

Vietnam National Day Special

Rapid growth points to stronger ties ahead

VU HONG NAM
AMBASSADOR OF VIETNAM



On Sept. 2, 1945, President Ho Chi Minh proclaimed the independence of Vietnam. On this historic occasion, the Vietnamese people pledged to stand united to overcome countless hardships

to secure independence, sovereignty and the right to pursue happiness. One of the teachings of Ho Chi Minh – “Nothing is as precious as independence and freedom” – has long been engraved in the hearts of millions of Vietnamese. The 76-year journey of Vietnam has been marked with glory and profound changes in realizing its goals of becoming a “wealthy people, strong nation, and democratic, just and cultured society” under a foreign policy of independence, self-reliance, diversification and multilateralization of international relations.

2021 has been an extraordinary year. COVID-19 has caused unprecedented damage to human life, the global economy and sociopolitical stability. However, the Vietnamese people managed to overcome major challenges and achieve the dual goals of fighting the pandemic and reviving socio-economic development. In 2021, we have continued to remain optimistic with encouraging outcomes in many fields.

In politics, various important events were held with great success, including the 13th National Party Congress and 14th National

Assembly. In the global and regional domains, Vietnam successfully assumed its nonpermanent membership in the 2020-2021 U.N. Security Council and has acted as an active member in promoting centrality for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. Regarding the economy, despite the fourth wave of COVID-19, Vietnam’s gross domestic product expanded 5.64% in the first half. As of June, foreign direct investment projects were estimated to have disbursed \$9.24 billion, an increase of 6.8% over 2020.

As one of the fastest-emerging economies, Vietnam holds a key position in the Indo-Pacific region. Over the years, Vietnam and Japan have become more than trusted friends and partners. Our nations frequently support each other and work to overcome any challenges. Japan has always been Vietnam’s top partner in trade, investment, infrastructure development and technical assistance. This was affirmed by Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga’s decision to make Vietnam the destination for his first overseas trip as Japan’s new leader.

Among the 136 nations and territories investing in Vietnam, Japan is the biggest provider of official development assistance, with \$28 billion in grants and loans. For the first six months of 2021, Japan’s investment in Vietnam reached \$2.44 billion. The 4,900 projects in the country backed by \$63.1 billion in capital have made Japan the second-largest investor in Vietnam.

There are various areas of cooperation our two countries can explore, namely infrastructure development, high-quality human resource development, digital technology, pandemic prevention and

COVID-19 vaccine production. Given the emergence of the coronavirus variants, the Vietnamese government has identified access to vaccine sources as a high priority. In this regard, Japan has provided Vietnam with 3 million doses of COVID-19 vaccine and other medical supplies and equipment through the Japan International Cooperation Agency. Let me express my sincere thanks and appreciation to the Japanese government for actively assisting Vietnam in controlling the COVID-19 pandemic.

2021 is the 45th anniversary of the opening of the Vietnamese Embassy in Japan. This year marks my third year as ambassador, and working with Japanese friends and colleagues has brought me fond memories of the culture and people. It is my wholehearted belief that Vietnamese-Japanese relations will blossom with greater momentum in the future. I truly believe this kind of partnership and long-standing trust represent an exemplary model for countries in the region and around the world.

Warm exchanges feed partnership

EIICHIRO WASHIO
STATE MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS



I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam on the occasion of its 76th Independence Day anniversary.

The world is still being challenged by the unrelenting COVID-19 crisis. Nonetheless, even in the midst of this difficult time, Japan-Vietnam relations are making steady progress. True to the old adage, “A friend in need is a friend indeed,” the provision of masks to Japan by the Vietnamese government last year and the recent provision of COVID-19 vaccines to Vietnam by the Japanese government are proof that the ties

between Japan and Vietnam are deepening at all levels.

I participated in the Vietnam Festival 2020 held in Tokyo last November. I saw many people enjoying Vietnamese food and culture on that occasion, and realized that this kind of exchange between our two peoples is the foundation of the Japan-Vietnam relationship, which is valued as the best in history.

The year 2023 will mark the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Vietnam. Looking back on the progress of our collaborative relationship, let us make that year an important milestone for the future of Japan-Vietnam relations.

This content was compiled in collaboration with the embassy. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the newspaper.



General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong greets Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga on Oct. 19, 2020, at the Central Office of the Communist Party of Vietnam. Above right: Health Minister Nguyen Thanh Long (center) and Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Nguyen Minh Vu (right) accept COVID-19 vaccines donated by Japan from Ambassador Takio Yamada at Noi Bai Airport on June 16.

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to the People
of
the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam
on the Occasion
of
Their Independence Day



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