

PRESIDENT HO CHI MINH'S PHILOSOPHICAL THOUGHT ON DIPLOMACY

[O PENSAMENTO FILOSÓFICO DO PRESIDENTE HO CHI MINH]

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ABSTRACT Ho Chi Minh's thought on diplomatic relations between Vietnam and other countries is the red thread guiding the foreign affairs activities of the Communist Party of Vietnam and the State of Vietnam in the process of revolutionary struggle and renovation. As a result, Vietnam has achieved significant socio-economic development. During the renovation period, the Communist Party of Vietnam creatively applied Ho Chi Minh Thought; Vietnam expanded its foreign relations, maintained its independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity, and accelerated its development process. This study clarifies the main principles of Ho Chi Minh's diplomatic thought and evaluates their essential role in Vietnam's revolutionary cause and success in the international arena. In addition, the study also analyzes how these ideas continue to promote their value in the context of Vietnam's modern diplomacy, contributing to building an international environment of peace, justice, and sustainable development.

KEYWORDS: Diplomatic ideology; independence; international solidarity; peace, flexible adaptation

RESUMO: O pensamento filosófico de Ho Chi Minh sobre a diplomacia entre o Vietnã e outros países constitui o fio condutor que guia as atividades de relações exteriores do Partido Comunista do Vietnã e do Estado do Vietnã na sua política interna de renovação. Pode se constatar, como resultado, que o Vietnã tem alcançado um significativo nível de desenvolvimento socioeconômico. Durante o período de renovação, o Pensamento de Ho Chi Minh serviu de inspiração profunda ao Partido Comunista; é de se notar que o Vietnã expandiu suas relações exteriores, ao mesmo tempo em que mantém sua independência, sua soberania e a integridade territorial, associados a um acelerado processo de desenvolvimento. Este artigo aborda alguns dos princípios do pensamento de Ho Chi Minh sobre diplomacia e avalia seu papel essencial na causa revolucionária e no sucesso do Vietnã em nível internacional. Nesse mesmo tom, o artigo analisa o modo como essas ideias continuam exercer influência no contexto da diplomacia atual do Vietnã, e maneira como contribui para a construção de um ambiente internacional de paz, justiça e desenvolvimento sustentável.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Diplomacia; independência; solidariedade internacional; paz; flexibilidade de relações

1. INTRODUCTION

Diplomacy has always played an essential role in the foreign policy of any country, especially for Vietnam – a small country with a turbulent geopolitical, strategic, and historical position. This position requires Vietnam to have a flexible and sensitive diplomatic approach. Ho Chi Minh, the founder and leader of the

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Democratic Republic of Vietnam, stood out as a brilliant political and military leader and an outstanding diplomat. His diplomatic thought is not only short-term political strategies but also has a profound philosophical vision based on core principles such as independence, self-reliance, peace, international solidarity, and perseverance in the struggle for national liberation. President Ho Chi Minh's diplomatic thought emphasizes that every country, whether large or small, has the right to respect its sovereignty and decide its development path without being subjected to external imposition. Independence and self-reliance are the cornerstones of his foreign policy, where mutual respect and the right of nations to self-determination are at the forefront. At the same time, he upheld peace and harmony among nations, emphasizing avoiding military conflicts and resolving conflicts through dialogue and negotiation. In addition, President Ho Chi Minh also built a diplomatic ideology based on international solidarity, especially with countries of the national liberation movement and countries with the same aspirations to fight for independence and freedom. He always called for unity and mutual support among small countries to create a strong front against imperialism and oppression. This ideology has helped Vietnam receive strong support from the international community during the struggle for independence and national construction. In the current context of globalization and international integration, President Ho Chi Minh's diplomatic thought still retains its value and plays a guiding role in Vietnam's foreign policy. Maintaining independence and self-reliance, protecting national sovereignty, and promoting international cooperation are still the basic principles of Vietnam's modern diplomacy. In addition, President Ho Chi Minh's ideology of international peace and solidarity continues to be applied in building friendly relations with countries worldwide, contributing to creating an international environment of stability, peace, and sustainable development. Applying President Ho Chi Minh's diplomatic ideology helps Vietnam strengthen its international position and protects national interests in an increasingly complex international context. The values of independence, autonomy, peace, and cooperation that President Ho Chi Minh has left behind are valuable lessons for Vietnam's diplomacy today.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Ho Chi Minh is an outstanding diplomat and the founder of modern Vietnamese diplomacy. Diplomacy in the Ho Chi Minh era was a significant turning point in the success of the revolutionary cause of the Vietnamese nation. Ho Chi Minh's diplomatic thought originated from Ho Chi Minh's political thought on the cause of the Vietnamese revolution. Therefore, Ho Chi Minh's diplomatic thought is a system of principles and views on the world and the times, international lines, strategies, and foreign policies of Vietnamese diplomacy in modern times. This is reflected in the practical diplomatic activities of the Vietnamese nation.

According to research by Tran Van Giau (2010), President Ho Chi Minh has seamlessly combined the tradition of national diplomacy with the progressive ideas of the times, creating a diplomatic strategy with Vietnam's identity. Nguyen Dy Nien's research (2008) emphasizes the role of President Ho Chi Minh in combining political struggle and diplomacy to achieve strategic victories in the fight for national independence. Trinh Thanh Mai (2019) also mentioned the role of President Ho Chi Minh in building international solidarity, thanks to which Vietnam has received strong support from friendly countries, especially in the national liberation movement.

In addition to studies from Vietnamese scholars, international researchers also

highly appreciate Ho Chi Minh's diplomatic ability. Carlyle Thayer (1999) emphasized that President Ho Chi Minh's ingenious diplomacy and strategic thinking helped Vietnam maintain balanced relations with significant powers while maintaining an independent and self-reliant stance in international relations.

Although many studies have been conducted on Ho Chi Minh's diplomatic aspects, a complete philosophical system of his diplomacy has not yet been fully exploited. This article will approach President Ho Chi Minh's diplomatic thought from a strategic and intellectual perspective to clarify the fundamental principles and values that this ideology brings to Vietnam and the world.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

The article uses a materialist dialectical method to clarify the development and movement of President Ho Chi Minh's diplomatic thought about historical, economic, and social contexts. By recognizing that all events and phenomena are in a process of continuous change and development, the materialist dialectical method with objective principles, comprehensive principles, and specific historical principles to clarify the creativity, flexibility, and use of opportunities in Ho Chi Minh's diplomatic thought to solve diplomatic strategies to contribute to the progress of humanity and the cause of national liberation, gaining independence and freedom for Vietnam. The article uses analysis and synthesis to clarify the process of President Ho Chi Minh's adaptation and adjustment of diplomatic strategy based on historical reality and international conflicts. The article also clarifies the development process and the interaction between President Ho Chi Minh's diplomatic thought and changes in the historical and political context.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Independent and autonomous diplomatic ideology

In Ho Chi Minh's thought, the nation's right to independence and autonomy is the goal of its entire life of revolutionary activities. Therefore, Ho Chi Minh spent his whole life fighting for the cause of national liberation. Therefore, independence and self-reliance are fundamental principles in Ho Chi Minh's foreign policy. He believes each nation has the right to decide its destiny without being dependent or dominated by external forces. Therefore, in the context of world politics in the first half of the twentieth century and external enemies in Vietnam, President Ho Chi Minh identified freedom and independence as the Vietnamese nation's most essential and urgent rights. At the end of the "Declaration of Independence," the President affirmed to the world: "Vietnam has the right to enjoy freedom and independence, and the truth is that it has become a free and independent country. The entire Vietnamese nation is determined to bring all its spirit and strength, life and wealth to maintain that freedom and independence" (Ho Chi Minh, 2000, t.4, p. 3). For Ho Chi Minh, independence and self-reliance are essential political goals in the struggle for national independence and core principles in international relations. He emphasized that Vietnam must maintain its sovereignty and not depend on any country. It means that to fight for the independence and freedom of the nation, it must be independence and freedom really, completely and thoroughly. He affirmed: "Independence means that we control all our affairs, without

outside interference" (Ho Chi Minh, 2000, t.5, p. 162); "Vietnam is completely unified and independent," it has its parliament, its government, its army, its diplomacy, and its "own economy and finances" (Ho Chi Minh, 2000, t.6, p. 97). President Ho Chi Minh expressed this idea while leading the independence revolution and in diplomatic negotiations with significant countries. After the August Revolution, in talks with France, he resolutely defended Vietnam's autonomy and independence while still skillfully maintaining a peaceful relationship with France to avoid a military conflict that could harm the country's development. This clever diplomatic strategy helps Vietnam maintain its sovereignty and position in the international arena during a turbulent period. According to President Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam must be independent and self-reliant in relations with other countries. Uncle Ho once said with an immortal saying: "There is nothing more precious than independence and freedom." However, in the struggle, President Ho Chi Minh not only focused on promoting international law but also upheld the cause, applied the values of Vietnamese culture and traditional diplomacy, as well as the popular and progressive ideas of humanity, always paying attention to creating good omens, uphold humanity and morality in international relations to persuade and enlist the support of the world people and fight against the enemy. Therefore, through two resistance wars against French colonialism and American imperialist aggression, the Vietnamese people have shown their determination to be willing to sacrifice to realize the goals and aspirations of the whole nation, namely independence, freedom, peace, and national reunification. In his diplomatic thought, independence, and freedom are the goals that cannot be changed. Therefore, President Ho Chi Minh consistently maintained an independent and free stance when establishing diplomatic relations with other countries. He said: "Independence is independence, self-reliance is freedom"; Independence means "controlling all work, without outside interference." (Ho Chi Minh, 2000, t.7, p. 445).

According to Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam needs independence and self-reliance in diplomatic relations with major countries. That does not mean we isolate ourselves, separating the nation from the world. Independence and self-reliance must be associated with international solidarity and cooperation. Must gather forces to promote synergy. In the Declaration of Independence dated September 2, 1945, he affirmed: "Vietnam has the right to enjoy freedom and independence, and has become a free and independent country" (Ho Chi Minh, 2000, t.4, p. 4). Through the Declaration of Independence, he wants to declare Vietnam's independent and self-reliant foreign policy to the world.

During the resistance war against French colonial aggression, President Ho Chi Minh continued to uphold the view of independence and self-reliance in international relations. Also, during this time, Ho Chi Minh advocated solidarity, taking advantage of the material and spiritual support and help of the two major countries in the socialist bloc, the Soviet Union and China. On January 18, 1950, Ho Chi Minh directly visited and worked in China. Here, the two countries established diplomatic relations at the ambassadorial level. On January 30, 1950, the Soviet Union and the people's democratic countries recognized and established diplomatic relations with Vietnam one after another.

In the resistance war against the United States and to save the country, Ho Chi Minh continued to advocate the implementation of the diplomatic strategy of independence, self-reliance, self-reliance, and solidarity with socialist countries, especially with the Soviet Union and China. Through that, the liberty and freedom of the Vietnamese nation are maintained, and Vietnam's foreign relations are constantly expanding. At the same time, on the consistent basis of the goal of independent and foreign self-reliant ties, ready to develop relations with all countries, especially with

significant countries, Ho Chi Minh thoroughly exploited the contradictions between the US imperialists and their allies, between the militants and the pacifists and corporations with different interests in the US ruling circles; taking advantage of the support of the American people and other progressive forces to build a united world people's front and support Vietnam against US aggression.

In relations with socialist countries, President Ho Chi Minh has always affirmed that Vietnam must be autonomous in political decisions and not wholly dependent on any country. He knows that maintaining allied relations with significant countries is necessary, but that does not mean that Vietnam must relinquish its right to self-determination. This ideology is reflected in the steadfastness in maintaining an independent foreign policy even under pressure from significant countries. Therefore, President Ho Chi Minh's thought of independent diplomacy played an essential role in building the foundation for Vietnam's foreign policy throughout the twentieth century and a valuable lesson for future generations in maintaining national sovereignty and building sustainable international relations. This is one of the great ideas that has helped Vietnam stand firm and develop in a complex and challenging world. Therefore, the idea of national independence associated with socialism directs awareness and action in implementing international guidelines and diplomatic activities in the historical periods of the Vietnamese revolution.

4.2. Relations of peace and friendly cooperation with countries around the world

The idea of peace and reconciliation is one of the core principles of Ho Chi Minh's foreign policy. He has permanently attached great importance to maintaining peace, not just as a temporary state but as a long-term goal in international relations. According to Ho Chi Minh, peace is the highest value of humanity and the foundation for the sustainable development of nations. He stressed that all diplomatic efforts should be directed towards maintaining and consolidating peace, as only peace can bring stability and create conditions for countries to develop. In Ho Chi Minh's thought, peace is about avoiding military conflict and building a fair international environment where all countries, big and small, have the right to respect and develop freely. Peace, for him, is not simply the absence of war but also the cooperation between nations to jointly solve global problems and promote justice and common development. He has always wanted to build a world where governments can cooperate, share common interests, and resolve conflicts through dialogue rather than force—during negotiations with the United States, President Ho Chi Minh repeatedly expressed his desire to find a peaceful solution to the conflict in Vietnam. Despite the fierce war context, he persistently pursued the path of negotiation to reduce losses for the people. However, President Ho Chi Minh's prerequisite for any peace agreement is for Vietnam to be recognized as an independent, self-determined country and free from interference by external forces. For him, peace is only significant when it goes hand in hand with respect for Vietnam's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The August Revolution in 1945 was successful; Ho Chi Minh affirmed to the whole world: "The Government's foreign policy has only one thing, that is, to be friendly to all democratic countries in the world to maintain peace" (Ho Chi Minh, 2000, t.5, p.30). In any case, Ho Chi Minh always put the idea of peace as the central ideology, and war was the last measure to preserve national independence. With France, he wished to cooperate peacefully with the French people and was even willing to

establish diplomatic relations with the French Government after the war ended. Ho Chi Minh also wanted to have friendly relations with the United States. He said that to preserve national independence and the peace of humanity, it is necessary to strengthen international ties, expand foreign relations, consider peace the first criterion in all negotiations, and resolve conflicts with significant countries. Ho Chi Minh affirmed: "The Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam is ready to establish diplomatic relations with any government that respects the equal rights, territorial sovereignty and national sovereignty of Vietnam, to protect peace and build world democracy jointly" (Ho Chi Minh, 2000, t.5, p.273). Ho Chi Minh always finds ways to preserve a peaceful environment and is ready to negotiate with France and the United States to solve the war problem. He believes that negotiations in peace are a "sharp weapon" to accomplish the goal of independence and freedom. Using the idea of peace and tolerance with the enemy to end the war and limit losses for the parties is essential in diplomacy.

Ho Chi Minh did not abstractly mention peace and war. Peace is moral, and anti-war aggression is associated with the protection of Vietnam's fundamental national rights and serves the cause of liberation of oppressed peoples in the world. Ho Chi Minh pointed out: "imperialism is the origin of war"; "If we want to maintain peace practically, we must make efforts to resist imperialism" (Ho Chi Minh, 2000, t.6, p.123). Actively striving for genuine and sustainable peace, President Ho Chi Minh stated: "The Vietnamese people love peace, true peace, peace in independence and freedom, not fake peace..." (Ho Chi Minh, 2000, t.12, p.109). President Ho Chi Minh said: "... preserving world peace means preserving the interests of our country. For the sake of working people around the world is unanimous. ... The spirit of patriotism and the spirit of internationalism are closely related to each other. For this reason, we have both tried to resist the war and participated in the movement in support of the President, affirming: "The Vietnamese people will never let anyone invade their own country, and at the same time, they will never invade other countries..." (Ho Chi Minh, 2000, t.8, p.4). President Ho Chi Minh does not accept a temporary or artificial peace in which Vietnam's right to freedom and independence is violated. He was adamant that true peace could only be achieved when the parties to the negotiations respected Vietnam's right to self-determination and that the involvement of the great powers should not interfere in the internal affairs of other countries. This reflects President Ho Chi Minh's views on the close relationship between peace and national independence.

Ho Chi Minh's diplomatic thought expresses the Marxist view of the decisive role of internal factors in resolving conflicts. Therefore, Ho Chi Minh advocated doing his best to promote the nation's strength, patriotism, and significant national unity and proactively build a revolutionary force to seize the opportunity. It is the basis for implementing international cooperation and enlisting external help. Therefore, President Ho Chi Minh's thoughts on peace and reconciliation not only played an essential role in Vietnam's foreign policy but also a message of steadfastness in protecting the right to self-determination and building a peaceful international environment. Just. He left a great legacy of combining the struggle for independence and the desire to preserve peace, setting the stage for Vietnam's foreign policy throughout the twentieth century and continuing to influence international relations today.

4.3. International solidarity

During the Ho Chi Minh era, the strength of our nation was promoted at a high

level, bringing the country to overcome difficulties and dangerous challenges. Thanks to vigorously promoting Vietnam's political, spiritual, national, cultural, and military traditions. Vietnam's diplomatic tradition closely coordinates political, military, economic, and diplomatic factors under the leadership of the Party and is supported by the people. The revolutionary cause and the cause of the whole people. At the same time, our Party and President Ho Chi Minh have attached great importance to closely combining national strength with the strength of the times. He pointed out: "The An Nam destiny is also a part of the world destiny. Whoever makes a revolution in the world is a comrade of the people of Annam" (Ho Chi Minh, 2000, t.2, p.301). Throughout history, the Vietnamese revolution has always been the progressive trend of the times and associated with the struggle for progressive humanity. It is one of the most critical, profoundly topical success lessons. Ho Chi Minh was the first Vietnamese to break the solitary position of the Vietnamese people during the national liberation struggle, laying a solid foundation for the correct international line between the Party and the State of Vietnam. That is, based on their national strength, to take advantage of international cooperation and combine the strength of the times with the national strength to form the synergy of the nation, contributing to the cause of progressive humanity. Global solidarity is essential to Ho Chi Minh's diplomatic thought. He is well aware that Vietnam's struggle for independence and nation-building cannot succeed without the support and consensus of the international community, especially from the countries of friends of the socialist bloc and national liberation movements around the world, for Ho Chi Minh, unity among oppressed peoples was the key to achieving victory in the common struggle against imperialism.

In leading the resistance, President Ho Chi Minh made the most of international relations to build strong alliances with socialist countries such as the Soviet Union and China. He understood that to sustain the long-term struggle, Vietnam needed help in many aspects, from finance and weapons to training cadres and the army. These allied countries have become both materially and spiritually essential resources, encouraging Vietnam's resistance.

President Ho Chi Minh received support and actively promoted the national liberation movement in other countries. He affirmed that Vietnam's struggle is not merely a struggle of a nation but a part of the everyday struggle of all oppressed peoples in the world. This unity among peoples helps to create strength against imperialist powers. It contributes to building a more just world where all nations have the right to self-determination and independent development.

President Ho Chi Minh has always encouraged the countries in the socialist bloc and national liberation movements to join in the common struggle and support each other in building the country after gaining independence. He said that international solidarity is not only meaningful in the period of resistance but also the foundation for sustainable development cooperation in the future.

The essence of Vietnam's diplomacy is peace. In the long and arduous struggle, Vietnam has consistently raised the banner of peace, considering the struggle for peace as an international task that is inseparable from the struggle for national independence of the Vietnamese people. Striving for peace in Vietnam and preventing war from happening has been the consistent nature and ideology of Ho Chi Minh since the birth of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in August 1945, throughout the two national liberation wars that he directly led. He always raised the banner of peace: Peace for Vietnam and peace for other peoples. He was resolute in the struggle for independence and freedom but took advantage of every opportunity to restore peace.

The spirit of international solidarity in President Ho Chi Minh's ideology has

helped Vietnam build a solid alliance network, creating favorable conditions for the comprehensive support of the resistance war for independence. At the same time, this ideology also promotes solidarity and mutual assistance among oppressed peoples, thereby creating a strong national liberation movement worldwide. This spirit continues to influence Vietnam's foreign policy in the current period, clearly reflected in Vietnam's constant attaching importance to international cooperation and promoting the spirit of global solidarity in all foreign affairs.

4.4. Flexible adaptability

President Ho Chi Minh's diplomatic thought is reflected in his flexible adaptability in international relations. He always knows how to adjust diplomatic strategies according to the specific context of the country as well as fluctuations in the global arena. Independence and autonomy are manifested first in self-controlled, creative, non-dogmatic, and stereotypical thinking and action. President Ho Chi Minh often emphasized: "Comrade Lenin has repeatedly reiterated that revolutionary theory is not a dogma, it is a guideline for revolutionary action; and reasoning is not something rigid, it is full of creativity... The communists of other countries must concretize Marxism-Leninism to suit the conditions of each time and place..." (Ho Chi Minh, 2000, t.8, p.496 – 497). In addition, he reminded our country's Party members to uphold "independence of thought and freedom of thought" (Ho Chi Minh, 2000, t.8, p.500).

Ho Chi Minh's ultimate goal is to maintain national independence and protect national interests; therefore, he is willing to change his approach to suit the situation. In the early stages of the resistance war against France, President Ho Chi Minh temporarily maintained cooperative relations with France. This decision was intended to avoid direct military conflict. At the same time, the domestic resistance forces were still weak, which gave Vietnam more time to consolidate its forces, reorganize its armed forces, and build its political base. President Ho Chi Minh understands it is impossible to immediately confront a power like France when domestic conditions are still limited. Instead of choosing the path of military confrontation from the beginning, he chose the option of temporary cooperation, keeping the domestic situation stable so that Vietnam had time to prepare for a long-term resistance war.

President Ho Chi Minh quickly adjusted his diplomatic strategy as the international and domestic situation changed. After realizing that France could no longer sustainably cooperate, he established alliances with socialist countries such as the Soviet Union and China. This not only helped Vietnam receive financial, military, and weapons support but also helped to strengthen the confidence and resistance spirit of the Vietnamese people in the fight against French intervention and, later, the United States. President Ho Chi Minh's ability to adapt to diplomacy flexibly helped Vietnam maintain its independent position in the international arena and avoid being caught up in complex conflicts between great powers. Instead of being dependent on one faction or facing pressure from great powers, President Ho Chi Minh always upheld the principle of independence and autonomy in foreign relations. This helps Vietnam stand firm in the face of unexpected changes in the international arena and build an independent diplomatic position independent of any great power.

President Ho Chi Minh's ability to adapt his diplomatic strategy flexibly has become one of the critical factors in helping Vietnam overcome many difficulties during the period of resistance and national construction. This flexibility shows the wisdom of diplomatic behavior. It is a clear expression of the ultimate goal that President Ho Chi

Minh pursues: to protect national independence and maintain national sovereignty in all circumstances. This ideology plays a vital role in Vietnam's foreign policy orientation today, as the country faces new challenges in the international arena.

4.5. Combining national strength with the strength of the times, creating national unity

These are particularly important factors in diplomacy with significant countries, determining the victory of the Vietnamese revolution. However, external and internal factors are not consistently fully recognized. Excessive xenophobia or xenophobia also leads to stagnation in the development process. First, promoting internal strength promotes the resilience of the collective and community. The strength of the significant national unity bloc is an essential endogenous resource; it has always been considered a red thread throughout the Party's line and strategy in the war and in renewing, building, and defending the country. The strength of the times is that the "external force" factors support and supplement "internal resources," which is an indispensable condition in Vietnam's foreign strategy. Ho Chi Minh said it was necessary to bring the Vietnamese national liberation movement along the trajectory of the proletarian revolution, bringing the Vietnamese nation to integrate with the general trend of the times. The goal of the Communist Party of Vietnam is national independence and socialism, national liberation, class liberation, social liberation, and human liberation. The struggle of our people is inseparable but is associated with the battle of the peoples of other countries in the world for peace, national independence, democracy, and social progress. Combining the nation's strength and the strength of the times has become the law of the Vietnamese revolution, making Vietnam an independent, unified, and socialist country. Today, the power of the times also includes peace. The strength of the nation and the strength of the times, when combined, will create great resources, contributing to bringing the revolution to overcome difficulties and challenges.

5. CONCLUSION

President Ho Chi Minh's philosophical thought on diplomacy has left a deep imprint on Vietnam's history and contributed to the victory of the struggle for independence. Principles such as independence, self-reliance, peace, international solidarity, and flexible adaptability have formed a solid foundation for Vietnam's foreign policy throughout the twentieth century and remain valid in modern diplomacy. President Ho Chi Minh's thoughts on diplomacy are strategic in protecting national sovereignty and expressing profound human values. The lessons from his diplomatic thought continue to be significant to Vietnam in building international relations for peace, cooperation, and sustainable development.

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