VIETNAM'S SOVEREIGNTY
OVER THE HOANG SA
AND TRUONG SA
ARCHIPELAGOES

INFORMATION AND PRESS DEPARTMENT
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM
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CONTENTS

I. Foreword
II. Some documents proving Viet Nam’s sovereignty over the Huang Sa and Truong Sa archipelagoes.
III. Significant events relating to Vietnamese sovereignty over the Huang Sa and Truong Sa archipelagoes.
IV. Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, on August 7, 1979, on the Huang Sa and Truong Sa archipelagoes.
THE HOANG SA AND TRUONG SA ARCHIPELAGOES
PART OF VIET NAM'S TERRITORY
Hoang Sa and Truong Sa are two archipelagoes consisting mainly of coral islands and submerged floors east of Viet Nam. The archipelagoes were once called by a common name of Hoang Sa or Dai Truong Sa or Van Ly Truong Sa. They comprise islands which, though small in size, are of great strategic value and economic importance.

The Hoang Sa archipelago lies off the Gulf of Bac Bo (Tonkin), about 130 nautical miles from Da Nang.

Westerners call it Paracels.

The Truong Sa archipelago lies scattered in the South of the Eastern Sea, 250 nautical miles from Cam Ranh Bay.

Westerners call it Spratly.

Both Hoang Sa and Truong Sa have, from time immemorial, been part of Viet Nam's territory. The Vietnamese feudal state was the first in history to occupy, claim ownership of, exercise sovereignty over and exploit, in the name of the State, these two archipelagoes which had never before come under the administration of any country. This ownership is effective and in conformity with international law and practice. Successive administrations have organized these islands into administrative units belonging to mainland provinces of Viet Nam.

Viet Nam's sovereignty over the Hoang Sa and Truong Sa archipelagoes is indisputable. The Vietnamese people have enough evidence and historical documents to prove their sovereignty. Several western navigators, geographers and missionaries in the past centuries have confirmed this fact.

In spite of this, the Peking authorities have brazenly claimed that these two archipelagoes, which they call Xiha and Nanhu,
belong to the Chinese People's Republic. On January 19, 1974, using
a large naval and air force, and with U.S. acquiescence, they seized
the Hoang Sa archipelago then under the administration of the
Nguyen Van Thieu regime.

This is a flagrant act of aggression of the Peking authorities,
cruelly violating the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Viet
Nam and trampling upon the U.N. Charter principles, international
law and practice. This act is part of Peking's scheme to gradually
establish its control over the Eastern Sea, western and subjugate Viet
Nam, Laos, and Kampuchea so as to secure a spring-board for
expansion to South-East Asia. To whitewash their act of aggression,
the Peking authorities have been fabricating and distorting facts in
an attempt to justify their claim on the Hoang Sa and Truong Sa
archipelagoes.

With the materials presented in this booklet, we are convinced
that the peace-and-justice loving people in the world will know the
truth: the Hoang Sa and Truong Sa archipelagoes are part of the
territory of Viet Nam.

No deceptive manoeuvres of the Peking expansionists can cover
up or distort this truth, or justify their acts of aggression and
betrayal against the Vietnamese people in the Eastern Sea.
from a collection of maps of Viet Nam compiled in the 17th century by Do Bia. In the footnote, the exploitation of Dai Cat Vang(1) by the Nguyen princes(2) is clearly mentioned in the following terms:

"... An elongated sandbank, called Dai Cat Vang, 400 dam long and 20 dam wide, lies in the middle of the sea facing the coastline between the Dai Chiem port(3) to Sa Vinh port(4). Every time the South-Western wind arose, foreign trade ships sailing near the coast were flown off course and ran aground on this sandbank so were those sailing on the high sea from the North when there was a North-Eastern wind. Men on board the ships all starved to death and goods were amassed there. Every year, in the last month of winter, the Nguyen princes sent 18 ships there to recuperate the goods consisting mostly of gold, silver, currencies, arms and ammunition. It takes one day and a half, from the Dai Chiem port to go there; and only a day if one embarks at Sa Ky..."

(1) Dai Cat Vang: Golden Sandbank.
(2) Nguyen princes (1384—1775), of a noble family ruling the region (later called Cochinchina) which is the Southern part of Viet Nam.
(3) Dai Chiem port is now Cua Dai port of Quang Nam—Da Nang province.
(4) Sa Vinh port is now Sa Huynh port, in Khoai Phan province.
DOCUMENT 302

ACCORDING TO "PHU BIEN TAP LUC"
(Miscellaneous Records on the Pacification of the Frontiers)

This book was written by Le Quy Don (1726–1784), a great scholar. Le Quy Don described in details the topography, natural resources of the Hoàng Sa and Trường Sa archipelagoes and their exploitation by the Nguyễn princes.

In the book, Le Quy Don wrote:

"In Quảng Ngãi district, off the coast of An Vô village, Bình Sơn sub-district there is a mountain called Cu Lao Re stretching over 30 dam. The Tu Chinh settlement, as it is called, has been established here and the people there grow beans. It takes half a day to go there by boat. Further still, there is the Dai Trường Sa(1) island, with many sea products and wrecked carpooses which are collected by the Hoàng Sa(1) detachment. It takes three days and nights to go there by boat. The island is near the area called Dac Hai.

(1) During that time, the Hoàng Sa and Trường Sa archipelagoes were referred to by a common name as Hoàng Sa or Đại Trường Sa or Vạn Lý Trường Sa.
In Binh Son sub-district, Quang Ngai district, there is the An Vinh village on the sea. Off the coast of this village, in the North-East lie over 130 islands. The distance between two islands is covered by a voyage of one day or sometimes of only a few hours. There are fresh water springs on some islands. On an island there is a vast and flat golden sandbank, 30 dam long, where the spring water is crystal clear. The island swarms with swallows and thousands of other species of birds, which are not frightened by the sight of men. Strange animals abound on the shore. Among them are giant snails, the shells of which can be baked into lime for house building or used as ornaments. Several other species of snails and other molluscs big and small, can be used for food or for ornamental purposes. There are giant tortoises and smaller varieties of turtles, and also sea-slugs abounding near the shore. They are to be treated with lime, and after a clean scrubbing, cooked with pork and shrimp.

Foreign ships hit by storms often take shelter on these islands. Formerly, the Nguyen formed a 70-strong Hoang Sa detachment made up of An Vinh villagers. It is sent on duty in the third month every year, taking along enough food for six months, in 5 small fishing boats and making a three-day-and-night voyage to the islands. There, the men are free to collect things as they like. They find shipwrecked things such as gold, silver, brass valuables, currency, tin, lead, arms, ivory, wax, crockery... and pick up beautiful shells and holothurians. In August, they return to Phu Xuan citadel where they hand over all the recuperated goods, keeping the shells and holothurians for themselves. The quantities of goods picked up vary from year to year. There have been times when the men returned empty-handed. The notebook of an officer in charge reads: In Nham Ngo year, we collected 30 ingots of silver; in Giap Than year, 5,100 kan of tin; in At Dai year, 125 ingots of silver; in each of the five years from Ky Sue to Quy Ty, merely a few tortoise shells, and in other years, a quantity of tin, some ceramic bowls and two bronze cannons.

The Nguyen also formed Bac Hai team made up of people from Tu Chinh, Binh Thuan province, or Canh Duong village. These people were all volunteers, exempted from some taxes and travel expenses by the State. They were sent, under the command of the Hoang Sa detachment commander on small fishing boats to the Northern sea, Con Lon (Poulpe Condor) island and the Ha Tien lates to find shipwrecked valuables, tortoise shells, sea-slugs. They got chiefly sea products. Very few gold and silver valuables were found.
Compiled by the National Institute of History of the Nguyen Imperial Court, the "Official Chronicles of Dai Nam" is a history of the Nguyen kings. The chapters of the "official chronicles" on the reigns of Kings Gia Long, Minh Mang and Thieu Tri, record the occupation by King Gia Long of the Hoang Sa islands in 1818, King Minh Mang’s decision to build a temple, to install sovereignty markers and to plant trees on these islands, to survey and to draw maps of these islands.

Hereunder are excerpts from those chapters:

Chapter 52:

"In the year Binh Ty, the 15th year of the Gia Long reign (1818)...on the King's order, naval units and the Hoang Sa detachment travelled in boats to Hoang Sa to survey sea-routes."
<table>
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<th>项目内容</th>
<th>项目进度</th>
<th>项目负责人</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>任务1</td>
<td>完成</td>
<td>张三</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>项目B</td>
<td>任务2</td>
<td>进行中</td>
<td>李四</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>项目C</td>
<td>任务3</td>
<td>未开始</td>
<td>王五</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

注：项目A的进度已达到80%，项目B的进度为50%，项目C尚未开始。
Chapter 104:

"In the eighth month of the year Quy Ty, the 14th year of the Minh M nephew reign (1833), the King instructed his Minister of Public Works in these terms:

"In the territorial waters at Quang Ngai province, there lies the Hoang Sa archipelago.

But how can one know, from afar, whatever lies there in the vast expanse of the sea? This is why recently, merchant boats often ran aground on sandbanks. Preparations should be made for a team to go there next year to build a temple, to install markers and to plant trees. Trees will grow up into a luxuriant vegetation that would allow navigators to mark the areas and avoid shipwrecks. This will be for the benefit of thousands of generations to come".

Chapter 154:

"The sixth month of the year An Mui, the 16th years of the Minh M nephew reign (1835).

A temple has been built on Hoang Sa (Quang Ngai province). Among the Hoang Sa islands located in the territorial waters of Quang Ngai province, there exists the islet of Bach Sa (white sand) where the vegetation is luxuriant. In the middle of the islet there is a well and in its South-Western corner, an old temple with a signboard bearing the inscription: "Van Ly Ba Binh" (Quiet waves over thousands of dams). The perimeter of the islet is 1,070 truong. The islet used to be known as Phat Tu Son. To the east, the west and the south of the islet are coral stretches. To the north of this islet is another one formed of corals with a perimeter measuring 348 truong and an altitude of 1 truong 3 shuon. It is as high as the Bach Sa islet and called Ban Than Thach. Last year, the King intended to build there a temple and a steeple, but the project was called off because of unfavourable winds and waves. This year, the King ordered Navy Commander Pham Van Nguyen to head a Royal Guard detachment and a group of boatmen recruited from the provinces of Quang Ngai and Binh Dinh to transport materials for the building of a temple on that islet. This temple is 7 truong distance from the old one and has a stone mark to its left and a brick screen in front. Upon completion of the project which took 10 days, they returned home".

(Chapter 154)
无
Chapter 165:

"In the year Binh Than, the 11th year of the Minh Mang reign (1836), on the 1st day of the first month... the Minister of Public Works reported:

"In our territorial waters, Hoang Sa occupies a strategically important position. In the past we undertook to draw its map but, due to its far-off location, we had only completed part of the project, and it was not detailed enough. It is suggested that we should carry out surveying work every year so as to be able to chart the routes definitively. From now on, in the second half of the 1st month yearly, we should detail some naval units and men of the Royal Guard for a boat trip to Quang Ngai. They will have to reach Quang Ngai by the 1st half of the 2nd month, and they will ask the administrators of the provinces of Quang Ngai and Binh Dinh to hire pilots and four boats to take them to Hoang Sa. Whatever place they reach, be it an island, an inlet or a sandbank. they have to examine the length, the width, the height, the perimeter and the depth of the surrounding waters, ascertain whether there are underwater rocks and reefs and whether the terrain is difficult or not, and they will have to note all these data on their maps. They will have to record the date, the point of departure, the direction they take and the distance they cover. On arrival, they will have to look back to the mainland and try to determine the locations of the provinces they are facing or those which are on their right and left, note down the direction of their view and the estimated distance to the mainland. Upon completion of their tasks, they will have to submit a detailed report".

The King approved these measures and ordered Navy Commander Pham Huu Nhat to head a survey team who was given 10 wood boards, each 5 feet in length, 1 foot in width. 1 foot in thickness, to be used as markers. On each board the following is inscribed: "In the year Binh Than, 17th year of the reign of Minh Mang, Navy Commander Pham Huu Nhat sent by the King to conduct surveying for map drawing in Hoang Sa has planted this marker so as to perpetuate the memory of the event".

(Chapter 165)
DOCUMENT NO. 4

A MAP OF VIET NAM
(From "Da Nam Nhat Thong Toan Do"
Detailed Map of Dai Nam, early 19th century)

This is a map of Viet Nam drawn under the Nguyen dynasty, in 1838, presenting Hoang Sa or Van Ly Truong Sa as part of Vietnamese territory.
ACCORDING TO GEOGRAPHICAL BOOK OF
"DAI NAM NHAT THONG CHI"
(Dai Nam Comprehensive Encyclopedia)

"Dai Nam Nhat Thong Chi" is the official geographical book compiled by the National Institute of History under the Nguyen dynasty from 1855 to 1910. Volume VIII, on Quang Ngai province, mentions the status of the Hoang Sa archipelago as belonging to this province and relates that the exploitation of these islands was continuing. The management was strengthened under the reigns of Gia Long and Minh Menth.
Following is an excerpt from the chapter of the book about the
Hoang Sa archipelago:

"To the East of Quang Ngai there were sand islands (the Hoang Sa)... In its South-Western mountain region Quang Ngai has a strong
bulwark. It borders on Binh Dinh province in the South where Ben
Da Pass stands, and on Quang Nam province in the North where the
Sa Tho Reef separates the two provinces. In the early years of the
reign of King Gia Long, the formation of a Hoang Sa detachment
was planned, but the project was later dropped. King Minh Mouch,
at the beginning of his reign, often sent people to Hoang Sa inboats
to explore sea routes. Once a white sand islet was found whose
circumference was about 1,070 "truuqo." There, vegetation was
luxuriant. In the middle of the islet there was a well. At its South-
West corner there was an old temple whose date of construction
was not given, but on a stele nearby were inscribed four words
"Van Ly Ba Binh." The sandbank was known as Phu Tu Son.
Next to the coral stretch in the North-West was another islet
whose circumference was about 316 "truuqo" and whose height
1.2 "truuqo." This islet was called "Ban Thuan Thach." In the 16th
year of his reign, Minh Mouch sent boats carrying bricks and pebble
for the building of a temple and a stele in the East of the islet.
He also ordered the sowing of seeds on three sides—the left,
the right and the back—of the temple.

In laying the foundation of the temple, the recruits found bremen
and iron plates and dug out 2,000 "Kee" of them.

DOCUMEN T NO 6

TRUONG SA ARCHIPELAGO, PART OF
BA RIA PROVINCE (1933)

Cochinchina Governor's Ordinances of December 21, 1933 annexing
the Hoang Sa archipelago to Ba Ria province:

"Article 1: The island called Spratly and the small dependent
islands Caye d'Amboine, Iu Abo, Hoi Dao-Loi To and Thi Tu, in
the Eastern Sea are to be annexed to Ba Ria province."
King Bao Dai's Decree No 18 of the 29th of the Second month of the 13th year of his reign (March 30, 1933) severing the Hoang Sa islands from Nam Ngan province and annexing them to the territory of Thua Thien province. The Decree said: "...Considering that the Hoang Sa Islands (Paracel archipelago) have long been under Viet Nam’s sovereignty, and under the previous dynasties the said islands were part of Nam Ngan province; under the reign of the founder of our dynasty, no change was made to that order as communications with these islands were still assured through the ports of Nam Ngan province.

Owing to progress made in sea navigation, communications have been improved. Besides, the representative of the Viet Nam Royal Government, after an inspection of the island, has joined the representative of the Protectorate Government in proposing that the Hoang Sa islands be annexed to Thua Thien province.

We have decided: The Hoang Sa islands (Paracel archipelago) shall be annexed to Thua Thien province and put under the administration of the authorities of the said province.
DOCUMENT N° 6

ORGANIZATION OF THE HOANG SA ARCHIPELAGO INTO AN ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT (1938)

Le Gouverneur Général de l'Indochine
N° 143-6

Commandant de la Légion d'Honneur

Vu les lois du 29 octobre 1931, portant création des pouvoirs de gouverneur général et organisation financière et administrative de l'Indochine;

Vu le décret du 2 août 1934;

Vu l'arrêté du 20 décembre 1934 portant réglement sur les indemnités et pourtours au naturel et au canalisation;

Sur la proposition du Ministre Suprême en Annam

La Commission du Conseil du Gouvernement estant;

— 57 —

ABRÉGÉ

Article premier. — Une délégation administrative est créée aux Îles Paracélus dépendant de la province de Thua Thien (Annam) sous le nom de délégation des Paracélus. Elle est tenue d'exécuter sur tout le territoire de ces îles et de liés, comprenus sous la dénomination d'îles Paracélus.

Le fonctionnaire placé à la tête de cette délégation est qualifié de Délégué du Ministre de France à Thua Thien, désormais à l'Île Paracélus.

Art. 2. — L'État doit être en quête, pour frais de représentation et de soumission, à l'indemnité annuelle de quatre cents francs (400F) portée à l'arrêté du 20 décembre 1934. Cette indemnité est payable au Budget local de l'Annam, chapitre 12, article 6, paragraphe 3.

Art. 3. — Le Délégué Supérieur en Annam et chargé de l'administration du présent arrêté.

[Signature]

Indochinese Governor General’s Ordinance of June 15, 1938 establishing an administrative unit on the Hoang Sa archipelago annexed to Thua Thien province (Published in “Bulletin administratif de l’Annam” N° 12 dated August 9, 1938).

DOCUMENT N° 9

VIET NAM SOVEREIGNTY MARKER ON HOANG SA ARCHIPELAGO (1938)

Sovereignty marker posted by the French in 1938. The inscription reads: “French Republic, the Kingdom of Annam, Paracelis Archipelago, 1816—Pattie Island—1936” (1816 is the year when King Gia Long began to exercise his sovereignty over the archipelago; 1928, the year when the marker was erected.)

— 55 —
DOCUMENT No 10
DIVISION OF HOANG SA ARCHIPELAGO INTO TWO ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS (1939)

DOCUMENT No 11
APPOINTMENT OF A NEW COMMANDER OF THE DETACHMENT ON ITUABA ISLAND (1918)

Indochinese Governor General's Ordinance of May 5, 1939, constituting two administrative units on the Hoang Sa Archipelago (Published in "Bulletin administratif de l'Annam No 9, 1939."

(1) There is an error in Article 1 of that Ordinance. The mention of "No. 186-CC, June 15, 1932" should be read "No. 196-3, June 15, 1932."
Indochinese Governor General's decision of August 22, 1940 on the appointment of a new commander of the detachment on Itu Aba Island (Truong Sa Archipelago) in replacement of M. Buroliaud, who had completed his term.

Annam Governor's Ordinance of August 12, 1941 appointing Mahamehbay Mohine in place of Vuillaume as administrator of the Amphitrite Islands (Hoang Sa Archipelago).
Document No. 12
TWO METEOROLOGICAL STATIONS ON HOANG SA ARCHIPELAGO IN THE WORLD METEOROLOGICAL ORGANIZATION NETWORK, 1949

Phu Lam station, registration number 48859.
Hoang Sa station, registration number 48860.
(WMO documents, 1949)

Document No. 14
METEOROLOGICAL STATION OF ITU ABA (HOANG SA ARCHIPELAGO) IN THE WORLD METEOROLOGICAL ORGANIZATION NETWORK, 1949

Itu ABA station, registration number 48910.
(WMO documents, 1949)
DOCUMENT No. 15

STATEMENT OF THE VIETNAMESE DELEGATION AT THE SAN FRANCISCO CONFERENCE (1951)

La délégation vietnamienne a accepté, par l'entremise d'un émissaire, une mission qui n'a pas été précisée dans son pays.

Nous avons aussi été amenés à demander que d'autres formulaires de paiement fussent ouverts aux étrangers et que, notamment, nous puissions remplir, en cas de mouvement de fonds, une déclaration conformément à l'article 34, qui a été soumis par le gouvernement japonais le métro en question pour un service d'avions à ses obligations.

Le Viêt-Nam serait souhaitable que nous déclarions que nous avons reçu le document suivant : 1. Les documents relatifs à notre déclaration perçue par notre pays de ce service économique sont sauvegardés et conservés à notre décharge pour notre service d'importants améliorations : 2. Ce décret est à jour et il est également demandé que nous puissions déterminer les sommes que nous pouvons accepter en garantie de nos engagements sur la base de la somme d'une somme et au service de la France.

Nous avons également souhaité que nous puissions déterminer les sommes que nous pouvons accepter en garantie de nos engagements sur la base de la somme d'une somme et au service de la France.

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Le Viêt-Nam, avec enthousiasme, souhaiterait à l'avenir à cet égard de nous être reconnu.

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On September 7, 1951 at the San Francisco Conference, Tran Van Huu, Prime Minister of the Bao Dai Government reaffirmed Vietnamese sovereignty over the Hoang Sa archipelago and the Truong Sa archipelago: "As we must frankly profit from all the opportunities offered to us to stifle the germ of discord, we affirm our right to the Spratly and Paracel islands, which always belonged to Viet Nam." (The statement was published in the "France-Asie" magazine No. 66—67, November, December, 1951.)

DOCUMENT No. 16

VIETNAMESE STAFF OF THE METEOROLOGICAL STATION ON HOANG SA ISLAND
(Petite) in 1952

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
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</table>

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### DOCUMENT No. 216

**SOVEREIGNTY MARKER ERECTED IN 1961 ON TRUONG SA ISLAND (TRUONG SA ARCHIPELAGO)**

### DOCUMENT No. 18

**HOANG SA METEOROLOGICAL STATION IN THE WORLD METEOROLOGICAL ORGANIZATION NETWORK (APRIL 1973)**

(WMO documents, 1973)
TROOPS OF THE VIET NAM PEOPLE'S ARMY
ON THE TRUONG SA ARCHIPELAGO
III

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS RELATING TO VIETNAMESE SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE HOANG SA AND TRUONG SA ARCHIPELAGOES
17th Century: Hu Dieu, a Vietnamese geographer, compiled a book titled "Hai Cat Vung" (the Golden Sandbank).

1791: In letters of a Western missionary aboard S.S. Amphitrite from France to China, the Hoang Sa archipelago was referred to as belonging to the Kingdom of Annam.

1796: In his book "Phu Bien Tyu Loc", Vietnamese scholar Le Qui Don wrote about the organization by the Nguyen Princes of Hoang Sa and Boc Hai detachments for the exploitation of Hoang Sa, Truong Sa archipelagoes and other islands.

1816: On King Gia Long's order, Vietnamese naval units and the Hoang Sa detachment carried out the measurement of sea-routes from the mainland to the islands in the Hoang Sa.

1820: Jean Baptiste Chaingneau, a Frenchman who was king Gia Gia Long's adviser, wrote a "L'Enport on Cochinchina" in 1820. In this report, Chaingneau notes that King Gia Long had officially established sovereignty over the Hoang Sa archipelago in 1816.

1821: In his work "History of Dynasties". Vietnamese historian Phan Huy Chi wrote about the Hoang Sa and its exploitation by the Nguyen Princes.

1832: King Minh Menc instructed his Ministry of Public Works to get facilities and materials ready for carrying out projects of stone installation, temple construction and tree-planting in the following year on the Hoang Sa.

1835: Navy Commander Pham Van Nguyen led naval units with building materials to Hoang Sa to install a stele and build a temple.

1836: Navy Commander Pham Huu Nhat led a detachment to lay by King Minh Menc when they left for home.

1838: In December, a British ship sank off Hoang Sa; 90 sailors were brought to Binh Thuan province and were given foodstuff by King Minh Menc when they lost for home.

1838: Archbishop J.L. Taberet published his Latin-Annamiticum Dictionary to which a map of Annam was annexed. In this map the Hoang Sa archipelago was marked with its traditional name of "The Golden Sandbank" along with its international appellation of Paracel.
1849: In his article “Geography of the Cochinchinese Empire”, Dr. Guttaf, an Englishman, wrote about the taking possession by the King of Cochinchina of the Hoang Sa archipelago and about the formation of merchant fleets and of military squadras, to help in levying tax on foreign fishermen and defending local ones.

1862—1894: France established colonial rule over Viet Nam, from the time when the French occupied three Eastern Nam Bo provinces in the time the Paris Treaty was signed.

1910: The National Institute of History under the Nguyen dynasty completed the official geographical book “National Geography”. In this book, Hoang Sa was once again referred to as part of Viet Nam’s territory.

1925: Thanh Trong Hue, Minister for Military Affairs of the Hue Imperial Court, in face of a Chinese claim of Hoang Sa, reaffirmed that the archipelago had constantly been part of Viet Nam.

1927: A. Krempf, Director of the Indochinese Oceanographical Institute conducted a scientific survey in the Hoang Sa archipelago.

1933: The French Foreign Ministry, issued a communiqué published on the Official Journal of the French Republic on the taking possession of the islands in the Truong Sa archipelago (7-1933); Cochinchina Governor of Krastonekim issued an ordinance annexing the archipelago to the Binh Ba Province (Ordinance No. 748 of December 21, 1933). France built a meteorological station and a radio transmission station on Itu Aba in the Truong Sa archipelago.

1937: Chief civil engineer Gauthier arrived in Hoang Sa to find places where a lighthouse and a port for amphibian aircraft could be built and to study the possibility of settlement in Hoang Sa.

1938: By Decree of March 30, 1938, King Bao Dai severed the Hoang Sa archipelago from Nam Ngial province and annexed it to Thua Thien province; by Ordinance of June 15, 1938, the Governor General of Indochina J. Brevii made the archipelago an administrative unit; the French colonial administration installed sovereignty markers, built a lighthouse, a meteorological station and a radio-transmission station on Paratte.

1939: By Ordinance of May 5, 1939, the Indochinese Governor General J. Brevii divided the administrative unit of Hoang Sa Archipelago into two smaller units.

1946: The French re-occupied the Hoang Sa Archipelago. In this operation, they used the ship “Beauvais de Brazza” (During World War II, Japan occupied the Hoang Sa and Truong Sa archipelagos.

1952: France handed over to the Bao Dai Government the administration of the Hoang Sa archipelago.

1951: At the San Francisco Conference, Tran Van Huu, Prime Minister of the Bao Dai Government made a statement reaffirming Vietnamese sovereignty over the archipelagos of Hoang Sa and Truong Sa. The statement did not arouse any protest.

1955: Under the Saigon administration, a marine company was stationed in Hoang Sa in replacement of French troops who were withdrawn from Indochina and a hydrological team arrived in Hoang Sa to conduct researches. The Saigon administration later allowed a Vietnamese industrialist to exploit phosphate on this archipelago.

1968: The Saigon administration sent warships to Truong Sa to effect control over this archipelago and decreed the annexation of Truong Sa to Phu Quoc province.

1961: By decree, the Saigon administration made the Hoang Sa archipelago a village, gave it the name of Dinha Hai and placed it under the administration of Hoa Vang district, Quang Nam province and installed sovereignty markers on the Truong Sa Archipelago.

1971: Tran Van Lam, Foreign Minister of the Saigon administration, at the ASPAC Conference in Manila, on July 13, reaffirmed Vietnamese sovereignty over the two archipelagos of Hoang Sa and Truong Sa.
1973: By decree the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam annexed the Truong Sa Archipelago to Phuon Hai village, Dat Do district, Phuoc Tuy province.

1974:
— January 16, 1974: In a statement, the Foreign Ministry of the Saigon administration reaffirmed Vietnamese sovereignty over the Hoang Sa archipelago and sent the President of the U.N. Security Council a message requesting him to take action to cope with the situation.
— January 19, 1974: China occupied the Hoang Sa archipelago.
— January 20, 1974: The Foreign Minister of the Saigon administration sent an urgent message to the President of the U.N. Security Council requesting him to call an emergency meeting to consider the occupation by the People's Republic of China of the Vietnamese archipelago of Hoang Sa.
— January 26, 1974: the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam made public its position on the occupation of the Hoang Sa archipelago by China as follows:
a) Sovereignty and territorial integrity are questions sacred to every nation.
b) As regards territorial border questions, there often exist between neighboring countries disputes left by history which may be extremely complicated and should be thoroughly studied.
c) The countries concerned should consider this question in the spirit of equality, mutual respect, friendship and good neighborliness and settle it by negotiations.
— June 28, 1974, At the U.N. Conference on the Law of the Sea, held in Caracas, the Saigon delegation reaffirmed: "The archipelagoes of Hoang Sa and Truong Sa are part of Vietnamese territory" and "Vietnam has indisputable and inalienable right to sovereignty over these archipelagoes despite unjust claims or illegal occupation of certain islands among the "by neighboring countries".

1975: At the talks with the Vietnamese Party and Government delegation on a visit to China, Chinese Vice-Premier Deng Xiaoping admitted that there were disputes between the two sides on the problem of the parcels and spratly archipelagoes and that the two sides should later discuss with each other to settle the problem.

1978: In a statement on December 30, 1978, the spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam refuted the allegations made in the statement on December 29, 1978 of the spokesman of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the question of Truong Sa archipelago, reaffirming Vietnamese sovereignty over the two archipelagoes of Hoang Sa and Truong Sa and reiterating Viet Nam's position which advocated the settlement of all disputes or disagreements through peaceful means.

1979: In its statement of August 7, 1979, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam refuted the distortions made by China in publishing a number of Vietnamese documents concerning the archipelagoes of Hoang Sa and Truong Sa, reaffirmed Vietnamese sovereignty over them and reiterated Viet Nam's position on the settlement of the dispute between the two countries over these two archipelagoes through peaceful means.
IV

STATEMENT

BY THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM
ON THE HOANG SA AND TRUONG SA
ARCHIPELAGOES

(AUGUST 7, 1979)
On July 20, 1975, China made public in Peking some documents in an attempt to justify its claim of sovereignty over the Paracel and Spratly archipelagoes.

As regards this issue, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam declares:

1. The Hoang Sa and Truong Sa archipelagoes are part of Vietnamese territory. The Vietnamese feudal states were the first in history to occupy, organize, control and exploit these archipelagoes in their capacities as States. This ownership is effective and in conformity with international law. We have sufficient historical and legal documents proving Viet Nam's indisputable sovereignty over these two archipelagoes.

2. The Chinese interpretation of the September 14, 1958 note by the Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam as recognition of China's ownership over the archipelagoes is a gross distortion since the spirit and letter of the note only mean the recognition of a 12-mile limit for Chinese territorial waters.

3. In 1965, the United States intensified its war of aggression in South Viet Nam and launched a war of destruction by air and naval forces against North Viet Nam. It declared that the combat zone of the U.S. armed forces included Viet Nam and an adjacent zone of about 100 nautical miles from Viet Nam's coast line. At that time, in their anti-U.S. struggle for national salvation the Vietnamese people had to carry out their fight in all forms to defend their territorial integrity. Moreover, Viet Nam and China then maintained friendly relations. The May 9, 1965 Statement by the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam had its raison d'etre only with this historical background.

4. Since 1972, following the Shanghai Joint Communiqué, the Chinese rulers have colluded with the U.S. aggressors and betrayed the Vietnamese people, causing more and more obstacles to the war of resistance of Viet Nam. Early in January 1974, just before the Vietnamese people won complete victory in Spring 1975, China occupied by armed forces the Hoang Sa archipelago then administered by the Saigon administration.

The Republic of South Viet Nam then clearly stated its position as follows:
— Sovereignty and territorial integrity are questions sacred to every nation.
— As regards territorial border questions, there often exist between neighbouring countries disputes left by history, which may be extremely complicated and should be thoroughly studied.

— The countries concerned should consider this question in the spirit of equality, mutual respect, friendship and good neighbourliness and settle it by negotiations.

5. At the talks held on September 24, 1973 with the Vietnamese Party and Government Delegation on a visit to China, Chinese Vice-Premier Deng Xiaoping admitted that there were disputes between the two sides on the problem of the Paracels and Spratly archipelagoes and that the two sides should later discuss with each other to settle the problem.

6. By illegally occupying the Hoàng Sa archipelago by military force, China has encroached upon the territorial integrity of Việt Nam and trampled underfoot the principles of the United Nations Charter which calls for settlement of all disputes by peaceful negotiations. After launching a large-scale war of aggression against Việt Nam, the Chinese side again raised the question of the Hoàng Sa and Trường Sa archipelagoes while creating an increasingly tense situation along the Vietnamese border and refusing to discuss urgent measures to ensure peace and stability in border areas of the two countries. It is clear that the Chinese rulers have not given up their attempt to attack Việt Nam once again. Their actions pose a serious threat to peace and stability in South-east Asia and expose more clearly their expansionist ambitions, big-nation hegemonism, bellicose nature, their volte-face and their traitorous character.