

VIETNAM NEWS

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international and regional organisations on human rights and other issues and promote economic co-operation and solidarity for development.

The first man appointed to the office was Boutros Boutros Ghali, deputy minister and head delegate from the Arab Republic of Egypt.

At a press conference following the closing session, Việt Nam's Vice President Nguyễn Thị Bình said that for the first time, Francophonie had held a summit in Asia, with the success of the summit indicative of Asia's position and growing influence across different regions of the world.

Madame Bình was delegated by President Trần Đức Lương to act as president of the summit presidium.

Co-chairing a press conference with French President Jacques Chirac, Canada's Prime Minister Jean Chrétien, and New Brunswick's Prime Minister Raymond Frenette, Vice President Bình said the greatest success of the summit was strengthening solidarity and friendship among Francophonie members.

She cited the expansion of the community at the Hà Nội meeting, with the presence of three new observers – Albania, Poland and Macedonia.

Madame Bình said the summit had expressed its deep concern for different crises and persistent conflicts in a number of member countries, and stated the community's commitment to actively

contribute to preventive efforts and peaceful settlements.

The summit discussed at length co-operation and solidarity for peace and economic and social development.

It stressed the necessity of economic co-operation for the development of all member countries in the context of accelerated globalisation.

The Francophone community has supported North-South dialogue with determination and decided to promote more South-South dialogue.

For this purpose it would call a conference of economic ministers for the 1998-99 period with the view of realising the initiative taken at the Cotonou Summit to create a Francophone economic area.

The Hà Nội Summit also decided to expand co-operation in culture, communications, education, training, building up States of law, and other traditional domains so as to better contribute to respect of human rights, democracy and national sovereignty.

On the election of the first Francophone secretary general, Madame Bình said it was unanimously agreed that Boutros Boutros Ghali, who held strong rich experience and high prestige, would succeed in his task of enhancing the international image of the Francophone community.

The next summit, the ninth will be held in Canada in 1999. — VNS