

Conscience of Humanity Awakened : Driving Force of the World People’s Front in Support of Vietnam’s Struggle against the US

Nguyen Khac Huynh

The support that the world people gave Vietnam in the struggle against the US was broad in scope, strong in intensity and dramatic in effect. In this article, the author tries to trace its roots to the two world wars which helped awaken the conscience of the humanity. This support manifests itself in the awakening of the colonial people who rose up to regain the rights to decide their own destiny, in the world people’s movement for peace and democracy. Indeed, a world people’s front was formed, taking root in socialist countries and spread to Northern and Western Europe. This is a front as it is very broad-based with the participation of international mass organizations, well-known personalities, young people and old folks. It covers a wide spectrum of activities with different forms of support. The Front was effective in bringing an end to the war in mobilizing public opinion in the US and other countries and encouraging the Vietnamese people in their struggle.

Vietnam and ASEAN’s Political - Security Cooperation

Nguyen Hoang Giap, Asso. Prof

Over the past decade and more since it joined ASEAN, Vietnam has, together with other member countries, been able to bring into fullest play their respective endogenous strength in political-security cooperation. The country has made positive contribution to strengthening ASEAN’s cooperation and unity, helped preserving the tenet of ASEAN principles, well resolved complicated and sensitive regional problems, maintained the unity of the Association and absorbed outside pressure and impacts. However, in view of recent development in the region and the world, Vietnam would have to overcome complexities to participate fully and effectively in this area of cooperation. Analysing and evaluating the difficulties facing Vietnam, the author gives a number of recommendations for greater Vietnamese participation in this area in the years to come. Firstly, the country should take the initiative to actively and proactively participate in the political-security cooperation. Secondly, Vietnam should attach great importance to real results in building the ASEAN Security Community. Thirdly, it should adopt a flexible approach to security cooperation within ARF. Fourthly, Vietnam should take an active part in ASEAN cooperation to tackle with non-traditional security issues. Finally, Vietnam should also promote bilateral security cooperation while strengthening ASEAN cooperation.

Contribution to an International Relations Approach to World Order

Nguyen Vu Tung, PhD

Vietnam has so far adopted a mainly dialectical approach to its assessment of the tendencies in international relations. Although this has served its purpose the country needs to adopt a new approach in view of the new stage of its diplomatic activities. In this article, the author suggests that realism accompany realism, a well - known theory in the studies of international relations and the most common category of system and international order. He also argues that realism is close to Marxism and Leninism in approaching international relations. If adopted, realism would help relieve the pressure on policy makers over the short term and therefore would prove to be a useful tool for correct approach to concrete analysis of the world situation and a judicious foreign policy.

Some Features of China's Neighbourhood Policy

Nguyen Cong Minh

In the belief that neighbours play a significant role in its economic development, political affairs and security, China attaches great importance to improving relations with them. This policy dates back to 1950s. However, because of the Cold War, the approach between the Soviet Union and the United States, China was engaged in breaking the bipolar world and rallying third world countries. This policy was not well implemented. Since the end of 1980s, especially since the end of the Cold War, China's neighbourhood policy has been given high priority as the country needs a stable neighbourhood environment. As it enters the 21st century, China is giving more importance to its neighbourhood policy in service of its peaceful rise, soft power projection. China's neighbourhood policy is an integral part of its foreign policy with the unchangeable objectives of exerting influence to bear upon its neighbours, entertaining good relations with countries in the world, especially its neighbours.

An Overview of Human Security in Southeast Asia

Ha Anh Tuan, MA

In this article, the author traces the origin of human security in the UNDP Human Development Report 1994 which stated clearly that (1) Human beings are the centre and concern of mankind; (2) Elements of human security are interdependent as threats to human security transcend borders; (3) Human security can be achieved earlier with early intervention. Southeast Asia has recently witnessed many disasters affecting human security. Furthermore, the region has also seen a multitude of challenges to its

development. These are likely to increase in the future. Against this background, human security has received increasing attention in the region. Moreover, the process of democratization, the proliferation of NGOs have allowed the civil society to have a bigger say in the government policy making process. Not only can we find human security in leaders' statements but also in activities of the ASEAN People's Assembly, and most importantly in the ASEAN Charter. However, because of differences in their development, each Southeast Asian country has its own standards and priorities, Southeast Asia has not been able to find effective measures to promote cooperation in human security.

France and its Participation in NATO Committees

Nguyen Hong Quan, PhD

More than 40 years ago in 1966, France withdrew from the Defence Planning Committee and the Nuclear Planning Committee, the two most important of all NATO committees. This is not a purely military decision but a political, diplomatic and economic one. However, in the past decade mention has been made of France's rejoining these two committees. The most recent mention is in French Defence and Security White Book published in June 2008. All this is prompted by changes in the world in which France is seeking new position and role. It also comes out of the fear that NATO would make decisions to go into France's sphere of influence or other decisions that might affect France in the absence of France. Additionally, the absence of France in the two committees would not allow France to gather support for its recently-initiated European Defence and Security Policy. Rejoining the two committees would send a strong signal that France wishes to improve its relations with the US.

Settlement of Territorial Dispute between Singapore and Malaysia: In Retrospective

Do Hoa Binh, PhD. and Nguyen Bich Thuy

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruled on 2008 that although Pandora Blanca had originally been under the sovereignty of Johor, the conduct of Singapore and its predecessors à titre de souverain and the failure of Malaysia and its predecessors to respond to such conduct showed that by 1980 sovereignty over the island had passed to Singapore. In much the same way, the Sultan of Johor held the original ancient title to Middle Rock and as Singapore had not exercised any rights as sovereign over Middle Rock, the ICJ held that Malaysia retained sovereignty over this maritime feature. The ICJ, additionally, noted that South Ledge fell within the overlapping territorial waters of Malaysia and Singapore, and therefore, belonged to the state which owned the territorial waters in which it is located (the ICJ has no authority to demarcate the border). In spite

of the ruling, the dispute continues. However, it is interesting to note that the ruling of the ICJ indicates, once again, the importance of evidences to back territorial claims as well as the exercise of sovereignty over other activities. The ICJ also considers maps as evidence supporting historical documents of the claimants.

Trade and Security Exceptions in the WTO

Ly Van Anh, MA. and Nguyen Thi Hong Lien

The WTO was born in 1994 with a mission to promote free and fair trade among its members through reduction of tariffs and other trade barriers and moving toward eliminating discrimination in international trade. To ensure other interest and development objectives which can sometimes be contrary to trade growth, the WTO also allows its members exceptions and exemptions. In all these, security seems to be an “exception of all exceptions”. Article XIV of GATS and Article 73 of TRIPS provides for security exceptions which have no strings attached like other exceptions. This has been evoked legitimately or illegitimately on many occasions. The WTO is responsible for examining the disputes carefully to determine that the disputes are legal problems rather than political ones. They should not be pretexts to avoid free and fair trade.

Research in Vietnam’s Diplomatic History and Lessons of Experience

Vu Duong Huan, Asso. Prof

There has been a lot of research done into Vietnam’s diplomatic history, especially that of recent period. Taking stock of Vietnam’s diplomatic activities has been done all along yet this is usually done after each activity. Only in recent years did we start systematic research into the subject. Many books by different authors have been published on the subject and a lot of lessons can be drawn from diplomatic activities in our forefathers struggle against foreign invaders, in the resistance against the French and then the American. Among those lessons, the most important ones are (1) Giving the highest priority to national interests while respecting those of other countries, especially our neighbours; (2) Preserving independence, self - reliance; (3) Combining the strength of our nation with that of the times; (4) Brining into full play our peace - loving and reconciliatory tradition; (5) Building and maintaining durable friendship and cooperation with neighbours and others; (6) Closely combining diplomacy and national defence, security and economic construction etc. These lessons will help propel the country into a better future.