

THE SPEECH OF MR. LUONG LE PHUONG
VICE MINISTER OF VIETNAM'S MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND
RURAL DEVELOPMENT AT RICE DUBAI 2011

Ladies and Gentlemen!

First of all, on behalf of Vietnam delegation, I would like to thank you to RICE DUBAI Organizers who came to Vietnam to invite us for this important event of worldwide rice exporters and importers. I am very pleased to see delegations from all over the world presenting here. I wish RICE DUBAI Organizer and all of you good health, happiness and success.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

Vietnam is a nation in Southeast Asia, a member of ASEAN – Association of Southeast Asian Nations, bordered by the Pacific to the East and has approximately 333.000 km² in area. With a population of 86 million, Vietnam has a huge aquatic and agricultural potential. Land area for growing rice is 5.8 million ha. Annual rice output is about 39 to 41 million tons. Vietnam's Government has invested into technical infrastructure to improve capacities in agricultural production in general and rice production in particular. Especially, Vietnam focuses on hi-tech agricultural projects such as modern storage facilities so as to improve rice quality. There are the projects of rice processing factories comprising the whole process from drying, chafing, cleaning to storing, and transporting to port for export. Vietnam has clear and open policies to attract investment from foreign countries, Vietnam's Government always provides highest incentives to foreign investors participating in agricultural sector. Thanks to Government's efforts, annual rice outputs are growing remarkably in recent years, about from 39 to 41 million tons. Annual exporting rice outputs are more than 5 million tons. In 2011, Vietnam is the world's second-largest rice exporter. We are trying to become the world's largest rice exporter in the future. We have a strong belief that we can achieve that target. Why can I say like that? There are four reasons as followed:

**Firstly*, Vietnam has a large land potential very appropriate to grow rice, especially, in the Mekong Delta which produces over 30 million tons annually.

**Secondly*, Vietnam has a large hard-working, young labor resource which is being trained carefully to improve quality to meet requirements of a modern agriculture.

**Thirdly*, Vietnamese social and political base is stable. Vietnamese people gained our independence after two revolutionary wars. Therefore, we treasure peace, and friendliness and are against terrorism, live and work by the constitution and law. We live, work and learn after Ho Chi Minh President, our great leader and the world's cultural personality.

With the above reasons, we entirely believe that our dream will come true. We hope Vietnam's agriculture will be strongly modernized step-by-step and become the world's largest rice exporter to have more contribution in stabilizing world rice prices, helping some developing countries threatened by severe famine. We truly hope that you will support us in implementing this agenda, also to make our world – our home a better place.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today we have relationship with a many importers in rice import-export trade community – they are our close, warm-hearted partners. Rice trade is not only about profit, defined in USD, but also that about the relationship between Vietnam and rice importers. Through business, we become friends and are ready to help each other if needed. We determine that the great long-term goals are how to improve the farmers' life in Vietnam and how to help people in importing nations having enough high quality and good rice for consumption at reasonable prices.

Coming to RICE DUBAI today, Vietnam delegation has 42 members in total, including Representatives from the Government, the Vice Minister of Vietnam's Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, leading groups and companies within Vietnam rice industry. Coming to UAE, Vietnam delegation is strongly impressed by one of the world's most beautiful and prosperous countries. I think that Dubai has the best conditions to successfully organize RICE Dubai, an event that will have vast influence on rice trade and production. Joining in RICE DUBAI this time, Vietnam's delegation has some suggestions as followed:

1. **To United Arab Emirates (UAE):** We suggest that you should plan to set up a Rice Trading Center for Middle East market. Vietnam is ready to cooperate and support Dubai in carrying this project out successfully.
We also suggest that the UAE supports Vietnam in organizing a fair in Dubai to introduce and showcase our fishery and agricultural products to the Middle East market.
2. **To Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO):** We suggest an international event about rice import-export and production in the world should be organized in the

nearest future. The main topic of that event is “Overcoming challenges of climate change; Ensuring the stable supply of rice for all over the world”. We suggest that the event organizer should send invitations to all government leaders, representatives of rice exporting and producing countries, leaders of rice importing nations, specialists and scientists working in agricultural research to come to the event to discuss about methods and technology to improve world rice production outputs, focusing on *qualitative* production rather than *quantitative* production, to concentrate on *quality* rather than *quantity*. Especially, we should care about rice production safety to ensure health of consumers. Vietnam is now trying to produce rice in this way and we are focusing on producing “green” rice, without using hazardous chemicals in rice growing, processing, preservation and storage.

3. We suggest that we should hold events like RICE DUBAI every two years for rice trade and production industry to maintain the place for us to get together in order to exchange experience, and to look for investment opportunities in rice trade & production. We think that these activities bring not only good benefits to rice trade & production industry but also to both farmers in exporting countries and consumers in rice importing countries alike.

I would like to see you in Vietnam. In cooperation with SAOKHUE Investment & Trade Promotion Organization, We are planning for an international event of Vietnam Agriculture and I would like to invite you to take your visit to this event to meet with Vietnam partners. The information of this event will be sent to you when it's completed. Should you need any assistance for your investment and trade with Vietnam for Agriculture Products, I believe SAOKHUE Organization can help you. We also support the plan of SAOKHUE for establishing Vietnam Distribution Centers (VDC) in key cities of MENA Region. Cooperation for this VDC in your country is much welcome.

Finally, once again, on behalf of Vietnam delegation, I wish you all the best, good health, happiness and success in your lives.

Thank you for your attention!