

Vietnam national day

Deeper ties in store for longtime strategic partners

Doan Xuan Hung
AMBASSADOR OF VIETNAM

On the occasion of the 67th anniversary of the National Day of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, I would like to extend the best of wishes to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, members of the Imperial family, Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda as well as to Cabinet members and the friendly and hospitable people of Japan. I would also like to extend my warmest wishes to the Vietnamese citizens working or studying in Japan and our communities living in this country.

Following the victory of the 1945 August Revolution in the struggle to regain independence from foreign occupation, on Sept. 2, 1945, President Ho Chi Minh solemnly made the Declaration of Independence, proclaiming the birth of the Dem-

ocratic Republic of Vietnam, which was renamed in 1976 as the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. Even after the republic was founded, the Vietnamese people still had to persevere through another long, arduous struggle to protect their newfound independence and freedom. That ended in 1975 when our country was reunified. The people of the world have shared with us their sympathy, empathy, heartfelt sentiments and strong support in the struggle for freedom and independence in the past, and have continued to do so in the current course of building a new life for the Vietnamese people.

Ever since embarking on reform in 1986, Vietnam has witnessed many major changes. Our economy has seen progressive growth for 25 years, with annual gross domestic product (GDP) growth averaging 7 percent. GDP per capita in 2011 was nearly 600 percent that of 1986. Vietnam has transformed from a poor, low-income country to middle-income status. The livelihood of our people has

been markedly improved. The poverty rate has fallen from 58 percent in 1993 to 10 percent in 2011. Vietnam today is a mega-construction site with new houses, plants, factories, roads and schools emerging everywhere. Our whole country and people are working toward an industrialized and modernized society.

In our current national construction efforts, we are resolved to mainly rely on our inner strength, but also attach much importance to international support and cooperation, including from Japan. We cherish the excellent development of our bilateral relations in the past 39 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations. Vietnam and Japan currently enjoy increasingly effective multifaceted cooperation and are working together to realize a strategic partnership. Our relationship is characterized by a high degree of mutual trust and comprehensive cooperation in all fields. The exchange of delegations between the two countries, including high-level visits, is increasing, reflecting the bonds that we enjoy. Within 6 months, from November 2011 to April 2012, Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung visited Japan twice and engaged in very productive talks with Prime Minister Noda, manifested through the mutual understanding and agreement on all issues of mutual concern. The



Strengthening ties: Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung meets with Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda at Akasaka Palace in Tokyo on April 21 after attending the Mekong-Japan Summit meeting. EMBASSY OF VIETNAM

two countries have cooperated closely and supported each other at international and regional forums. The relations in the fields of economics, trade, science, culture and education, etc., are also developing very well.

We would like to extend our gratitude to the government

and people of Japan for the sustained high levels of official development assistance (ODA) for Vietnam over the years, even in 2011 when Japan suffered from a double disaster, namely the earthquake and tsunami, and the Fukushima nuclear power plant accident. In appreciation of

this moving gesture, Vietnam has pledged itself to the most effective use of this source of capital. Since the beginning of 2012, Japan has risen to become the top investor in Vietnam, with total pledged capital of \$28 billion. Over 1,700 Japanese projects are being implemented in Vietnam.

It is worthy of note that hundreds of big and small Japanese companies are enthusiastically discovering the Vietnamese market with hopes of investing in a country with high levels of socio-political stability, vast resources, rising much like an emerging economy. Two-way trade has increased considerably: in 2011 bilateral trade was over \$21 billion, effectively making Japan one of Vietnam's leading trade partners. However, these figures also illustrate untapped potentials, for it accounts for a very small portion of Japan's foreign trade figures.

Our relations in culture, education, training, science and technology are also being increasingly strengthened. There are currently some 5,000 Vietnamese students and researchers in Japan. Cooperation between universities is also being strengthened and expanded. Surely, in the near future, our strategic partnership will also see strengthening and development for the interest of the people of both countries. We will bear witness to far greater projects, with greater socioeconomic significance built in Vietnam under Japanese support and assistance. We will also surely see high-quality consumption, goods made in Vietnam being used in Japan, reflecting the bond of interests and sentiments shared between the two countries and

people. To further promote bilateral relations and strengthen the bonds between our people, this month, with the close cooperation of the ministries of culture, foreign affairs, planning and investment and labor of Vietnam and Japanese partners, the Vietnamese Embassy in Japan will hold "Meet Vietnam 2012" with four main events. A Vietnam Festival will be held in Yoyogi Park on Sept. 15 and 16. It is expected that 150,000 to 200,000 people will attend the festival to experience Vietnamese culture, cuisine and artistic performances. An investment promotion event for Vietnam's industrial parks and economic zones, with a focus on the development of supporting industries, will be held on the afternoon of Sept. 13. Traditional Vietnamese songs and dances will be performed during the same evening. A roundtable on human resource development cooperation will be inserted in the series of events. It is my hope that this grand and carefully prepared program will bring a fresh breath to the already sound relations between us.

Finally, allow me to express my sincere appreciation to The Japan Times for allowing us the opportunity to make an appearance in this edition and to all Japanese friends for providing assistance to us to celebrate Vietnam's National Day.



Scenic spot: Hoan Kiem Lake, also known as "Sword Lake," with the legendary Turtle Tower at its center, is situated in the historic district of the capital Hanoi and serves as a focal point of the city's public life. ASEAN-JAPAN CENTRE

Vietnam's growth in current context helps Japan see nation's importance

Motoo Furuta
PRESIDENT, JAPAN-VIETNAM
FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION;
PROFESSOR, THE UNIVERSITY OF
TOKYO

On the occasion of the 67th anniversary of the National Day of Vietnam, Sept. 2, allow me to extend the warmest congratulations to the government and people of Vietnam. We are pleased to see that this year's celebration takes place amid many new social achievements in its reform process.

Vietnam's growth in the context of current international and regional developments has

helped Japanese see clearer the importance of Vietnam to Japan. The relations between Japan and Vietnam are developing comprehensively and turning stronger than ever. The two countries are working together to realize a strategic partnership for peace and prosperity in Asia, opening up the most comprehensive stage of development ever in the history of the bilateral relations.

The foundation for this growing relationship between Japan and Vietnam lies in the bonds of friendship between the two peoples. When eastern Japan was hit by the mega-earthquake on March 11, 2011, popular campaigns arose in Vietnam to help the Japanese people. This is proof of the warm feelings that the Vietnamese people

have reserved for the people of Japan.

In history, there were times when the Japan-Vietnam relation developed robustly, such as the peak of the Japanese Street and Japanese Bridge in Hoi An in the middle of the 17th century, or the Dong Du (Travel East) Movement in the early 20th century. However, these precedents were inevitably marked by impermanence. I believe it is high time for us now to work together to make the friendship between the two peoples more sustainable and enduring.

Next year, we will celebrate the 40th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Japan and Vietnam. May I wish this commemorative year to become a turning point in the history of our bilateral relations.

Meet Vietnam 2012: Four main events for stronger ties

Vietnam Investment Forum

• Sept. 13, 1:30 p.m.-5:30 p.m.
Sumitomo Mitsui Bank Main Office Building
3F; (03) 3282-1111; 1-1-2 Marunouchi, Chiyoda-ku,
Tokyo; access via Tokyo Station

Focusing on local supporting industries, the symposium provides Japanese companies and investors with information on economic opportunities, the investment environment and destinations in Vietnam, introducing the country's industrial parks and economic zones. Also, there will be a chance to meet representatives of Vietnamese companies.

Vietnamese Cultural Night

• Sept. 13, 6:30 p.m.-8 p.m.
Nippon Seinen-kan Hall; (03) 3475-2457; 7-1
Kasumigaoka, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo; access via JR
Shinanomachi Station or Tokyo Metro Gaienmae
Station; tickets cost ¥5,000.

The concert features Vietnamese songs, dances accompanied by traditional instruments as well as a fashion show. The concert will be performed by first-class Vietnamese artists. At the venue, there will also be a photo exhibition that introduces the natural landscapes and people's lives in Vietnam.

Vietnam-Japan Human Resources Seminar

• Sept. 14, 9:30 a.m.-noon
TKP Shibuya Conference Center;
(03) 5778-2700; 2-17-3 Shibuya, Shibuya-ku,
Tokyo; access via Shibuya Station

A round-table discussion will provide a venue to exchange opinions on bilateral cooperation for vocational training and human resource development. Major topics will be acceptance of Vietnamese trainees to Japan, evaluation of vocational abilities, development of highly trained human resources and development of education at the university and postgraduate levels.

Vietnam Festival 2012

• Sept. 15-16, 10 a.m.-8 p.m.
Yoyogi Park, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo; access via JR
Harajuku Station or Tokyo Metro Yoyogi-Koen
Station; free

Held annually since 2008, the Vietnam Festival showcases the Vietnam of today through various food, culture and music, attracting more than 100,000 people every year. This year, commemorating the event's fifth anniversary, the festival will seek to further promote Vietnam-Japan cultural exchanges.

Japanese businesses look to carry positive relationship forward

Susumu Kato and Kyohei
Takahashi
CHAIRMAN AND COCHAIRMAN,
JAPAN-VIETNAM ECONOMIC
COMMITTEE, KEIDANREN

On behalf of Keidanren, we offer our heartfelt congratulations to the people of Vietnam on the occasion of the 67th anniversary of their National Day.

Today, relations between Japan and Vietnam are better than ever before. In order to carry this positive relationship forward, the Japanese business



Kato



Takahashi

community will continue to contribute to building a foundation for Vietnam's ongoing industrialization and economic development.

As part of these efforts, a Keidanren mission led by Chairman Hiromasa Yonekura visited Hanoi in March this year. We were among those who took part and had an opportunity to hear President Truong Tan Sang and the other government leaders express their high hopes for cooperation with Japanese companies on developing infrastructure, improving the business environment and making Vietnam's industrialization strategy a reality. Keidanren will work to fulfill these ex-

pectations through frameworks including the Japan-Vietnam Joint Initiative, the symbol of cooperation between the two countries. We are delighted to note that steady progress is already being made, particularly with regard to infrastructure development, in areas such as aircraft, space centers, construction of airports, highways and steel refineries, and industrial waste power generation projects. At the second Japan-Vietnam Ministerial Public-Private Policy Dialogue

held in mid-August in Hanoi, both governments issued a clear statement of their determination to cooperate across the board to bring these projects to completion. This is a very encouraging development.

In terms of the business environment, steady progress is being made toward achieving some 70 targets set out in Phase 4 of the Japan-Vietnam Joint Initiative, which involves the participation of the public and private sectors in both countries. We have every expectation that

many of these targets will have been reached by the time the initiative's final evaluation appears in November.

Building on these achievements, we trust that the coming year, which marks 40 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Vietnam, will see the economic relationship between our countries go from strength to strength. We look forward to further cooperation as we work together to realize Vietnam's industrialization strategy.

Congratulations

to the People of
the Socialist Republic of Vietnam

on the Occasion of
the 67th Anniversary of
Their National Day

The Future of Energy, Resources and Materials
JX Nippon Oil & Gas Exploration


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