

**Khuc Minh Tho Speech at Vietnam Center – Lubbock, Texas
May 28, 2008**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Families of Vietnamese Political Prisoners Association and its members, I have the --great honor today to celebrate. This Grand Opening-- of the tireless work for over 30 years of this Association and its dedicated volunteers.

First, our special thanks to Dr. James Reckner, Dr. Steve Maxner, the staff of the Vietnam Center and all the members of the Vietnamese American Heritage Foundation. Without your labor and passion, this Center and this day of celebration would never have happened.

One special person that our Association is deeply indebted to, Mr. Robert Funseth. Mr Funseth, the former Senior Deputy Assistant Secretary of State was the one who negotiated the agreement of July 30, 1989 between the United States Government and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam for the resettlement of Vietnamese political prisoners.

We express our deepest appreciation to the five American presidents, President Jimmy Carter, President Ronald Reagan, President George H.W. Bush, President Bill Clinton, and President George W. Bush. The great initiatives and policies of their administrations made possible the resettlement of-- hundreds of thousands of the former Vietnamese political prisoners and their families, the

refugees and the Amerasians,-- who now prosper in this great land of freedom, AMERICA after years of oppression, and imprisonment in Vietnam.

We acknowledge the never ending efforts of the-- U.S. Congress, whose legislations implemented the policies of these presidents, and especially the -- bipartisan approach of Senators Edward Kennedy, Robert Dole and John McCain, --who have always sponsor critical legislations at difficult times over the past 30 years.

We also thank the many --NGO's: the International Red Cross, the U.S. Catholic Conference of Bishops (USCCB) and various international and refugee organizations,-- who made possible the migrations of the Vietnamese to America, and who assisted their sometimes difficult adjustment in resettlement.

Anyone who doubts the loyalty and generosity of the-- American People and government---- to its South Vietnamese ally need only come to this Vietnam Center to read the records that bear witness that the US -- did not and never forget its ally.

Finally, let us close with a moment of silence to --commemorate the 58,000 American soldiers, the many soldiers of other countries who fought alongside the Americans and Vietnamese, and thousands of soldiers of the Republic of South Vietnam who gave their lives in the defense of liberty.

Thank you all --again, and again!