

**VIETNAM'S INTEGRATION AND PERSPECTIVE**

*By Dr. Pham Quoc Tru*

More than two decades into renovation, Vietnam has recorded important achievements, changing both quantitatively and qualitatively economic, political, social and cultural life and the Vietnamese economy and market have become integral parts of the world economy and market. The country now has no other choice than fully integrate into the world to ensure vigorous and sustainable development. Looking back, we can see that there remain shortcomings in the process. These are the lack of deep integration, activism and the absence of clear guidance from the government, lack of timely and synchronous preparations and the inability to forecast the effect of integration.

The author concludes by the following recommendations: (1) take stock of the process at all levels, (2) overcome all shortcomings identified, (3) promote activism, (4) restructure the economy toward industrialization and modernization, (5) renovate the legislative process and (6) disseminate more widely information of the process.

**VALUE PROMOTION IN FOREIGN POLICY:  
COMPARISON BETWEEN VIETNAM AND THE US**

*By Ta Minh Tuan*

National interest plays a central role in deciding national policies, especially foreign policy. Value system forms an important element of national interest. However, the value systems of Vietnam and the US differ. The US has, as a matter of fact, grown up with individuals' responsibility, freedom, religious freedom and democracy. Along these lines, it also advocated trade liberalization.

Vietnam shares those values and desire for prosperity. Vietnam's foreign policy is characterised by reconciliation and benevolence. The difference between the two countries may lie in the fact that the US politicizes problems relating to values and the two countries have different political systems. These differences can be resolved through dialogue and would not stand in the way of better relations between the two countries.

**DEVELOPMENT OF VIETNAMESE COMMUNITY  
IN RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

*By Le Thanh Van*

The Vietnamese community in Russia now boast about 100.000 people. They were once Vietnamese students, guest workers, immigrants. Though they contribute to the Russian economy, the Vietnamese faced difficulties, facing strict regulation concerning their residence permits. This can be improved with the Agreement on Residence of Citizens in Russia and Vietnam territories.

The community can be characterized by the followings: (1) They are adaptable; (2) They are able to uphold and further develop the traditional relations between the Vietnamese people and people in Russia and other CIS countries; (3) They are hardworking, devoting themselves to work and participating in no political activities. With legal basis for the community being laid and support coming from the Vietnamese Government, they would be in a better position to contribute to the Russian economy and the relations between the two countries.

**EAST SEA LITTORAL COUNTRIES AND THE SUBMISSION OF FILES ON THE OUTER LIMIT OF THE CONTINENTAL SHELF**

***By Ass. Prof. Dr. Nguyen Hong Thao***

In accordance with the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, East Sea littoral countries have filed their dossier on the outer limit beyond the continental shelf. The Philippines,

Malaysia, Indonesia and Vietnam have done so in a partial manner. Doing so on May 8, 2009, Vietnam holds the view that the country exercises its sovereignty, rights of sovereignty and jurisdiction over its sea areas and continental shelf in conformity with the 1982 UNCLOS. China, on the same day, protested against Vietnam-Malaysia joint report and for the first time made public its nine-dotted lines. The Philippines, on August 4, also sent a protest note to the UN Secretary General, requesting that the Committee on the Limit of the Continental Shelf stop considering the report pending a solution to the problem through discussion and negotiation.

While Vietnam and Malaysia filed their report on the basis of legal explanation of the exercise by littoral states under the UNCLOS, China and the Philippines linked the scientific definition of the outer limit of the continental shelf with territorial conflict in the area. Though a definite resolution to the problem cannot be achieved very soon, the fling of the dossier would encourage littoral countries to adopt a new attitude and comply with the Law. It also encourages countries to engage in serious discussion of island regime in accordance with UNCLOS Article 121 (3). More importantly, it encourages them to clarify their claims. In any

case, UNCLOS form the common and supreme basis for all maritime activities.

#### **FOREIGN POLICY ADJUSTMENT UNDER OBAMA**

*By Ass. Prof. Dr. Tran Nguyen Tuyen  
and Nguyen Ky Son*

On January 20, 2009, Barack Obama officially became the 44<sup>th</sup> President of the US. However, he inherited a bad legacy of deep economic crisis, worsening US image abroad. This requires the US to accord high priority to the adjustment of its foreign policy. For the immediate future, US foreign policy should focus on restoring and consolidating US position as the superpower No 1, solving the economic and financial crisis to restore economic development and fighting against terrorism with the focus on the war in Afghanistan and Iraq.

US relations with major powers have been improved. The US Administration considers its relations with China as the most important ones. It is "ready to press the reset button" in relations with Russia. Japan continues to be an ally of the US. Geostrategic adjustments have been made, paying greater attention to Asia and the Pacific. It also tries to resolve hotspots and global challenges. With Vietnam as chairman of ASEAN in 2010 and a better US role in the

Mekong subregion cooperation will present an opportunity to Vietnam to strengthen its cooperation with the US.

#### **US - CHINA RELATIONS AND ORDER IN ASIA PACIFIC**

*By Dr. Vu Le Thai Hoang*

Though the bipolar world and the Cold War have ended two decades ago, the discussion on a new order in the world and in the region has not come to a conclusion. In retrospective, it is widely accepted that after a transient US unipolarity, the world is now in an order of one super power and many powers in moving toward a multitude of poles and centres. With both vertical and horizontal approaches, and judging the balance and alignment of forces in the past years, the author has it that peace and cooperation remain in the main stream in Asia and the Pacific and the trend toward multilateralism and multipolarity continues to move forward.

With new players like Japan, Russia and India unable to be politically and diplomatically active, China and the US are thought to have formed a G-2 to dominate the region. However, taking every thing into consideration, we can see that G-2 would not become a reality in the next decade or two as the two countries have tried not to admit to the mechanism and share the view that

cooperation and multilateralism remain high on their foreign policy agenda. Differences between them in level of economic, scientific and technological development are so great that China think the US would not treat itself as equal and problems in their relations can not be ironed overnight. It is likely that the two countries will both cooperate and compete, trying to restrain each other, leaving regional like the ARF to play some role in peace, stability and prosperity.

**TENDENCY TOWARD SECESSION  
AND INTERNATIONAL LAW**

*By Pham Lan Dung*

Secession has become a problem that the world has to deal with. However, international law does not contain any provisions to govern the problem. Separatism contradicts with the respect for national sovereignty, non interference into internal affairs of other countries and non recourse to threat and use of force. Moreover, secessionists tend to invoke the rights to determination and the respect for human rights. The International Court also allows the use of theories by famous scholars as supplementary source of international law. Yet the problem remains. Opinions differ in this. While many

consider succession a political problem beyond the purview of international law other hold that international law governs the process in so far as it relates to the basic principles of international law.

International law is likely to develop with general provisions reaffirming the basic principles listed above or with clear provisions to allow secession. This is a question that would not have an answer in the near future.

**REFLECTION ON NATIONAL INTEREST IN NEW STAGE**

*By Dang Dinh Quy*

In diplomatic activities, "serving national interests" has become the supreme principle in the foreign policy of many countries; including Vietnam. However, many questions arise in its application. How to define national interest? What are the priorities? Although it can be said that national interest is the highest objective that a country pursues, we understand the word in different ways. This due to different interests of national players in foreign policy, different perception and different application of national interests and the lack of unity among players. As a result, countries tend to have only a broad agreement on national interest and break them down in priority.

For Vietnam, since the launch of the renovation national interest has been pretty well defined. Peace and development have become the "supreme and sacred" national interest. We can break down Vietnamese national interest into vital interest and development interest with development interest ensuring vital interest and vital interest serving as the basis for development interest. The author concludes by suggesting 4 principles in defining national interest (1) taking into account five interests, (2) combing "point" interest and "aspect", (3) combining short- and long-term interest, (4) conforming to the general trends.

**SOME CHARACTERS OF POWER RIVALRY IN  
THE FIRST TWO DECADE OF THE 21st CENTURY**

*By Dr. Nguyen Dinh Luan*

Asia's spectacular development and America's relative decline have changed the international power structure toward mutipolarity. The current power structure can be charaterized by Asia's gradual rise, the appearance of 5 spaces and 5 key areas and an uneven positions.

Asia's dramatic development with China and India's rise, Russia's comeback and economic dynamism have given the general impression of the

rise in Asia. However, the development has not enabled the region to play a dominating role in America's place. This is true in science and technology, in economic development and social affairs as well as in political and military affairs.

In international relations, geo-strategic competition takes place in 5 strategic spaces: (1) three connecting Asia, Europe, Africa, (2) three continuous oceans, (3) the Earth, (4) the outer space and (5) the information space. Main geostrategic players remain the same inspite of economic and cultural changes. Additionally, the world now boasts six main power centres, namely the US, China, the European Union, Russia, Japan and India of which the US, China and Russia are most likely to command the biggest influence. This would not allow world war to happen though local wars have broken out in the past two decades.

**BARRACK OBAMA: A CHALLENGING YEAR**

*By. Phan Doan Nam*

Though Obama read his State of the Union address on 27 January, outlining his achievements in the year of the Presidency, it is useful to

give an objective assessment of what he has done for America.

On the positive side, his stimulus package and others have helped arrest the economic decline, the health care bill has been passed by the Congress and US image as superpower number 1 has been improved vastly. However, challenges lie ahead. He could only delivered 124 out of 5000 promises made during his election campaign. His job bill has not been passed, making it difficult for him to. On foreign policy, he has been unable to withdraw from Afghanistan. In general, Obama's year of Presidency is not a complete failure. There is a lot to be done for America.