

Report from Minister of Health for delivery a medical aid to DR Vietnam,  
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Secret

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Ministry of Health and Social Care

Special Department

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TO

Prime Minister

Comrade TODOR ZHIVKOV

R E P O R T

From Minister of health and social care

Dr. KIRIL IGNATOV

REFERENCE: Rendering medical aid to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam

COMRADE PRIME MINISTER,

During the visit of Bulgarian Party & Governmental delegation, headed by Comrade Ivan Mihailov, to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in 1966 our country has promised to build and equip a multifunctional hospital with 250 beds as an aid to the fighting Vietnamese nation against the American imperialists.

In August 1967 the Embassy of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in Sofia by instruction of its government asked for a faster construction and equipment of the promised hospital, which will work at war time terms. For the resolving of the issue, the Vietnamese comrades suggested to be sent several our experts – physicians and an architect, who to visit Democratic Republic of Vietnam, and to discuss with the Vietnamese medical services the tasks, requirements, and conditions of the construction and functioning of the hospital.

Coordinated with the Council of Ministers and Ministry of foreign affairs, Ministry of health and social care sent three experts (two physicians and an architect) to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam at the end of September this year.

From the examinations that our expert commission made together with the Vietnamese medical services there was found out:

The Democratic Republic of Vietnam is an undeveloped agrarian country with low developed industry and large needs due to the prolonged feudal and colonial regime. After the liberation of the country from French colonizers in 1954 it started the way of Socialist development. For a very short period the Democratic Republic of Vietnam achieved great successes in the field of agriculture and industry. However, the Socialist development of the country has been violated in 1965 when the American imperialists started mass bombardment on the territory of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. The moral state of the people became more difficult. This gave an impact on the health of the people.

The medical organization currently is significantly embarrassed for providing necessary medical aid to the people, because of the destruction of many hospitals. These hospitals have been evacuated in the villages and are working on war time terms with insufficient capacity and possibilities. Various medical indicators have been worsening. For instance, the Vietnamese comrades still can not cope with several infectious and social deceases. Currently, hundreds thousands Vietnamese citizens suffer from malaria, tuberculosis, dysentery, trachoma, beriberi, leprosa, and other deceases. Practically the whole population has intestinal parasites due to the hard hygienic, life, and work conditions.

Besides, the medical organizations have to assure timely medical care of great number wounded citizens as a result of the ceaseless American bombardments. The medical network is still extremely short.

In this situation, the Vietnamese comrades require our aid, which expression is the construction, equipment, and functioning of a multifunctional hospital with 250 beds, with the follows tasks:

- the newly constructed hospital to be a central hospital of a province, which serves with qualified and special stationary and polyclinic help to a population of 1 260 000 persons;
- the hospital shall be equipped with modern medical technique of diagnostic and treatment of complex and hard deceases, which exceeded the technical capacity of the district hospitals;
- to participate in the prophylactic and the struggle against the epidemics and social deceases;
- to prepare and teach medical personnel for the needs of the province and of the Ministry of health;
- to lead and implement medical research in the province;
- to manage the health care in the whole province.

The stationary and polyclinic buildings of the multifunctional hospital shall be constructed in two or three villages in order to avoid the results of the eventual bombardments. Those buildings shall be of a temporary kind with size and materials similar to the local houses i. e. with length up to 15 m, and width up to 7 m, and with protective trenches. They shall be build up mainly by wood – bamboo, thatches, reed, filled up with mud and lime.

Only the surgical block and the buildings designed for roentgen and laboratory analysis shall be constructed of bricks with ceiling and semi-basements, rounded entirely with grounded anti-shells embankment. The underground surgery halls shall be constructed next to the surgery block with cement walls, tiled floors, and system of drains.

The projects of the hospital shall be completed by Bulgarian architects; however, for each kind of building have to be created separate architecture projects on which the Vietnamese architects and engineers shall develop technical and working projects according to the local conditions in Vietnam.

The construction materials shall be provided mainly from DR of Vietnam, with exception of 400 tons of cement, and some other equipment and installations, which shall be provided by PR of Bulgaria.

The expenditures for the hospital's construction by preliminary accounts amounted to 500 000 leva in total. In case of exceeding of this amount there will not be required new funding from Bulgaria, and it will be settled by the Vietnamese comrades by decreasing of the construction' plans.

The equipment of the hospital with medical installations, surgery instruments, and other consumer's materials shall be provided by PR of Bulgaria accordingly to the hospital's standards in our country.

The supply with medicines, reagents, and dressings for treatment of hospital patients and ambulance cure within the consultative policlinic shall be provided by PR of Bulgaria annually until the final victory of the Vietnamese people against the American aggressors.

With a view to the implementation of the tasks of construction and functioning of the multifunctional hospital, the Vietnamese comrades put a request for sending three Bulgarian physicians and one engineer with high qualification (professors) and knowledge of French. Their salaries shall be paid by our country.

In accordance with the preliminary instructions, given by the Council of Ministers, Ministry of health and social care considers that the official requests of the Vietnamese medical institutions should be satisfied in the spirit of the comprehensive help rendered by all Socialist countries.

For this aim Ministry of health and social care needs until the end of this year approximately 1 180 00 leva, of which:

1. For the construction of the hospital – 500 000 leva;
2. For total equipment of the hospital with medical equipment, surgery instruments, etc. – 400 000 leva;
3. For medicines, reagents, and dressings for treatment of stationary and policlinic patients – 230 000 leva;
4. For salaries of the Bulgarian experts in DR of Vietnam annually – 30 000 leva
5. For hospital's architecture projects – 20 000 leva;
6. For transportation – 50 000 leva\*

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\* The last point added on the draft by a handwritten note.

For the promptly supplying the hospital with modern equipment it is necessary part of it to be taken from Ministry of health and social care's public reserves, and other parts – from Ministry of people's defense, Ministry of transportation, etc.

This report with the draft of a Resolution have been coordinated with Ministry of finance, State planning committee, Ministry of construction, Ministry of foreign trade. All ministries have agreed in principle with the proposal for rendering a medical aid. Some of the institutions made additional proposals, which have been added to the draft. The proposal of *Technoexportstroy* State Construction Company for four months term of the construction's design has been rejected.

In accordance with the above, I request Council of Ministers to approve following

#### RESOLUTION<sup>†</sup>

1. The Ministry of people's health and social care shall organize the construction of a multifunctional hospital with 250 beds in DR Vietnam, based on the research, conducted on-site by Bulgarian specialists, and in accordance with the requirements of the Vietnamese health authorities.

Necessary funds at the amount of 1 230 000 leva – 437 000 leva in foreign currency in 1967 and 793 000 leva in the first half of 1968 – shall be provided by the State planning commission and the Ministry of finance in accordance with Appendix 2.

2. The State planning commission and the Ministry of finance shall provide to the Ministry of people's health and social care for 1969 and each of the following years 400 000 leva, including 30 000 currency leva, to supply the hospital with medications, reagents, dressing materials, hospital inventory, as well as for salaries of Bulgarian medical personnel, in accordance with Appendix 3.

3. The Ministry of construction, respectively “*Technoexportstroy*”, shall design the hospital in 2 month-term in coordination with sector “Health construction” at the Ministry of people's health and social care, implementing the

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<sup>†</sup> There are several handwritten corrections on the draft.

requirements of 63<sup>rd</sup> resolution of the Council of Ministers, dated 29 December 1966. Necessary funds shall be provided by the Ministry of people's health and social care.

4. The State planning commission shall provide to the Ministry of construction, respectively "Technoexportstroy", from the State reserve, the necessary construction materials and installations, in compliance with specifications in accordance with Appendix 1.

"Technoexportstroy" shall expedite the materials and installations.

5. Medications, instruments, soft and hard inventory, apparatus, laboratory equipment, etc. shall be delivered at retail prices, discounted accordingly, from the stockpiles at the pharmaceutical department, including from the public and state medical reserve of the Ministry of people's health and social care, from the regional pharmaceutical industries and the stockpiles for the population.

6. When impossible to be purchased, some of the apparatus, inventory items and medications shall be taken from hospitals belonging to the Ministry of people's health and social care and the Ministry of people's defense.

7. The Ministry of foreign trade, respectively "Despred", and the Ministry of people's health and social care shall send construction materials, furniture and medications in two month-term in the best for the country way.

8. The Minister of people's health and social care, coordinated with the State Security Committee, shall assign annually, starting in 1968, three highly qualified French speaking Bulgarian doctors and one engineer.

These specialists shall receive in DR Vietnam, on our account, payment equal to 70% of the ambassador's salary, and in Bulgaria – their full salary, paid by the employing institution. Their positions shall be taken over by substitutes, payment shall be provided by economies in the institution's budget.

9. The Ministry of people's health and social care shall replenish the public reserve and the state medical reserve of the Ministry of people's health and social care and the Ministry of people's defense for 1968 – field hospitals, apparatus and equipment for the needs of the hospital in DR Vietnam.

The Ministry of foreign trade, by the end of 1967, shall import from socialist countries 2 X-ray apparatus, 2 single-channel electrocardiographs and 1 tri-channel one for about 80 000 leva.

*[Translated by Greta Keremidchieva]*