

THIRTY-FIVE YEARS OF VIETNAM - US RELATIONS IN RETROSPECTIVE

Nguyen Manh Hung

15 years have gone since the US and Vietnam established full diplomatic relations. Relations between the two countries can be characterized by the followings: (1) slow but sure progress in the positive direction, (2) diplomatic relations were soon followed by normalization of economic relations culminating in the granting by the US of permanent normal trading relations in 2006 and then, (3) improvement of defence relations peaked with the visit to the US by the Vietnamese Defence Minister in 2003. Viet Nam can be credited for the improvement of turning points in the bilateral relations. The author also reviewed the three stages of development of bilateral relations.

He also pointed out three factors that may have impeded these relations. Firstly, because of its strategic interests, China does not want close relations between the US and Vietnam. The US may have different choices than Vietnam. Secondly, because of past experience, Vietnam suspects US intention and commitment. Thirdly, because of its vigilance at "peaceful evolution", Vietnam considers US pressure on human rights and

democracy as interference into its "internal affair". The author followed by listing three factors that may help improve the bilateral relations. China's excessive demand has created a common concern in the two countries. In US strategies, Vietnam is viewed in a more favourable light. Vietnam is not considered as a threat to US security and there are no conflicts of strategies. The US is disappointed over China's activities on the international arena. Overall, Vietnam and the US have greater opportunities to improve their relations.

"TITLE CONFERMENT" IN RELATIONS BETWEEN VIETNAMESE DYNASTIES AND CHINA

Nguyen Thi My Hanh

In feudal times, "titles conferment" and "tributes payment" are two foundations of relations between Vietnam and China. This is a kind of special relations which can only be seen in China's relations with its neighbour. The practice of "title conferment" started in the ten century when Vietnam regained independence from China. This means only when defeated militarily and forced to give back sovereignty to Vietnam would China confer titles to Vietnamese. This

practice, however, stopped when China and France concluded the Tianjin Accord in 1885. The author cited security and reconciliation with big neighbour as a reason for such “soft” diplomatic lines. In seeking titles from China, Vietnamese Kings could justify their legitimacy and role as the Chinese Emperor is celestial. China, meanwhile, was willing to confer titles to ensure good relations between the “Celestial Emperor” and its “Subject”. The author then listed title conferment from the Ngo to the Nguyen Dynasties.

In the thoughts of different Vietnamese feudal dynasties, independence meant a peaceful country free from foreign invasion and with clearly demarcated borderline. In that sense, title conferment did not violate the principle of independence. While seeking titles from China, Vietnamese Kings also proclaim themselves as Kings to their subjects. Indeed Vietnamese history is that of reaffirming the country’s independence from China.

**“HARMONIOUS SOCIETY” CONCEPT: A NEW WORLD VIEW
CURRENTLY SHARED AMONG THE CHINESE LEADERSHIP**

Hien Luong – Phuong Mai

Thirty years of reform and opening up have transformed China from a backward country to the world’s third largest economy and biggest exporter with the largest foreign currency reserve. Vigorous ascendance of national strength has elevated China’s position on the international stage. Against this backdrop, the fourth generation of the Chinese leadership led by Hu Jintao has introduced new strategic notions of international development, most notably among which are “peaceful development” and “harmonious society”. In this paper, the authors focus on the question of whether the “harmonious society” concept lays the foundation for a new world view currently shared among the Chinese leadership.

The idea is rooted in the thinking of Deng Xiaoping and Zhu Rongri and was further developed at the 17th Congress of the Communist Party of China in 2007. The concept was put forth to reduce tension in internal political problems, thus legitimizing the rule of the Communist Party of China. It is also connected to China’s power and influence, especially in Southeast Asia. It helps project China as a peace-loving and responsible power. China’s current thinking is on peaceful development and harmonious society. It also reflects tolerance and reconciliation. In any case, it can only be a new thinking if it is

put into practice. However, we need further study to correctly assess and evaluate the application of the thought.

DEVELOPING NUCLEAR ENERGY FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA: CAN IT ENHANCE HUMAN RIGHTS?

Nguyen Phu Tan Huong

Faced with the increasing demand for energy, recent record-high oil prices and long-term concerns about non-renewable fossil fuel supplies, many states have considered the peaceful use of nuclear power to increase their electricity generation capacity. In the article, the author concentrates on the Southeast Asian region and takes Vietnam as a case study to study its plan of using nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. She also tries to examine the effectiveness of the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ) when most of countries in the region pursuing nuclear energy programs, especially Myanmar's alleged development of nuclear weapons with North Korean support. She offers arguments that Myanmar cannot go beyond the SEANWFZ Treaty, as a nuclear Myanmar is neither in China's interests nor those of ASEAN.

Some scholars consider Vietnam, because of its scale, the most aggressive nuclear power-ambitious country in the region. To speed up the nuclear energy program, the Vietnamese Atomic Energy Commission and Government have spent years preparing the groundwork including legal framework, technology, experts and personnel, etc.

Developing nuclear energy in Southeast Asia not only helps ensure the energy security, thus further develop national economies, but also contributes to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and climate change. Therefore, it can enhance human rights if regional countries demonstrate their commitment to the safety and security of nuclear power plants and standards recommended by the IAEA for the protection of health and minimization of danger for life and property.

JAPAN AND ITS PLACE IN COMING EAST ASIA ORDER

Nguyen Quoc Hung

With the end of the Cold War in 1991, the world entered a new period of unpredictability. Many countries have surged economically. However, Japan is a different case that should be examined carefully. In the first half of 20

century, Japan became power No. 1 with its Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. As early two years after the cold War, Japan leaders made efforts to make Japan a "normal" state, meaning to be more active and decisive, to take a more independent position in world affairs. This theory of a normal Japan was applied in policies of different Japanese Prime Ministers to Yukio Hatoyama. Japan, however, faces a series of challenges (1) relying on its own strength which is already weakening, (2) China's vigorous economic development in the past 30 years, (3) constraint to improve its military might by Article 9 of the Constitution, (4) Japan's role as a political power. Japan has contributed to international affairs, sought better the alliance with the US while promoting multilateralism in East Asia. Japan's relations with China are those between competitors as they all want to play the leadership role in Asia. Japan has been on a firm footing in its relations with ASEAN. However, its role in the East Asia Community is not clear. Against such a background, four actors in the region Asean, China, Japan and the Republic of Korea will play important roles in building an order in the East

Asian region. In such context, Japan would become a normal power.

RUSSIA'S ENERGY DIPLOMACY DURING V. PUTIN'S PRESIDENCY

Nguyen Phuong Ly

Vladimir Putin assumed Russian presidency, energy, particularly natural gas and oil, has represented the most effective political power instrument for Russia's foreign policy. This was largely thanks to the high energy prices since the turn of the millennium, its rich oil and gas resources, together with its control of lanes of energy transportation to consumers. Additionally, the experience of playing the energy card in its relations with allies since the Soviet era, Putin's conception of energy power as well as the resurrection of Russia's political and economic power were also key components of Russia's ability to use energy as a foreign policy tool.

The priorities of Russia's energy diplomacy are given to restore its superpower status on the global stage, to promote Russia's relationship with world-wide countries and to seek new energy

resources in order to further consolidate its role as a major global supplier of natural gas and oil. Since the beginning of Putin era, his administration managed to take over the country's oil and gas sector, which in turn enabled Moscow to employ its strategic natural resources for political purposes. Besides, tightening cooperative ties with other leading energy exporters in the world is another move that lays grounds for Russia to retain and expand its dominant market shares to not only its traditional customers in Europe but also new customers in Asia.

The effective use of energy resources has enabled the country to regain its role as a key player in international arena. In the time to come, it will stay as an important tool to ensure the resurgence of Russia's power, especially for Kremlin's leverages with its European neighbors in the creation of a new security political architecture for Eurasia. However, taking the oil and gas policy as "petro-carrots" to reward friends and as "petrol-sticks" to punish those defying Russian interests also produces side-effects when Moscow's energy diplomacy has sometimes led to a strained relationship between Russia and EU states.

BALANCED DEVELOPMENT: IMPORTANT FACTOR TO ENSURE SUSTAINABILITY OF THE WORLD ECONOMY

Nguyen Nham

Balanced and sustainable development has long been imperative for all economies. Balance theory by John Forbes Nash was born 60 year ago and is considered a breakthrough comparable to the discovery of DNA. Economically, balance can apply to all and balance, in this case, is dynamic and therefore a real balance is difficult to define. Natural economic balance implies four phrases of crisis, recession, recovery and growth as Marx wrote in his Das Capital. At the moment when the world economy is recovering, we hear calls for "Adjustment capitalism, in the words" by Nicolas Sarkozy, "New global management system" by Gordon Brown or "the Fifth International" by Hugo Chavez. These calls further illustrate the need for balanced development. The author pointed out that one deficiency inherent in capitalism is crisis to achieve economic balance and different theories have been worked out to address the deficiency. The US economy is even in imbalance at the time of fast economic growth while Japan has lost balance in income and spending. Giant

China has exhibited signs of overheating whereas India faces mounting public debt. Europe is beset with increasing debt. It is indeed difficult to achieve balance. Economic forecasts can help, however, they are not easy as they are governed by many factors. Economic balance should also focus on other balance such as growth and macroeconomic stability, powers among powers. Against the back ground of manipulations by TNCs, an overall balance seems a far-fetched goal. Is it time we return to Marxism and Leninism?

NATURE AND PARTICULAR FEATURES OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Vu Duong Huan

International relations as a scientific category were first proposed by Jemery Bentham. He referred to them as relations among governments and nations. Ever since, the concept gained wider coverage and different approaches were adopted. International relations can be a set of relations among actors on the international arena while others stressed power and national interests. Others still consider international relations those among individuals making political and diplomatic decisions that

they managed. Marxism and Leninism argued that international relations are by nature decided by materials. International relations are of class nature. Russian scholar Sirgancof believes that international relations are special social relations transcending national borders. He attempted to analyze criteria for international relations.

The author pointed out that in international relations, there should be no monopoly though different countries may play different roles in international relations. International relations are complicated social phenomena involving different power structures, the spontaneity in actions by actors. International relations are systematic and global. They also are interactions between domestic relations and external relations and decided by the economic factor. International relations can also pluralistic in culture. It is obvious that foreign policy can be influence by the availability of information. Though complicated, international relations are political relations with their own particulars and rules.

FIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AFTER THE COLD WAR

Nguyen Dinh Luan

Even before the Cold War ended, there were already signs of erosion of the existing ideological dichotomy. New actors and new power structure appeared. With the end of the War, the world has shifted from military security to comprehensive and collective security. Many countries, particularly the US give priority to diplomacy. Countries have strengthened their security cooperation against terrorism, weapons of mass destruction and climate change etc. The world has also seen shift from economic growth to sustainable development through international integration. Development now includes social, cultural and ecological elements and the world is now characterized by democracy and institutionalization. The world has also moved from ideological-based interests to maximal interests on the basis of ideological pluralism. It has shifted from approach based on pure military power to international influence by many sources of power. International relations theorists now talk about "national synergy", "soft power" and "hard power", "smart power".

These five characteristics are being developed. They would help decision makers formulate and implement foreign policies more effectively.

NATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Do Thanh Hai

Three major engines are changing the world we are living. Globalization and regionalization are making countries more and more politically, economically and socially interconnected and interdependent. Many threats have gone transnational and global, well beyond the capacity to resolve of any nations. At the same time, international norms, standards and institutions have emerged to intervene into the relations between rulers and the ruled. These three developments have challenged state control and the Westphalian concept of sovereignty and reciprocity in international relations. Against this backdrop, while sovereignty persists, there has emerged a need for a new approach to the world politics, which gives due attention to the responsibilities of nation-states. There are generally four bases to define responsibilities

of a nation-state: (i) commonly-accepted norms, standards, and institutions; (ii) general interest of the international community and legitimate interests of other countries; (iii) international public goods such as the maintenance of international peace and stability and creation of a just and civilized framework for international political and economic cooperation; (iv) global threats such as global warming, pandemics, poverty and starvation, etc.

Vietnam's policy-makers should be aware of this titanic shift in global politics and change their world outlook and foreign policy along. In this connection, Vietnam should perceive itself more than "a friend and a reliable partner of other countries" but integral part of the international community. Therefore, integration should move beyond the economic front. Besides, as its aggregate strengths grows and its position becomes relatively more important, Vietnam should proactively take on greater international responsibilities within its power to contribute more to the global efforts to maintain international and regional peace and security and create a more just, democratic and civilized structure of global governance.

FARMERS, PUBLIC RELATIONS, RURAL CULTURE, ECOTOURISM AND THE PROMOTION OF FRANCE

Le Thanh Binh

Public relation (PR) is closely related to external cultural relations and cultural diplomacy. It is also closely related to the mass media. In a sense, it can be understood as communication methods and activities by individuals, organizations or governances to raise awareness of and build positive relations with the public.

The author then analyzes PR on the basis of a trip he took to France. What he saw in France confirm his belief that PR should use able people and develop further socialization as manifested in activities of many societies formed by Vietnamese in France. In on French farm, field studies are organized and shops setup within the farm as a form of PR. In another farm, information on the farm, its main products and ways of purchasing are clearly displayed. At the regional level, the French integrated their PR activities into socio-economic development plans thus fostering greater consensus. They also use PR to promote harmony among agriculture, rural areas, culture and tourism. He also recommended that those activities by French farmers be used

in Vietnam such as farm-guest house etc. In so doing, we can strengthen cultural communication in service of cultural diplomacy.