

74. The Vietnamese People's Volunteers/"Pathet Lao" Delegation represented that while all Vietnamese Volunteers who had fought in Laos would be completely withdrawn to Vietnam before the due date, the Vietnamese immigrants settled in Laos had the right to enjoy fundamental democratic freedoms as well as the right to reside in Laos just as any immigrant from any other country. It added that should the Franco-Laotian Party wish to settle the situation in a different manner, that would be the responsibility of the two Governments concerned - the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the Royal Government of Laos. As the matter was a political one, the Vietnamese People's Volunteers/"Pathet Lao" Delegation was not competent to enter into discussion on this question, but was ready to study any proposal that the Franco-Laotian Delegation may make, and to advise its High Command on it.

75. At the request of the International Commission, the question of the special convention was again raised during the meeting of the International Commission and the Joint Commission, on 2nd November, 1954. Declaration by Vietnamese People's Volunteers/"Pathet Lao" Delegation

76. The Chief of the Vietnamese People's Volunteers/"Pathet Lao" Delegation made the following declaration:

77. Article 4, paragraph (b) of the Geneva Agreement states that the withdrawal of the Vietnamese People's Volunteer forces from Laos to Vietnam will be effected by provinces and that the position of these Volunteers who have settled in Laos before the hostilities would form the subject of a special convention. Following the policy of peace rigorously followed by the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the High Command of the Vietnamese People's Volunteers are firmly decided to implement the Geneva Agreement by withdrawing totally all the Vietnamese People's Volunteer forces from the territory of Laos, thus rendering it unnecessary to set up a special convention regarding the position of these Vietnamese Volunteers who have settled in Laos before the hostilities.

78. As a representative of the High Command of the Vietnamese People's Volunteers army, I solemnly declare that the High Command of the Vietnamese People's Volunteers army has decided to withdraw completely all the forces of the Vietnamese People's Volunteers from Laos to Vietnam in conformity with the date provided for in the Geneva Agreement. The High Command of the Vietnamese People's Volunteer Forces will make a similar declaration concerning the complete withdrawal of all forces of the Vietnamese People's Volunteers from the territory of Laos to Vietnam.

79. The Chief of the Franco-Laotian Delegation took note of this declaration which, according to him, was made in lieu of the special convention and requested its transmission also to the Royal Laotian Government. He pointed out that this declaration was a unilateral decision and was against the text which was freely signed by both the parties. Reaction of the Franco-Laotian Delegation

80. By way of further clarification as to whether the Volunteers established in Laos before the hostilities, but who joined the "Pathet Lao" forces, were included among those to be withdrawn from Laos before 19th November,