

## **Speech on the Occasion of the 41<sup>st</sup> anniversary of ASEAN**

*By Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung*

This speech was delivered at a ceremony to celebrate the 41<sup>st</sup> ASEAN anniversary. Over the past 41 years, ASEAN has become a comprehensive regional cooperation organisation which embraces all 10 countries of Southeast Asia, a dynamic and cohesive entity engaged in both political-security, economic and functional cooperation. It is also playing an increasingly important role in the region and the world. The Association has become an indispensable partner in the world community and an important factor in promoting dialogue and cooperation at different levels in Asia and the Pacific.

ASEAN is now at a new stage of development, moving toward the establishment of the ASEAN Communities on the basis of the ASEAN Charter. ASEAN is to become an intergovernmental organization, working on the principles of sovereign equality among member countries and other purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter already ratified by many of its members.

As a member, Vietnam should actively participate and take the lead in ASEAN activities, thus making contribution to further development of the Association.

## **ASEAN Entering New Stage of Development and Vietnam's Participation**

*By Pham Gia Khiem*

*Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs*

ASEAN has been and will be an important factor in maintaining a peaceful environment, security and cooperation in Southeast Asia. The Association has been behind the objective of security and development of each member country and of the

whole Association. This is attributed to shared interest and vision, strong political will and untiring efforts of all member countries. Against the background of great and swift changes in the region and the world, ASEAN is now faced with both challenges and opportunities. However, the Association has been able to chart out its own course, promoting intra-ASEAN cooperation and moving toward the ASEAN community by 2015.

Over the past 13 years since its full membership of the Association, Vietnam has been an active member, making important contribution to charting out ASEAN's path of development. However, at this stage of development of the Association, Vietnam should raise public awareness of the role and activities of the Association, improve the quality of Vietnam's participation in ASEAN cooperation and make preparation for the role of ASEAN Chairman in 2010.

### **Attempt at Discussing Current World Order**

*By Ho Vu*

This analysis is an attempt at characterising the current world. As we all know, the 20 century can be divided into two main periods, from the beginning of the century to World War II and from then on to the disintegration of the Soviet Union. A decade after each period, the world changed in characteristics. The world after World War II were characterized by the US playing the international policeman, the Soviet Union being a superpower, the EU becoming an entity, and newly independent countries gaining in strength etc. However, in the present world, great changes have been observed. A new balance of power has been struck with signs of decline exhibited by the US, the emergence of BRIC and even VISTA countries. The world is now characterized by new actors emerging, economic factors playing a more important role, loose and interwoven coalitions, regional and international organizations being formed to co-exist with the UN, peripheral countries becoming more important players and the world facing crisis in raw materials, oil, food. This would demand that Vietnam an appropriate approach for the development of the country.

## **Vietnam-New Zealand Cooperation at Multilateral Forums: ASEAN, East Asian Summit and the United Nations**

*By H.E. James Kember  
Ambassador of New Zealand to Vietnam*

This is a review of the relations between Vietnam and New Zealand over the past 30 years and more. Bilateral relations between the two countries have gone from strength to strength, helping them to cooperate more closely within multilateral framework. This cooperation within multilateral forums and organizations between the two countries dates back to New Zealand's sponsoring of a UN resolution admitting Vietnam into the organization and its policy of engagement. New Zealand has supported many Vietnam's move in APEC and East Asia Summit. The country was also the first country outside of ASEAN to support Vietnam's bid to become a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council. Vietnam has participated in the various processes headed by New Zealand such as PSI and attended the Meeting on Cluster Bombs and the Interfaith Dialogue process. Such New Zealand's engagement policy is rooted in the belief that Vietnam could play an important role in the regions and in the advance of security and prosperity.

## **Interlacing in International Relations at the Beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

*By Duong Van Quang, Asso. Prof.*

With the multiplication of actors, increasing interaction among them and changes in the international environment, interlacing and diversity have become typical characters in international relations. In the present world, the win-loose approach is outdated and gradually replaced by a win-win approach, the role of the United Nations has also changed. Nations are according the highest priority to their interests. Globalization presents all countries with opportunities and challenges. It has also moved world centre of development to the Pacific in the interests of ASEAN.

Even with all these changes, the US still maintains a dominant role as no countries are able to cause major break up in international relations. Non-state actors will come into play with state actors in fighting terrorism, organized crimes etc. This would diversify modes of operations in international relations and make non-traditional issues more imperative in international relations. As this character is becoming more typical, international relations include both cooperation and struggle and therefore the idea of defining “friends and foes” is no longer appropriate. Interdependence and interlacing in international relations are advantages to be capitalized by countries, big or small. Despite all these, Vietnam should also join the game.

### **Some Reflections on the Philosophy of Vietnam’s Traditional Diplomacy**

*By Vu Duong Huan, Asso. Prof.*

In this article, the author looks back into Vietnam’s diplomatic history and reflects on the country’s diplomatic philosophy. Throughout its history, Vietnam has always adopted a reconciliatory attitude toward its neighbours, especially China. It has also been able to combine “fighting” with “negotiating” while holding aloft the banner of justice. The country has kept to the principles, though being flexible. Moreover, it knows how to obtain successes step by step. These are indeed lessons that we could draw from Vietnam’s history that should be further developed in the current stage of national defence and construction.

### **Relations between Vietnam and Asean: Important Milestones and Vietnam’s important role**

*By Nguyen Van Lan, PhD and Chuc Ba Tuyen*

Despite ups and downs, relations between Vietnam and ASEAN are now at their best. In the political and security field, Vietnam is now an active member. Trade between them has increased significantly, accounting for 25% of Vietnam total trade

while investment also went up. Vietnam has also been an active participant in functional cooperation, attending its meetings and regularly contributing to the cooperation. It also plays an important role in improving relations with ASEAN's dialogue partners. Most important of all, Vietnam has helped preserve the motto "Unity in Diversity", keeping the spirit of ASEAN alive and well.

### **New Development in Friendship and Cooperation between Vietnam and Belarus**

*By Le Thanh Van, MA*

Relations between Vietnam and Belarus have seen steady improvement though they were are one time very low. Their bilateral trade has seen dramatic increase and cooperation has been extended to other areas such as science and technology, education, There has been a regular exchange of visits by leaders of the two countries which culminates in the recent visit to Vietnam by Belarusian President Lucashenko. During the visit, the two countries reaffirmed their desire to further improve bilateral cooperation currently ranging from customs assistance to auditing to sports and tourism. The agreements signed during the visit would surely place their bilateral relations on a new footing. However, efforts would be required by the two sides to implement what has been agreed upon between leaders of the two countries, especially between President Lucashenko and his Vietnamese counterparts.

### **The United States and the Asia Pacific: Issues for 2009**

*By Robert Sutter*

2008 has been a static year with no major changes in the US position towards Asia and the Pacific though US Presidential candidates have all stressed changes. As we can see, the candidates for the Presidency and the Congress have not given high priority to Asia and the Pacific. The new US President will first tackle issues like the Iraq war, the

problem in Southwest Asia, the standoff over Iranian nuclear programme which also tops the agenda of the current US government. For Asia and the Pacific, the new President will take over imperative regional issues such as nuclear weapon programme in Korea, the military junta in Myanmar. More importantly, he will try to maintain the positive but fragile balance in US relations with China. These and the domestic issues that the new possibly Republican President is likely to face such as a Democrat-dominated Congress, economic recession, and high unemployment would compound his position toward the region. Regional leaders should be well prepared to deal with the adverse effect of a lack of interest in the region by the new President.

### **Russia's Re-Emergence: Implications for the Asia Pacific**

*By Vitaly Naumkin, Prof.*

Differing from 1990s, the Russian Federation has now become a “normal” player in the international arena, striking a balance between the “East” and the “West”. This is commensurate with Russia’s re-emergence as a leading technological power and swift changes in the world. President Putin’s speech at the Munich Conference on Security Policy constitutes an important milestone in Russia’s foreign policy, expressing dissatisfaction at the present world and readjusting its priorities in Asia and the Pacific, an area of vital economic importance to Russia. Russia is expected to play a bigger role in energy, security and other fields.

The author also put out two scenarios for the world and Asia and the Pacific, one pessimistic and one optimistic. In any case, Russia would play an important role in keeping peace and security in the region.

### **Approaches to Human Security in Southeast Asia**

*By Khong Thi Binh, MA*

Though interpreted differently, human security tops the agenda of many security-related meetings in ASEAN. We all try to define security to cover political, economic,

social and ecological areas. Some author in Southeast Asia has defined the notion in term of comprehensive security while others take into consideration security for nations and individuals. Still others see it in term of “freedom from want”. In any case, the 1997 financial and monetary crisis has awakened in the public the desire to participate in the building of the security agenda. It also brought into focus the need for social safety net which together with human security forms human development in Thailand and other crisis-hit countries. Now that the process of building the ASEAN Community has commenced, human security is, once again, mentioned when ASEAN reaffirmed that it will build a people-centered ASEAN wherein the role of the individuals is promoted. However, regional scholars should place the study of human security in a wider study of non-traditional security.

### **The First Indo-African Summit**

*By Nguyen Van Lich, PhD.*

The first-ever Indo-African Summit was held in New Dehli from 8-9 April 2008 attended by 14 leaders and many senior officials from Africa. For India, the Meeting reflected India’s desire to improve relations with Africa while for Africa it was an opportunity to express their need for concrete actions and cooperation projects. The two parties needed each other in economic, trade, investment and educational fields. As India’s Prime Minister said it was time that India and Africa created a new architecture to implement their bilateral commitments. Their relations on the basis of equality, mutual benefit would surely develop. The Meeting has conveyed to Africa the message that India is Africa’s willing partner in creating stability, peace, prosperity and development.