

VOICES OF VIETNAM

October 14, 2015

The Honorable Ban Ki Moon
Secretary General of the United Nations
1 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017

Mr. Secretary General:

We write to you today firm in our conviction that we are owed an apology. Forty years ago during the Vietnam War, South Korean troops were responsible for thousands of forcible rapes against innocent Vietnamese women like us. It has been very difficult for us to pick up the pieces of our lives in the aftermath of trauma, but we Vietnamese are a proud people who look to the future.

We believe that in you we have a sympathetic ear to our grievances. We have watched as you have stood up for women that have been victims of systemic sexual assault. Yet, as we read your words, it pains us that our stories are not among those you recount. Is our trauma any less real?

Earlier this year, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance cited the Republic of Korea for discrimination in its own country. We humbly request that the UN Human Rights Council also investigate Korea's history, including what has been done to us so that our story can be shared with the world. We do this not out of a desire for revenge, but rather to allow for healing and reconciliation.

We have faced great personal tragedy in our lives, but have found a way to persevere. For all that we have suffered, we need only to look into the faces of the children born of our trauma and our grandchildren born to them to see great hope for the future. We appeal to you so that we might find justice and that you might convey our wish for a formal apology from the government of the Republic of Korea for what happened to us.

We encourage you to listen to our individual stories first-hand at www.VietnamVoices.org and thank you for your urgent consideration.

Respectfully,

TRAN THI NGAI
DANG THI THAT
VAN THI NGHIEM
TRUONG THI CHIN
THACH THI HUU

NGUYEN THI BACH TUYET
NGO THI COI
CU THI HONG LIEN
NGUYEN THI XIET
DANG THI TUYET

cc: Her Excellency Park Geun-hye, President, Republic of Korea
Ambassador Oh Joon, Representative of Republic of Korea to the United Nations
Prince Zeid Ra'ad al-Husseini, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights