korean, Australia, and New Zealand veterans who were involved in the combat activities were also contaminated. In addition, Gagetown – an area in Canada, these substances also contaminated many other people.

The harmful effects and consequences caused by Agent Orange/ dioxin in Vietnam are distinct and confirmed by our world public opinion.

The Vietnamese victims are conducting a lawsuit against the U.S companies in a U.S District Court, while our South Korea colleagues are filing another in South Korea.

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

Within this context, this conference of the victims of Agent Orange/dioxin aims to gather and to unite all of us in the struggle for legitimate interests of our victims. This struggle is not meant for only Vietnamese victims but also for victims of many other countries, not only meant for one generation, but also for many other generations; not only meant for the better life of the victims, but also for a peaceful world and justice.

Let's create strong public opinion in the world and enable everybody, every nation and people to pay attention to the problems being faced by the victims of Agent Orange/ dioxin, hence supporting their struggle, including the the conduct of lawsuit by Vietnamese victims before the U.S court.

Agent Orange/ dioxin caused numerous disasters that deprive any man's right-to-life. The pain suffered by the Agent Orange/ dioxin victims is also a common pain share by the entire humanity. Hopefully, in this conference, we will have the best opportunity to confirm, by our own voice, the harmful effects caused by Agent Orange/ dioxin on humans health and life; to exchange fruitful experiences on our cooperation expected in our long-

standing struggle; to achieve a powerful consensus on views expressed in an earnest appeal, reflecting our sense of solidarity, mutual assistance and support in providing care and aid to victims of Agent Orange/ dioxin that they so much need in their daily life and in the struggle for justice and equality.

Once again, let's warmly welcome all of our representatives, reporters and others who are working herein for related newspapers, radio and television networks of Vietnam and other countries.

Best wishes to all of you and for the success of our conference./.