

Vietnamese prime minister's visit

Strategic partnership shows results

Nguyen Phu Binh
AMBASSADOR OF VIETNAM

Vietnam and Japan are the two Asian countries that share many similarities in geography and social life, rooted in a traditional rice farming culture. This factor is of immense significance for their bilateral ties to have flourished in various aspects. Over the recent years, the contemporary public have witnessed a continued and strong acceleration in their strategic partnership.



The bilateral diplomatic relationship established in 1973 marked a watershed for the bilateral cooperation to move forward in a more comprehensive manner and by now Japan has become the biggest donor to Vietnam in terms of development assistance. In the meanwhile, Vietnam has for many years been home to one of the largest communities of Japanese companies that undertake business abroad. Being the first developed country that restored development aid to Vietnam in 1992, Japan's contribution has come to about 30 percent of the total development assistance from Vietnam's 51 international donors. More notably, this valuable financial source has been

mainly focused on developing key and major infrastructure bases, which on the one hand have largely helped improve the conditions and raise the standards of living for the local people due to fast expansion in road and transportation networks, urbanization, electricity and water supply, and health care services, and on the other hand are bringing tremendous facilitation for Japanese direct investment in the country.

The presence of more than 1,200 Japanese companies, including giant conglomerates and industries of global size, in Vietnam reflects not only the active response of the Japanese economy to the potential of the Vietnamese market, but also the mutual confidence between the two peoples that have been gradually consolidated through many different channels of consultation and collaboration, particularly during their high-level visits of state and government leadership.

Since 1993, such visits between the two countries has taken place every year to further deliberate the determination to advance the bilateral relationship to higher levels. In 2009, following the official visit to Vietnam by His Imperial Highness Crown Prince Naruhito in early spring, the visit to Japan in April by then Party General Secretary Nong Duc Manh re-

affirmed the shared desire of the two nations for strategic partnership wherein Japan will become a major development partner of Vietnam, and Vietnam as a strategic destination for investment from Japan and a reliable factor to support peace and stability in Asia.

The acceleration of the strategic partnership was continued with the official visit by then Prime Minister Naoto Kan to Vietnam. In this visit, the determination by both sides on maintaining annual summit-level visits as well as strengthening of dialogue channels at all levels

and in all areas was reiterated. Prime Minister Kan and Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung of Vietnam also agreed to advance the bilateral economic relationship to a new stage, and Japan's strong assistance for Vietnam's priority development in infrastructure and other significant industries, including nuclear energy and rare earths, and a series of related development projects in Vietnam for major seaports, high-speed railways, airport complexes, power plants and transfer of advanced and environmentally friendly technologies were stated for further



Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung

commitment and large business opportunities.

The bilateral strategic partnership has also been illustrat-

ed by the strong solidarity and deep sympathy the Vietnamese people shared with the friendly people of Japan in a nationwide

Visit can help to enhance economic ties between Japan, Vietnam

Susumu Kato and Kyohei Takahashi
CHAIRMAN AND COCHAIRMAN,
JAPAN-VIETNAM ECONOMIC
COMMITTEE, JAPAN BUSINESS
FEDERATION (KEIDANREN)



Kato



Takahashi

The Japanese business community warmly welcomes the first visit of Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung to Japan since the new Vietnamese government came to office in August. It is an ideal opportunity to enhance the prospects for improved economic ties at a moment when both countries are under new administrations.

Following the Great East Ja-

pan Earthquake on March 11, Vietnam and other countries offered generous support and encouragement to Japan, which served as a reminder for many people in Japan of the vital importance of strong international ties. Strengthening our relation-

ship with Vietnam is an essential part of the effort to maintain and enhance those ties. Japan's relationship with Vietnam, a country with tremendous potential for growth, is mutually beneficial and of great strategic importance.

Vietnam shares this awareness and this was reflected by a string of visits to Japan in May and June, shortly before the country's new government took office, by key Vietnamese political leaders including now President Truong Tan Sang. These visits were effective to build even closer economic ties between the two countries under the new Viet-

namese government.

When Prime Minister Dung and President Sang met with the Keidanren delegation that visited Hanoi in July, they emphasized their high expectations for exports of Japanese infrastructure and state-of-the-art technologies to Vietnam, including those concerned with nuclear power plants and aircraft. Prime Minister Dung expressed his gratitude to Japan for providing its official development assistance to Vietnam despite the challenging domestic situation after the earthquake.

In order to realize our cooperation in the field of infrastruc-

ture development, which is necessary to improve logistics and the power supply, and to resolve bottlenecks in the country's growth, it is important to introduce a bilateral carbon offset scheme and a public-private partnerships scheme that allows unsolicited proposals, and to utilize the overseas investment and loan scheme of the Japan International Cooperation Agency.

Stronger ties between Japan and Vietnam will depend on human-resource training and people-to-people exchanges, and Japan will need to play a proactive role in this regard. As

part of this, Keidanren has been providing scholarships to promising Vietnamese students. In the years to come, it is important to expand such exchanges and promote programs to foster human resources. We hope these efforts will serve as the pillars for new bilateral economic relations.

Keidanren hopes that the occasion of Prime Minister Dung's visit to Japan will enhance our bilateral cooperation, including the development of infrastructure and people-to-people exchanges, thereby laying the groundwork for even closer economic ties between the two countries in the future.

Heartiest Welcome

to His Excellency Nguyen Tan Dung,
Prime Minister of the
Socialist Republic of Vietnam,
on the Occasion of
His Official Working Visit to Japan

 Mitsubishi Corporation

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