

Vietnam national day

Economic relations bring nations closer

Nguyen Phu Binh
AMBASSADOR OF THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC
OF VIETNAM

On Sept. 2, 1945, at the historic Ba Dinh Square in Hanoi, President Ho Chi Minh read the Declaration of Independence, solemnly announcing the foundation of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, predecessor of today's Socialist Republic of Vietnam, an independent and sovereign state, putting an end to nearly 100 years of colonialist domination of our country.

This year, the Vietnamese people are jubilant to celebrate the 65th anniversary of the National Day of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, and in the festive days of September, the Vietnamese people are also enthusiastic to welcome the 1,000th anniversary of Thang Long - Hanoi (Thang Long is the former name of the capital Hanoi), as well as 37th anniversary of the establishment of the diplomatic relationship between Vietnam and Japan.

The joy is more accumulative after the central sector of Thang Long Imperial Citadel was listed as the 900th UNESCO World Heritage site and professor Ngo Bao Chau, a young Vietnamese mathematician, was just recently awarded a Fields Medal for his excellent study on Langlands fundamental lemma. All this has proved that Vietnamese history, culture and intelligence are highly esteemed all over the world.

Looking back on the past 65 years, Vietnamese people have recorded outstanding achievements: defeating foreign aggressors; defending independence, freedom and sovereignty; reunifying the nation; rebuilding the economy from the ruins of war; and now steadily advancing in national

development and international integration.

In particular, for more than two decades after the Doi Moi (renovation) initiated in 1986, the country has transformed its state-planned economy into a market economy, bolstering the economic development continually at an average speed from 7 to 8.5 percent per year. Vietnam has also been able to move out of the list of poor countries and is determined to become an industrial country by 2020.

Possessing a considerable number of world heritages in nature and culture, a deep historical tradition and exotic sightseeing places, Vietnam is also becoming a favorite destination for foreign visitors who have made more than 2.5 million arrivals in the country for the first six months of 2010.

Regarding external relations, adopting the motto of diversification, multilateralism and international integration, Vietnam has proactively participated in almost all regional and international organizations and cooperation institutions. It became a member of the World Trade Organization in 2006, accomplished its duties during a two-year term as a nonpermanent member of the U.N. Security Council from 2008-2009, and is successfully undertaking the chairmanship of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 2010.

History proves that Vietnam-Japan relations date back as far as the 15th-16th centuries when Japanese commercial ships frequented Vietnam's harbors. Relics of good friendship and bilateral commercial relations have still remained and have been well preserved in the ancient city of Hoi An in Quang Nam Province, a cultural heritage recognized by UNESCO. More than 100 years ago the so-called Eastward Travel Movement occurred, mobilizing Vietnamese youths

to go to Japan to study the Meiji Restoration. Its related historical relics of memories recording the deeply moving relationship between Phan Boi Chau, the leader of the movement, and Dr. Sakitaro Asaba, who was wholeheartedly in favor of the movement, remain in Fukuoka City, Shizuoka Prefecture.

In the past years, the Vietnam-Japan relationship has developed steadily. In early spring last year, the Vietnamese people had the honor to welcome His Imperial Highness the Crown Prince Naruhito in an official visit to Vietnam. In 2009, the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam H.E. Nong Duc Manh officially visited Japan and together with then Prime Minister Tarō Aso unanimously made the Joint Proclamation on Vietnam-Japan Strategic Partnership with the aim to enhance the relations between the two nations for the time to come. Following this line, the two nations signed the Vietnam-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement, which came into force in October 2009. The Vietnam-Japan Joint Initiative, aimed at improving the business environment and competitive capacity of Vietnam, which started in 2003, is now bringing about encouraging outcomes toward the end of its third stage.

Japan has become one of the top, important economic partners of Vietnam. The bilateral trade is increasing rapidly and in 2008 surpassed the goal of \$15 billion set by the two countries to be achieved by 2010. At present, Japan possesses more

than 1,200 direct investment projects in Vietnam with a total registered capital of over \$20 billion, ranking first in foreign direct investment (FDI) disbursements and third among more than 90 investing countries and territories. Vietnam welcomes Japanese investors participating in key domains, large-scale projects and major economic areas. The country provides favorable conditions for small and medium enterprises of high technology and supporting industries from various localities of Japan to invest in the country.

Japan is now the biggest foreign aid provider to Vietnam with a record amount of \$1.6 billion in Official Development Assistance (ODA) in fiscal 2009. A series of infrastructure projects, particularly in transportation and energy sectors, which are being implemented with Japan's ODA in various areas in Vietnam, have currently played a very important role for the economic development and improvement of our people's living standards, demonstrating vividly the intimate relations of cooperation and friendship between our two countries. Further on, we believe the mechanism of public-private partnership (PPP) recently launched by both governments would well serve as the pipeline for a greater contribution of the Japanese business community to large infrastructure development projects in Vietnam.

As for regional integration, we attach high value and great importance to the large ODA donation and investment by Ja-

pan to the Great Mekong Subregion, through which, we expect, Japan will give more effective assistance and contributions to the development of the region, promoting the connectivity linking this area with other ASEAN countries.

Regarding educational cooperation, we are delighted to notice there are now nearly 4,000 Vietnamese students and 17,000 trainees in Japan. Vietnam highly appreciates Japanese assistance in fostering excellent human resources for our national development.

Additionally, direct flights connecting Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City to four destinations in Japan (Narita, Osaka, Fukuoka, Nagoya) at a frequency of 47 flights per week have transported more than 400,000 Japanese tourists to Vietnam and tens of thousands of Vietnamese visitors to Japan every year, thus making the two nations closer with every passing day.

On this festive occasion, I would like, on behalf of the Vietnamese government and people, to express my most sincere gratitude to Their Majesties the Emperor Akihito and the Empress Michiko, Their Imperial Highnesses the Crown Prince Naruhito and the Crown Princess Masako, the entire Imperial Family, as well as to the government, Diet members, business communities, scholars of Japan and the Japanese people for their valuable cooperation and assistance to the Vietnamese people in our cause of national construction and development.

My best wishes to all of you.



Amicable relations: Emperor Akihito greets Nong Duc Manh, general secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam, during his official visit to Japan in April last year.

Development of infrastructure fosters growth

Susumu Kato and
Kyohei Takahashi
CO-CHAIRMEN OF THE JAPAN-VIETNAM
ECONOMIC COMMITTEE, NIPPON
KEIDANREN



Kyohei Takahashi Susumu Kato

On behalf of Nippon Keidanren, we would like to offer our heartfelt congratulations on the occasion of Vietnam's 65th National Day.

The Vietnamese economy has rebounded quickly from the worldwide recession that began in 2008 and today continues to post remarkable growth under the Vietnamese government's strong leadership. In particular, the government has been actively advancing plans to expand infrastructure that are the basis for sustainable growth, such as electricity, transportation, and urban networks, leading many Japanese corporations to set their sights on Vietnam's strong growth potential. Vietnam is also a strategic location with regard to the broad regional infrastructure of Asia, as connectivity between Vietnam and the other countries in the Great Mekong Subregion has become the key to the development of the region.

The Japanese business community, as Vietnam's strategic partner, hopes to actively draw on its experience and technologies to contribute to this infrastructure building, thereby achieving growth in

tandem with Vietnam.

In order to promote infrastructure development in Vietnam, Keidanren has been pursuing policy discussions with government and business leaders of Vietnam, including the dispatch of a delegation to Hanoi last December headed by our chairman. In addition, concrete discussions regarding bilateral cooperation to develop Vietnam's infrastructure were held in Tokyo at the Vietnam Investment Forum on Aug. 4, which we hosted together with the Vietnamese government. We also plan to dispatch a delegation later this month aimed at promoting understanding on the local economic and social situations and facilitating the business in Vietnam.

Currently, efforts are under way in Vietnam to implement the public-private partnership (PPP) scheme, which is an important means of promoting private-sector business participation in infrastructure projects. It is our hope that this

scheme will come to fruition as soon as possible, and that the areas of cooperation between Japan and Vietnam will be further expanded.

Moving forward, we would like to additionally engage wholeheartedly in efforts to enhance "soft" infrastructure in areas such as development of logistics and laws concerning foreign investment, as advocated in the Vietnam-Japan Joint Initiative. Based on our belief that developing human resources is the cornerstone of economic relations between our countries, starting this year Keidanren will also be supporting a project to teach Vietnamese university students about Japanese law in order to foster personnel capable of handling legal affairs for Japanese companies active in Vietnam.

During this year, which marks the 65th anniversary of Vietnam's independence, we hope that the mutually beneficial economic relations between our two countries will become even closer through such efforts as the PPP scheme and the joint initiatives, as well as the fostering of human resources and other efforts.

Finally, on behalf of Keidanren, we would like once again to congratulate the people of Vietnam on the occasion of their National Day.



Heritage: Part of the Thang Long Imperial Citadel complex, the Hanoi Flag Tower, completed in 1812, is one of the most widely recognized landmarks in Hanoi.

Congratulations

to the People of

the Socialist Republic of Vietnam

on the Occasion of

the 65th Anniversary of

Their National Day

 Mitsubishi Corporation

Congratulations

to the People of

the Socialist Republic of Vietnam

on the Occasion of

the 65th Anniversary of

Their National Day

 MITSUI & CO.,LTD.

Congratulations

to the People of

the Socialist Republic of Vietnam

on the Occasion of

the 65th Anniversary of

Their National Day

 Sojitz Corporation

<http://www.sojitz.com/en>

Congratulations

to the People of

the Socialist Republic of Vietnam

on the Occasion of

the 65th Anniversary of

Their National Day

 Sumitomo Corporation

Congratulations

to the People of

the Socialist Republic of Vietnam

on the Occasion of

the 65th Anniversary of

Their National Day

 TOYO ENGINEERING CORPORATION