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EDITOR'S WELCOME

It gives me great pleasure to introduce this exclusive publication celebrating 50 years of diplomatic relations between Viet Nam and the UK. *Diplomat* magazine has been delighted to work with the Embassy of Viet Nam in London on this special report and we are especially grateful to Ambassador Nguyen Hoang Long and his efficient team for their hard work, dedication and guidance in the preparation of the magazine.

Together, we have compiled this unique collection of messages and articles from senior ministers in government, business, academia, parliaments, local government and charity organisations from both Viet Nam and the UK. We hear from Viet Nam's Foreign Minister and its Deputy Prime Minister among others, as well as the UK Foreign Secretary and various Ministers of State. They are all in agreement that this half-century milestone, with a refreshed strategic partnership, the UK-Viet Nam Free Trade Agreement (UKVFTA) and two-way trade with Viet Nam ranked as one of the highest with an ASEAN Member State, offers a strong foundation to build on for the future.

Chair of the UK-ASEAN Business Council Lord Vaizey reports that while so many economies were struggling to recover from the pandemic, in 2022 "Viet Nam posted the fastest growth in Asia with 8.02 per cent." And since 2000, "it has achieved an enviable average growth rate of 6.3 per cent. Its 103 million population is young, increasingly educated, increasingly wealthy and increasingly digitised."

Accordingly, Viet Nam has become one of the most exciting high-growth markets for British business. The UK's 'Indo-Pacific Tilt' highlights the importance the UK places on the region, seeing it as critical to growing the UK economy.

In this report, we hear from major global businesses like BP, HSBC, AstraZeneca, Standard Chartered and many more to learn about their work in Viet Nam over the decades, and the exciting opportunities that this stimulating country offers the UK in the years ahead.

Education, climate change and green technology are also areas where the connections between Viet Nam and the UK are of huge importance, not only economically, but also in terms of people-to-people contacts. Read on to discover how cooperation in these areas continues to go from strength-to-strength.

50 years of diplomatic relations between the UK and Viet Nam is a landmark achievement. The milestones in this ever-progressing relationship should be celebrated. Now we look forward to the next 50 years.

VENETIA DE BLOCQ VAN KUFFELER

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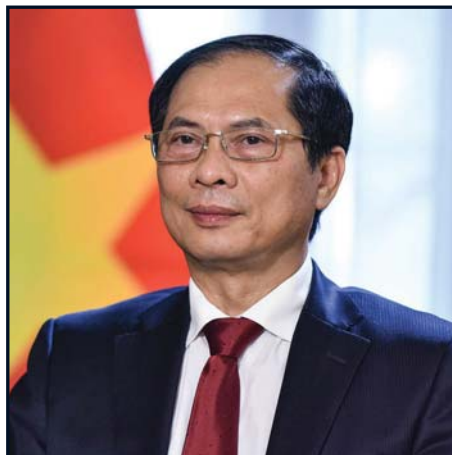
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Sapa Valley in the morning mist, Viet Nam





Foreign Minister's message on the 50th anniversary of the establishment of Diplomatic Relations between Viet Nam and the United Kingdom

In celebration of the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Viet Nam and the UK, I wish to extend my best wishes to partners and friends in the UK.

Viet Nam and the UK officially established diplomatic relations at a time when the struggle for independence and national reunification of the Vietnamese people was ongoing. Since then, we have built a strong and dynamic partnership that covers all areas of cooperation. The establishment of the Viet Nam - UK Strategic Partnership in 2010 and the adoption of the 'Joint Declaration on UK - Viet Nam Strategic Partnership: Forging ahead for another 10 years' in 2020 demonstrate the strong commitment of both governments towards enhancing comprehensive cooperation to achieve sustainable development and effectively respond to global challenges.

In this spirit, over the past years, high-level delegation exchanges and the implementation of bilateral cooperation mechanisms – such as the Strategic Dialogue between the two Foreign Ministries, the Joint Economic and Trade Committee (JETCO), and the Defence Policy Dialogue – have been playing a vital role in enhancing mutual understanding and political trust. Such endeavours have also been conducive to bolstering bilateral cooperation across the board.

Trade and investment cooperation, a key pillar of our Strategic Partnership, has also achieved remarkable results. The UK is currently Viet Nam's third largest trading partner in Europe, and ninth largest export market. Our trade turnover has nearly doubled in the past decade, from US\$3.5 billion in 2012 to US\$6.8 billion in 2022. The UK - Viet Nam Free Trade Agreement (UKVFTA), which came into effect on 1 May 2021, has further boosted our bilateral trade ties, despite the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the uncertainties of the global and regional economy.

We have also witnessed remarkable progress in our cooperation initiatives in the field of education and training. The UK, with its long-standing and world-class education system, has identified Viet Nam as one of the five

prioritised countries in its international education strategy. This has opened new opportunities for bilateral cooperation and for Viet Nam's efforts to develop high-quality human resources for its growth. This relationship has been further strengthened, thanks to the Vietnamese community of over 100,000 currently residing in the UK, including 15,000 students. They have served as a bridge connecting our two countries in this excellent relationship.

Today, Viet Nam and the UK can be proud of their collaboration to tackle global challenges. The two countries stood united and supported each other during the COVID-19 pandemic and work closely in such areas as energy transition and climate action. Most notably, we have made great efforts to establish the Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP). These endeavours are vivid testaments of our excellent cooperation. In addition to sharing views in addressing regional and global challenges, upholding international law and multilateralism, supporting free trade, Viet Nam hopes that the UK will continue to harness its role and strengths in contributing to peace, security, cooperation and development in the region. This was why Viet Nam fully supported the UK becoming an ASEAN Dialogue Partner, and joining the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP).

Looking back at the past 50 years of cooperation between Viet Nam and the UK, as Viet Nam continues to pursue its policy of comprehensive and extensive integration, and strives to further deepen its Strategic Partnership with the UK – especially as the UK is giving more priority to strengthening its relations with countries in the Indo-Pacific, including Viet Nam – I am confident that our two countries will enjoy ample space to elevate Viet Nam – UK relations to a new height. With the strong determination and efforts of the two countries' governments, businesses and peoples, we will certainly achieve our common goals in the near future.

"Viet Nam – United Kingdom: A partnership that goes the distance".

H.E. Bui Thanh Son

Minister of Foreign Affairs, The Socialist Republic of Viet Nam

Ships at Saigon Flower Market at Tet





Foreign Secretary's message on the 50th anniversary of the establishment of Diplomatic Relations between the UK and Viet Nam

Fifty years ago, just a few months after the Paris Peace Accords, foreign ministers Alec Douglas-Home and Nguyen Duy Trinh had the foresight to formalise diplomatic relations between the UK and Viet Nam.

Over the last five decades, both countries have built an enduring partnership through patient, positive diplomacy, respect and a willingness to listen. Starting with small steps, we have built a growing network of positive connections that will endure for many years to come.

In recent times, the partnerships between our governments, businesses, organisations and people have grown and flourished. This year the British Council and our Chevening Scholarship Programme both celebrate 30 years of operating in Viet Nam, and we are delighted to welcome around 15,000 Vietnamese students to the UK each year.

In 2020 both countries agreed to refresh our Strategic Partnership, setting higher ambitions for our cooperation and multilateral coordination. This was evident from our mutual support throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, to the recent visit of our Armed Forces Minister at the first Viet Nam International Defence Expo, and the creation of our Migration Dialogue to help tackle human trafficking and modern slavery. We are committed to being a reliable, trustworthy and long-term partner.

The Vietnamese economy grew by 8 per cent last year, a 12-year record and the highest growth rate in Asia. Trade between Viet Nam and the UK rose by 12.4 per cent to £5.9 billion over the same period. Viet Nam is now the UK's second biggest trade partner in South East Asia behind Singapore, showing the benefits of our Free Trade Agreement which entered into force in 2021.

I am grateful to the Government of Viet Nam for being an early supporter of the UK's bid to accede to the Pacific regional trade agreement – the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership. Our membership would not only reduce trade tariffs for goods, but also helps strengthen rules-based commerce and the principles of global free trade.

Climate change is a threat to our growing prosperity. The multi-billion dollar Just Energy Transition Partnership that we agreed alongside allies in December, will support Viet Nam's transition to clean energy by accelerating the phase down of fossil fuels and expansion of renewable energy in a high-emitting emerging economy and in line with the 2050 net zero target set by Prime Minister Chinh.

Thanks to Viet Nam's support, we are building strong ties on regional and multilateral issues through our ASEAN Dialogue Partner status, which we secured in 2021. We cooperate closely on preserving maritime security and defending the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, and I look forward to enhancing our cooperation as Viet Nam joins the UN Human Rights Council later this year.

The relationship between the UK and Viet Nam is closer than ever, and there is great potential to strengthen it further as we support Viet Nam's ambitions. By working together to address common challenges, and maximise the opportunities around us, the UK and Viet Nam are building a brighter future together.

The Rt Hon James Cleverly MP

UK Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs



A HALF CENTURY OF BILATERAL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

**A Message by Ambassador of the Socialist Republic of
Viet Nam to the United Kingdom H.E. Dr. Nguyen Hoang Long**

I am honoured and fortunate to be Ambassador of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam to the United Kingdom at a critical time when relations between our two countries are at their best. 2023 is a precious moment as we celebrate an important milestone – the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Viet Nam and the UK. With a wide-ranging series of commemorative activities in both countries, (over 50 major events across the UK alone in 2023), the Viet Nam – UK Friendship Year offers ideal opportunities for people to learn more about each other's country, history and culture, thus further strengthening the Viet Nam – UK Strategic Partnership.

Looking back over the past five decades of Viet Nam – UK friendship and cooperation, we have witnessed robust progress in all fields, ranging from political, economic, trade and investment to development cooperation, education and training, culture and defence security. Besides our historical legacy and linkages, together with shared fundamental and strategic interests, the relationship between our two countries has been built on a worthy foundation of close people-to-people ties, common values and the love that we have for each other's cultures. These are vivid examples of how our countries are successfully sharing links that set a firm foundation for the relationship to move forward in the next half century and beyond.

As Ambassador, I feel privileged to be part of this noble cause, particularly, as the Viet Nam-UK relationship is becoming more and more substantial, with new realms of cooperation emerging.

One of the new realms of cooperation that will serve as a driving force of the bilateral relationship in the coming years is our joint effort in dealing with climate change and cooperation in green transition, renewable energy and green finance, given that both Viet Nam and the UK are members of the Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP) and continue to build up institutions to facilitate financial cooperation.



Ambassador of Viet Nam Nguyen Hoang Long and his spouse Vu Huong Giang present Credentials to Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II at Buckingham Palace in November 2021

UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak has said the JETP model is a “game changer” in the fight against climate change, supporting Viet Nam to deliver its ambitious Net Zero 2050 goal and accelerating a just transition to clean energy. JETP will mobilise an initial US\$15.5 billion of public and private finance over the next three to five years to support Viet Nam’s green transition. Viet Nam’s new partnership with JETP has been a success for Viet Nam, the UK and other JETP members, but there is still much work to be done in refining and efficiently implementing the financing package. This undoubtedly opens more opportunities for fruitful cooperation between the two countries in 2023 and beyond.

As new opportunities emerge, I am also delighted to see TheCityUK’s plan to build an International Finance Centre (IFC) in Ho Chi Minh City. The IFC will help deepen Viet Nam’s financial links with the rest of the world by offering a business and regulatory environment that is attractive to British and international investors seeking to enter the market. This will also support the transition to net zero, the strong commitment that Viet Nam made at COP26. Viet Nam’s dynamic economy,

future vision, and commitment to the transition to net zero therefore provides many opportunities for partnership with the UK.

Aside from already burgeoning cooperation in trade, education, defence, security and people-to-people exchanges, there is still ample room for expanding bilateral cooperation.

Over the past 50 years, there is one great person, whose constant affection and support has been invaluable to the strengthening of the Strategic Partnership between our two countries. I would like to express our sincerest appreciation to Her Late Majesty the Queen for her dedication to peace and friendship around the world, and especially to Viet Nam – UK relations.

As we celebrate 50 years of bilateral diplomatic relations in 2023, it is also a special year celebrating the Coronation of King Charles III, who has also been supportive of Viet Nam’s green development agenda and Viet Nam – UK relations.

Let’s celebrate the Viet Nam – UK relationship and work together to ensure the next 50 years of peace and prosperity for both countries.



THE 50-YEAR PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND VIET NAM HAS DEVELOPED AND FLOURISHED

A Message by His Majesty's Ambassador to Viet Nam, H.E. Iain Frew

This year is a significant milestone as the UK and Viet Nam celebrate 50 years of diplomatic relations. Since 1973, the partnership between our two countries has developed and flourished. Particularly since Viet Nam's opening and reform in the late 1980s, the UK has been a growing partner supporting Viet Nam's socio-economic development, contributing to regional peace and stability and building ever deeper connections between our peoples.

Arriving as Ambassador last year, I was struck by how the relationship has grown in strength and breadth. This is underpinned by our shared commitment to prosperity and security for both our nations and the wider world, working together through multilateral institutions to protect the rules-based international order.

The historic development of our Strategic Partnership in 2010, renewed and enhanced three years ago, set a strong basis for our modern cooperation into an increasing number of areas. We came through the COVID-19 pandemic supporting each other on PPE, vaccines and medical equipment. And as the UK embeds our increased focus on the Indo-Pacific region, Viet Nam is an essential partner at the heart of ASEAN, international trade networks and major global issues. This is an increasingly mature partnership, where we speak honestly to each other where we have differences, alongside the many areas in which we agree.

At the centre of our relationship is economic development. Viet Nam's incredible advances in opening up and growing its economy while reducing poverty are an international benchmark. That strong economic story continues.

Everywhere I go in Viet Nam I see the energy and positivity that has propelled this country to become one of the fastest growing economies in the Indo-Pacific region. That has been driven in part by openness to international trade and investment. In 2022, we saw bilateral trade volumes growing over 20 per cent year-on-year to £6.4 billion. The UK-Viet Nam Free Trade Agreement signed in 2020 is at the heart of this and the UK looks forward to joining Viet Nam in the CPTPP regional trade agreement. Our businesses see bright prospects for further trade and investment, in particular to develop the digital and green economies.

Education remains another key pillar. We are very proud to host over 15,000 Vietnamese students in the UK, including through Chevening Programme scholarships – a number I am determined to increase. From meeting these leaders of tomorrow, it is clear to me that Viet Nam's future is a bright one. British institutions have built over 100 Trans-National Education partnerships with their Vietnamese counterparts, and we are increasingly working together on developing skills across technical, vocational and professional areas.

In the past two years we have seen the newest pillar of our relationship, cooperation on climate change and the green transition, develop to become one of the most important. Prime Minister Chinh's historic commitment at COP26 in Glasgow to reach Net Zero by 2050 set the ambition, which we are working to achieve together including through the Just Energy Transition Partnership. As the UK moves ahead with its own ambitious plans, we will collaborate with Viet Nam on technology, investment and skills to build low-carbon energy grids, urban infrastructure and industry.

Over recent years, the UK has been proud to partner with Viet Nam as it plays an increasingly international role, including through its time on the UN Security Council, ASEAN Chairmanship and in deploying UN peacekeepers. In an increasingly volatile and contested geopolitical context, our two countries are rightly looking to how our defence and security cooperation can support greater peace and stability. I was delighted to join Vietnamese friends and partners in welcoming HMS Spey to Ho Chi Minh City earlier this year, a symbol of that cooperation as well as our work together on maritime security issues. As Viet Nam modernises its defence capabilities, we will increasingly work together to tackle both traditional and emerging security challenges.

As we build for the future, we will see the same energy and positivity in newer areas of our relationship, from science and health to emerging technology, from the challenges and opportunities of international migration, to the growing links between our people in culture and sport. These promising buds will in turn blossom well beyond the political relationship between our governments.

The UK-Viet Nam partnership is a testament to the shared aspirations of both nations, founded on common principles including seeking mutual benefit, respect for international law and the UN charter. As we celebrate this important milestone, we look forward to an even brighter future for our two countries. As President Ho Chi Minh observed, "To reap a return in ten years, plant trees. To reap a return in 100, cultivate the people." I look forward to us doing both in the years ahead.





A NEW COOPERATION MILESTONE IN CLIMATE AND ENERGY

By Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Natural Resources and Environment of Viet Nam H.E. Dr. Tran Hong Ha

2023 marks a significant milestone for the UK and Viet Nam as the countries celebrate their 50th anniversary of bilateral diplomatic ties. Over the past 50 years, especially during the last two decades, both countries have achieved numerous important accomplishments with countless successful partnerships in politics and diplomacy, trade and investment, education and training, science and technology, security and defence, climate change response and sustainable development.

In politics, the two countries have never been so actively engaged. They have exchanged high-level delegations and regularly organised discussions between top leaders – from the Party to the Government and National Assembly – in addition to other official dialogue, conference and committee meetings between government ministries and agencies. In 2021, Prime Minister of Viet Nam Pham Minh Chinh attended the COP26 conference in Glasgow and in 2022 the Chairman of the National Assembly of Viet Nam Vuong Dinh Hue attended the Viet Nam-UK High-level Forum on Economy and Trade.

The UK and Viet Nam share a long-established economic and trade partnership. Signed in December 2020, the UK-Viet Nam Free Trade Agreement (UKVFTA) came into effect on 1 May 2021 and has promoted bilateral trade between the two countries, underpinned by a comprehensive free trade area. Official statistics reveal that in 2021, the UK was the third largest European importer of Vietnamese goods, and for the third quarter

of 2022, UK exports to Viet Nam increased by 13.6 per cent totalling £950 million, and total UK imports also went up by 21.8 per cent to £5.4 billion.

Viet Nam has also presented itself as a potential destination for British investors in many fields such as renewable energy, education, healthcare and infrastructure, and attracted foreign direct investment (FDI) worth £785 million in 2021. The numbers reflect a promising outlook for the bilateral trade and investment partnership that focuses on open trade through global and regional economic collaboration.

Over the past year, the two strategic partners have also been working on numerous agreements in other areas such as cooperation on global security challenges, strengthening collaboration in the field of science and technology, providing bilateral healthcare assistance in the context of an ongoing pandemic, and promoting human rights and gender equality. The strategic partnership between the UK and Viet Nam reflects a commitment from both countries to reinforce the bilateral partnership and sets the path between the two countries for years to come.

In climate change response, the UK has always provided financial and technical support to Viet Nam, including expertise support for Vietnamese scientists to develop the country's first scenario on climate change and sea level rise published in 2009. Under its Prosperity Fund, the UK implemented projects to support Viet Nam's climate change policies, including capacity building for Vietnamese and ASEAN negotiators prior to COP20 in Lima in 2014, training courses for Vietnamese officials in greenhouse



gas inventories to help develop a Greenhouse Gas Inventory (GHGI) and a monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV) system that is compliant with international standards, and the development of Viet Nam's 2050 Calculator, also presented at COP20.

Both countries promoted the exchange of delegations at all levels to further enhance bilateral co-operation to tackle climate change challenges and promote sustainable economic growth. The topic of climate change and energy transition was frequently mentioned at bilateral meetings between the two countries.

While hosting the COP26 presidency, the UK officially invited the Prime Minister of Viet Nam to attend the UN Climate Change Conference in Glasgow, Scotland. The UK has also encouraged Viet Nam to join several global climate initiatives such as Net Zero Emissions by 2050, the Joint Declaration on Forests and Land Use, the Global Coal to Clean Power Transition Statement, and the Adaption Action Coalition (AAC).

After COP26, the British Prime Minister together with the President of the European Commission sent a request to the Prime Minister of Viet Nam to negotiate the Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP) political declaration with the International Partners Group (IPG), that includes the European Union (EU), the UK, the United States of America, Japan, Germany, France, Italy, Canada, Denmark and Norway. The UK and the EU worked closely with their Vietnamese counterparts on the JETP, and reached an agreement in December 2022, making Viet Nam the third country to join the JETP, built on the UK-led G7 Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGII).

The agreed partnership is fundamental to promoting the bilateral and multilateral response to the climate change crisis. The agreement is set to forge the direction of the Viet Nam - UK strategic partnership for the coming decade. Along with other IPG countries, the UK will be working hand-in-hand with Viet Nam to actively support its decarbonisation

through a renewable energy related project, taking steps towards cleaner energy sources, all while enhancing the country's energy security.

Alongside other IPG members, the UK will support Viet Nam with finance, technology and improving the country's green energy policy. Furthermore, the UK will help increase Viet Nam's capacity to attract foreign and domestic private investment into green energy transition, helping Viet Nam move along the path to more sustainable development, cutting back on CO2 emissions, while simultaneously energising economic development. This will benefit the planet and society by achieving a just and inclusive green energy transition, and promote private sector engagement, create new jobs and strengthen economic development.

Apart from JETP implementation, Viet Nam and the UK are now working closely to promote other partnerships on climate change. The UK has recently introduced to Viet Nam its flagship technical assistance programme, UK Partnering for Accelerated Climate Transitions (UK PACT), which supports countries with high greenhouse gas emissions to put into practice their ambitions for emission reduction in line with internationally agreed commitments.

Looking back at 50 years of diplomatic ties between Viet Nam and the UK, we can be proud of the fact the two countries have increased economic growth and trade. As well as raising diplomatic ties to new heights, the two countries have also put sustainable growth and climate change resilience at the centre of their strategic partnership going forward. This also significantly contributes to global efforts to combat the climate crisis, with long-term benefits to both British and Vietnamese people.

With the support of the international community, including the UK, Viet Nam – an emerging country that is seriously subjected to the impacts of climate change – has shown its determination and commitments to reach net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 and its development path to become a high-income developed country by 2045.

1. EU Ambassador at large for Climate Diplomacy Marc Vanheukelen, Co-Chair of GFANZ and UN Special Envoy for Climate Action and Finance Mark Carney, Viet Nam's Minister of Natural Resources and Environment Tran Hong Ha and COP 26 President The Rt Hon Sir Alok Sharma MP, all negotiating the JETP at COP 27 in November 2022

2. Viet Nam's Minister of Natural Resources and Environment Tran Hong Ha delivering a speech at COP25, Madrid, December 2019



A SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIP TOWARDS GREEN GROWTH

Minister of State for Energy Security and Net Zero, Rt Hon Graham Stuart MP discusses Viet Nam's plans to continue this incredible growth while achieving its ambitious net zero 2050 target

I am delighted to have been asked to contribute to this magazine celebrating 50 years of diplomatic relations between the UK and Viet Nam.

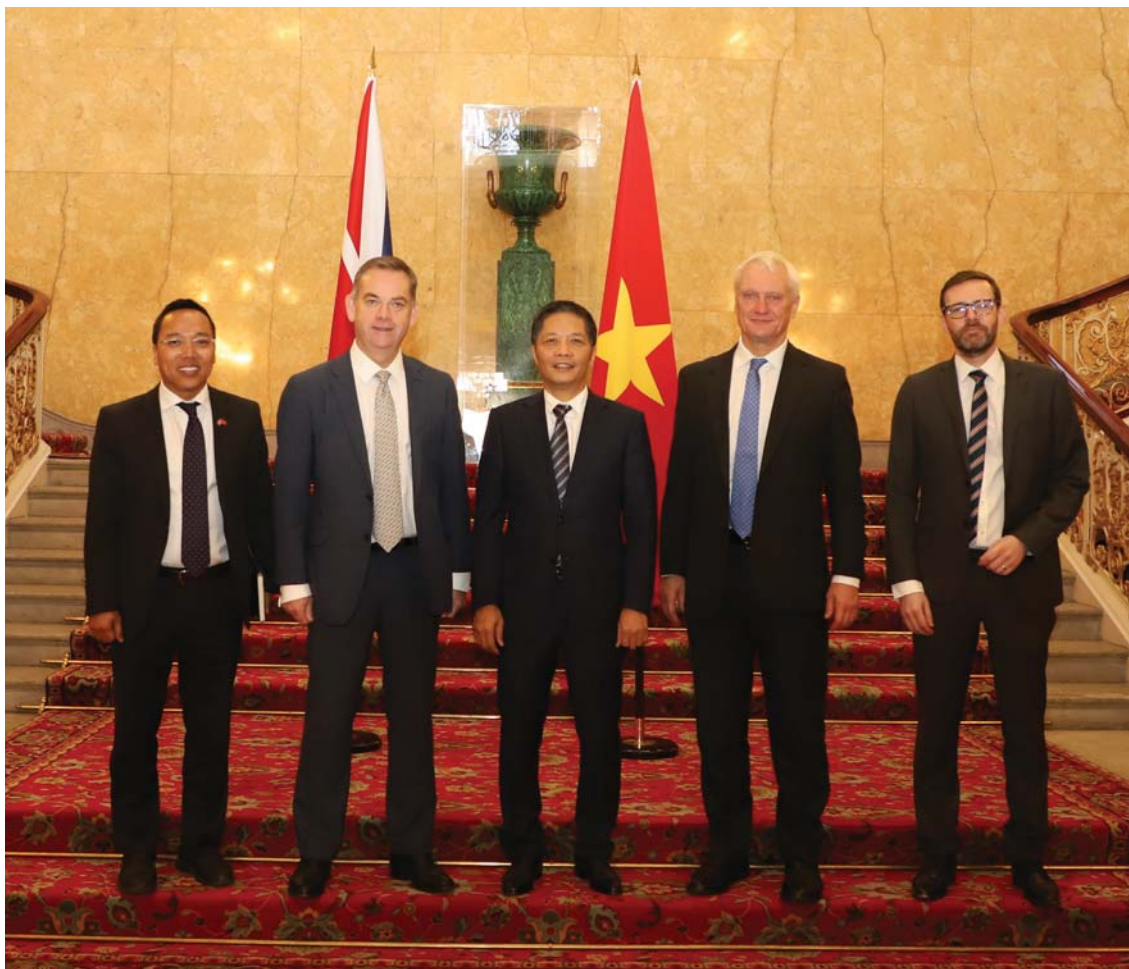
Over these decades Viet Nam has made remarkable progress, lifting tens of millions of people out of poverty and becoming one of the fastest growing economies in the world's fastest growing region. The next great challenge for Viet Nam is continuing this incredible growth while achieving its ambitious net zero 2050 target, which it announced at the UK-led COP26 in Glasgow. As the then-COP President Alok Sharma MP said at the end of COP26, the goal of keeping warming under 1.5 degrees is alive, but its pulse is weak. Viet Nam is working with the world on this critical challenge, and the UK is ready and able to be Viet Nam's key partner in meeting it.

I have greatly enjoyed my own time in Viet Nam, seeing for myself the incredible dynamism of the Vietnamese people. I am proud of the UK's longstanding friendship with Viet Nam. With each passing year the UK's relationship with Viet Nam becomes stronger and stronger. I am pleased that last year I was able to do my part to further the ties between our two countries.

THE JETP AND OFFSHORE WIND

In my current role as Minister for Energy and Climate, I was delighted at the agreement of the Viet Nam Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP) – aimed at mobilising US\$15.5 billion of funding from the International Partners Group, including the UK – to support Viet Nam's low emission and climate resilience development. I met the Natural Resources and Environment Minister (and now Deputy Prime Minister) Trần Hồng Hà to launch the agreement. It was great to hear how important the JETP is to Viet Nam and the achievement of its 2050 net zero target. Viet Nam agreed this ambitious goal, while the International Partners Group (IPG) offered substantial support. This puts an environmentally sustainable energy transition that enables Viet Nam's prosperity within reach. I am looking forward to seeing the plans Viet Nam and the IPG make together for the implementation for this programme over the next few months.

I am delighted that as part of the JETP, my department will be supporting Viet Nam's transition with a Centre of Excellence for offshore wind. Offshore wind has been an incredible success story in Britain with 30 per cent of our power generation now coming from wind and more capacity coming online all the time. Offshore wind has a crucial role to play in Viet Nam's continuing rapid economic growth and clean energy transition and I am proud the UK will be a key partner. Viet Nam has some of the best offshore wind potential in the world and the UK provides a great model of how this potential can be realised.



Viet Nam's Ambassador to the UK Nguyen Hoang Long, Minister of State in Cabinet Office Nigel Adams MP, Politburo Member and Chairman of the Party Central Committee's Economic Commission Tran Tuan Anh, FCDO Minister of State Graham Stuart MP and UK Ambassador to Viet Nam Iain Frew during Chairman Tran Tuan Anh's visit to the UK on 11 August 2022

The Siemens blade factory in Hull is an example of how the UK has realised this potential. In June last year, I took a delegation of senior Vietnamese officials to see it. It was great to meet with Vietnamese counterparts and to show them what the wind industry has done for clean energy and jobs in the UK, and demonstrate what it can achieve in Viet Nam.

TRADE

Before my current role, I was very pleased to serve as the UK's Trade Envoy to Viet Nam. In recent years, the UK-Viet Nam trade relationship has gone from strength to strength. The UK-Viet Nam Free Trade Agreement was implemented in May 2021, immediately removing 65 per cent of tariffs on bilateral trade (rising to 99 per cent by full implementation in 2030). Since then, UK-Viet Nam trade has increased by almost 12.4 per cent.

In April 2022, I visited Viet Nam where I met with Vietnamese officials including the Chairman of

the Ho Chi Minh City People's Committee Phan Van Mai. We discussed how Viet Nam and the UK can work together. As Trade Envoy I also focused on the opportunities for the UK and Viet Nam, such as green trade in energy and transport. Another area of focus was deepening our educational ties. During my trip, I also opened the first UK private school in Viet Nam along with the then UK Ambassador Gareth Ward.

Working with Viet Nam's dynamic ambassador in the UK, and dressed in my linen suit from Hoi An, I am looking forward to strengthening relations further in the coming years. From defence to trade to energy we have so much to work on and doing so will be good for both countries and provide the foundation for the next 50 years of friendship and cooperation. For now though, let's celebrate 50 years of diplomatic relations and raise a glass to the peoples of both our countries.



CONG THANH GROUP: FOR PROSPERITY AND DEVELOPMENT IN VIET NAM

Cong Thanh Group was established in early 2000's with the vision:

“The world of tomorrow belongs to those who have the vision today.”

(Robert Schuller)

This has been the Cong Thanh Group's vision for growth since its inception and has helped the company on its path to grow into one of the most dynamic businesses in Viet Nam contributing to the successful development of the country's economy.

Coupled with this vision has been the Cong Thanh Group's commitment “For prosperity and development in Viet Nam.” The group has significantly contributed to the development of the Vietnamese economy through investment in the workforce; specialist technical training, increasing financial acumen, community betterment and creating a green and friendly working environment compliant with international standards.

Alongside the advancement of our core Clinker and Cement production business, the Cong Thahn Group has also been investing and developing high-capacity energy production, which is vital for Viet Nam's rapidly growing economy. The Cong Thanh Group has been urgently working with the world's leading corporations to develop efficient electricity, vital to ensure Viet Nam's national energy security. The Cong Thahn Group's timely investment in the national power infrastructure actively and positively contributes towards providing energy security vital for Viet Nam's socio-economic development.

**CONG THANH
GROUP**



CÔNG THANH MANG LẠI THÀNH CÔNG
CONG THANH BRINGS SUCCESS



ACCELERATING VIET NAM'S JUST ENERGY TRANSITION

At bp, we provide heat, light and mobility to customers all over the world, with a purpose to reimagine energy for people and the planet and an ambition to be a net zero company by 2050 or sooner.

Our strategy is to transform into an integrated energy company, focused on delivering energy solutions for customers that are more secure, affordable and clean.

TURNING AMBITION INTO ACTION

Through our gas and low carbon energy business, we're addressing the complex challenges of the energy transition, providing systems that integrate zero carbon energy with the fuels of today and those of tomorrow.

We are harnessing wind energy – which can act as a catalyst to create integrated energy systems with the potential to produce green hydrogen – to help deliver low carbon power at scale.

bp aims to become a global leader in offshore wind, safely building and operating a multi-gigawatt pipeline. We've grown a pipeline of more than 5GW net (10GW with partners) in just over two years. We're looking to build offshore wind projects with our partners that have the potential to power around eight million homes.

"Delivering a net zero future is about much more than just generating renewable power offshore. It's about creating an integrated energy system with renewables at its heart."

Anja-Isabel Dotzenrath, bp's executive vice president of gas and low carbon energy

GROWING OUR GLOBAL OFFSHORE WIND PORTFOLIO

In 2021, bp entered a joint venture with Equinor to develop offshore wind projects in the US, including the Empire Wind and Beacon Wind projects with 4.4GW of potential generating capacity.

In the same year, bp and partner EnBW were selected as the preferred bidder for two leases in the Irish Sea, offering a combined potential generating capacity of 3GW. In 2022, the partnership was awarded a lease option in Scotland, which will offer up to 2.9GW of generating capacity. The combined potential generating capacity of all three projects is sufficient to power the equivalent of around six million UK households with clean electricity.

In March 2022, bp and Marubeni formed a strategic partnership to pursue offshore wind in Japan.

ACCELERATING THE ENERGY TRANSITION IN VIET NAM

Our presence in Viet Nam dates back to 1991 when bp delivered world-class offshore engineering in the Nam Con Son basin, combining it with reliable power generation in the southeastern province of Ba Ria-Vung Tau.

We demonstrate the ability to deliver large projects while creating new supply chains and contributing to the quality of lives of the communities.

As we are developing new large scale clean energy projects in Viet Nam, we are embedding environmental and social measures that will be at the forefront of a just transition. Our size and capabilities allow us to collaborate effectively with local partners, as well as international agencies, to deliver meaningful programmes that enhance the quality of living of Vietnamese citizens.

With a pipeline of 37GW of renewable energy, 13 major green and blue hydrogen projects, world-class offshore engineering capabilities and by acting as a global energy trader, bp has the skills and expertise to grow the offshore wind energy that Viet Nam needs on its energy transition journey.





COOPERATION IN TRADE, INDUSTRY AND ENERGY TOWARDS GREEN GROWTH IN VIET NAM – UK RELATIONS

By *Minister of Industry and Trade, H.E. Nguyen Hong Dien*

During the past 50 years, good relations and cooperation between Viet Nam and the UK has developed at different levels in almost all fields. Economic / trade cooperation has always been a bright spot, which has grown throughout the decades. Currently, the UK is ranked ninth among the top 10 export markets of Viet Nam overall, and ranked the fourth of that in Europe and the Americas. These facts demonstrate that cooperation between the two countries is at a high point, contributing to the promotion of investment links, plus economic and social development, bringing practical benefits to the people and business communities of both countries.

Various government agreements have established a solid platform for bilateral cooperation in many fields, especially in trade and industry. These include: the Agreement for the Promotion and Protection of Investments signed in 2002; the Viet Nam - UK Joint Economic and Trade Committee (JETCO) established in 2007; the Joint Statement on the Strategic Partnership in 2010, and the Viet Nam - UK Free Trade Agreement (UKVFTA) in 2020. The two sides have continuously organised high-level visits, together with a series of events and forums that have created trade and investment connections between corporations and enterprises, thereby facilitating and promoting cooperation between the two countries. The results are as follows:

*** TRADE COOPERATION**

Since Viet Nam and the UK announced the elevation of their strategic partnership in 2010, bilateral trade exchange has increased more than three times, reaching US\$6.84 billion in 2022, despite the negative impacts caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and recent geopolitical-economic instability.

In 2022, the UKVFTA helped the two way trade increase by 3.3 per cent. Much of this growth lay in Viet Nam's key export products, such as coffee (up 61 per cent); gems, precious metals and products (up 56 per cent); toys, sports equipment and parts (up 59 per cent); footwear (up 40 per cent); textiles

(up 36 per cent); electric wires and cables (up 30 per cent); electronic products and components (up 28 per cent) and other machinery, equipment, tools and spare parts (up 37 per cent).

The UKVFTA, which officially took effect from 1 May 2021, is on route to become an 'expressway,' promoting two-way economic-trade relations. With its extensive tariff reduction roadmap, on the one hand this Agreement creates clear benefits for many products on both sides to infiltrate into each other's markets. For Viet Nam, phones and their components, machinery, textiles, footwear, seafood, furniture, iron and steel, coffee and cashew nuts. For the UK, machinery, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, leather and footwear materials, automobiles as well as service sectors such as finance, transport and retail. On the other hand, the Agreement is also an important framework for future green development cooperation.

*** INDUSTRY AND ENERGY COOPERATION**

In the context of the Fourth Industrial Revolution and digital transformation, Viet Nam is currently accelerating its implementation of the strategy on technological innovation, digital transformation and supply chain diversification, as well as focusing on developing foundation industries and supporting industries in order to improve the economy's internal resources, competitiveness and production efficiency. At the same time, Viet Nam's industries are also making strategic shifts in production and increasing energy efficiency to promote sustainable development and contribute to better environmental practices, in the spirit of Resolution No. 55-NQ/TW dated February 11, 2020 of the Politburo and Viet Nam's Commitment at COP26.

To realise this common goal, on 14 December 2022, Viet Nam and the International Partners Group (IPG) agreed on the Political Declaration on establishing the Just Energy Transition Partnership. (The IPG consists of the European Union, the UK, the US, Japan, Germany, France, Italy, Canada, Denmark and Norway.) Together, with determination and a strong commitment to the international community on environmental protection and

combating climate change, the Government of Viet Nam identified green growth as essential in the strategy of industrialisation and modernisation of the country to 2030, with a vision to 2045. In the process of implementing this strategy, the Ministry of Industry and Trade of Viet Nam (MoIT) is ready to cooperate with the relevant ministries, sectors and partners in the UK to promote green energy projects, green trade, green logistics and digital transformation.

I hope that the UK's partners would support and share their valuable experiences in the design and implementation of energy transformation projects, policy advice and human resource training for green energy development. I hope the two sides will find numerous opportunities for investment cooperation for mutual benefit in this field.

* GREEN AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Currently, the UK is the 15th largest partner out of 141 countries and territories investing in Viet Nam, with about 500 projects with a total capital of more than US\$4 billion, focusing on sectors such as renewable energy, finance, banking and oil.

In the future, the strategic partnership between the two countries – along with legal frameworks such as the UKVFTA and other intergovernmental agreements, alongside the coordination mechanism JETCO – will open up new, potential opportunities to enhance cooperation, attract investment and

transfer technology in development sectors, such as: renewable energy, environmental industry, green trade, green financial services, green logistics, digital transformation and fintech.

MoIT reaffirms its commitment to building a transparent and friendly investment and business environment, and to creating favourable conditions for investors, including British businesses, to access resources and opportunities to realise ideas and efficient production and business activities in Viet Nam. This will contribute to making economic relations between the two countries more practical and effective, as well promoting bilateral socio-economic development.

I respectfully request DBT and other partners in the UK continue to assist the MoIT in implementing programmes and projects to support Viet Nam's enterprises to improve their management capacity, technical capability and restructuring production based on digital transformation and human resource development. I also hope that DBT would help to enhance connections between British and Vietnamese enterprises, also assisting Vietnamese enterprises participate more deeply in the global production and supply chain.

I firmly believe that, with the attention of leaders from both countries, bilateral economic and trade cooperation between Viet Nam and the UK will continue to reach new heights, promoting prosperity and sustainable development in both countries.



Signing ceremony for agreed minutes on the conclusion of the free trade agreement negotiation between Viet Nam and the UK on 11 December 2020



HARNESSING THE POWER OF ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Minister of State at the Department for International Trade (until 7 February 2023), and currently Minister at the Cabinet Office and Chairman of the Conservative Party, Rt Hon Greg Hands MP says there is much to be excited about when it comes to the UK-Viet Nam trade partnership

Viet Nam exemplifies South East Asia's growth story.

In just a few decades, this extraordinary country has used domestic reforms to open its economy to the world and fuel growth.

Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi are cities bursting with commerce. Businesses all around the world are recognising that Viet Nam is a country filled with opportunity and are setting up bases there. From fintech to digital education – Viet Nam is fast gaining a formidable global reputation for innovation.

The UK is proud to be a longstanding friend of Viet Nam, a nation that is so aptly otherwise known as the Land of the Ascending Dragon.

This year, our nations celebrate half a century of diplomatic ties. I know we both look forward to our warm and productive relationship continuing to develop over many decades to come.

For my part, as the UK's Minister of State for Trade Policy that means building even stronger trade links with Viet Nam. I have recently made my fourth visit to Viet Nam since 2018. This is a nation forecast to become the tenth largest importer on the planet by 2050, ahead of economic powerhouses like Canada and South Korea.

Our economic relationship, worth £5.9 billion in the 12 months ending June 2022, is already highly mutually beneficial.

Businesses in both countries have been making use of the UK-Viet Nam free trade agreement, which came into force in May 2021.

Major UK pharmaceutical companies like GSK and AstraZeneca are expanding into the Vietnamese economy.

The UK is also proving to be an increasingly important export market for Viet Nam – particularly for products like seafood, clothing and coffee.

And the UK-Viet Nam Joint Economic Trade Committee, set up to unblock trade barriers and grow commercial ties, has been delivering for businesses. For example, we have recently agreed an export health certificate that will open up the Vietnamese market for British pork, chicken and turkey.

Both our nations recognise that there is great opportunity to further harness the power of trade to fulfil our ambitions.

For instance, the UK's expertise in areas like offshore wind and solar power could support Viet Nam to achieve its 2050 net zero goals. The UK has the western world's largest installed offshore wind capacity.

And as a global centre for financial services, the UK is well placed to work with Viet Nam on its plans to turn Ho Chi Minh City into a major financial hub.

We are also exploring the possibilities for future partnerships in fast moving areas like artificial intelligence and smart cities.

The UK's relationship with Viet Nam is also an important element of our shift to embrace the Indo-Pacific, as the world's centre of economic gravity tilts eastwards.

The Indo-Pacific region is home to half the world's population and accounted for 50 per cent of global economic growth, in real terms, in the first two decades of this century. By 2050 that figure is expected to rise to 56 per cent.

A closer economic relationship with Viet Nam will help to unlock greater opportunities for UK businesses across the region.

In particular, it will mark another significant step on the UK's journey to full membership of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), of which Viet Nam is a founding member. This is a trade bloc made up of 11 markets, encompassing many of the world's great progressive nations.

The UK's membership of the CPTPP will also work to Viet Nam's advantage.

It will add another like-minded partner and strong voice to this powerful alliance, taking the trade bloc's GDP to £11 trillion, based on 2021 figures.

This extra heft will give us greater opportunity to jointly shape the rules of global trade in this influential region. This will mean they truly work for our businesses and citizens.

So there is much to be excited about when it comes to the UK-Viet Nam trade partnership. I have every confidence that over the years ahead our relationship with the Land of the Ascending Dragon will rise to ever greater heights.



THE NEXT 50 YEARS OF UK-VIET NAM RELATIONS WILL BE A WONDERFUL VOYAGE

By Prime Minister's Trade Envoy to Viet Nam, Rt Hon Mark Garnier MP

There are few things in life so enjoyable as playing a key role in an important moment of history. To be the UK Prime Minister's Trade Envoy to Viet Nam during the magical 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations is one such wonderful experience.

I must confess my experience of Viet Nam lies in just one trip last year. Leading a delegation of MPs from Parliament's International Trade Select Committee to study and understand the opportunities presented to the UK by joining the trade bloc CPTPP, I was struck by the vibrancy and enthusiasm of the young and ambitious population.

As an investment banker specialising in the markets of South East Asia back in the 1980s and '90s, I have wide experience of the region. I found in Viet Nam, last year, a determination to be successful that I recognised in some of the now more mature economies that were starting their economic journey when I was in my 20s.

You can tell a country's future by its youth. We met with students keen to learn English, eager to explore the world, and proud of the country they seek to call home to their life's ambition.

50 years of diplomatic relations between the UK and Viet Nam is a benchmark achievement. I aim to use it as a launchpad for deeper and wider economic ties between our two countries. Helping to build on the already excellent achievements of our team in Viet Nam, I want to see more UK businesses participate in what I believe will be an economic powerhouse in the coming years.

There are many British people who call Viet Nam their home, earning a living and playing their part in Viet Nam's economic journey. I look forward to playing my part in that journey, making sure that the next 50 years of relations between our two countries builds on the already excellent foundations laid down over the last 50. It will be a wonderful voyage.



Trade Envoy Mark Garnier and his team with Minister of State for Energy Security and Net Zero in the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero Graham Stuart and Viet Nam's Ambassador to the UK Nguyen Hoang Long at the Launching Ceremony of Viet Nam – UK Friendship Year 2023, Locarno Suite, FCDO on 22 February 2023

One of Viet Nam's lesser known gems: Ban Gioc waterfalls





Letter of Intent signing ceremony between HSBC and TrungNam Group on 15 February 2022

BUILDING A BETTER FUTURE TOGETHER

A comment by **Tim Evans, CEO of HSBC Viet Nam**

We have evolved together with Viet Nam, from initially providing simple conventional financial products and services, to now providing the market with sophisticated financial solutions

About two years ago, when COVID-19 was raging around the world and many of us were stuck in our homes, it became a common activity to track the news to understand what was happening in the outside world. There were many touching stories at the time.

One particularly heart-warming story highlighted how 'rice ATMs' were providing free rice for those who were suffering as a result of losing their livelihoods due to COVID-19 in Viet Nam. Based on the concept of an ATM dispensing cash, local entrepreneurs and donors built rice-dispensing machines to help the disadvantaged to survive the pandemic in several cities across the country. Little did they know that Viet Nam's first 'money' ATM was set up by HSBC a long time ago. This was a revolutionary milestone for the country's banking industry as ATMs eliminated the need to visit a bank to conduct basic financial transactions. This was only one of many other 'firsts' that HSBC has introduced to Viet Nam since it first opened an office in the country in 1870. Since then, we have worked with the country to help undertake other important market firsts such as being the first foreign bank to incorporate locally, issue the first blockchain Letter-of-Credit, issue the first bond by a foreign bank and the first to issue credit cards made from recycled PVC.

Throughout all the ups and downs, we have evolved together with Viet Nam, from initially providing simple conventional financial products and services, to now providing the market with sophisticated financial solutions, be they for individual customers or corporate clients. Over the years, HSBC has continued to help raise the bar of banking capabilities in Viet Nam and has helped contribute to the development of the local capital market. Despite the challenges of COVID-19, we became the first foreign commercial bank to successfully issue bonds in Viet Nam in 2020. The bond, which was named after the country's national flower 'Lotus', was oversubscribed by investors, underlining our commitment to grow in Viet Nam and contribute to the ongoing development of the capital market.

As Viet Nam continues to evolve at pace and is now entering a new era of 'different' development, we are accompanying Viet Nam in its journey to become a net zero economy by 2050, following the country's historic commitment made at COP26 in Glasgow in 2021. Apart from raising the awareness of the market and our clients and our team members to ESG-related matters, we are also providing novel sustainable financing solutions, thereby contributing to the market's growing sophistication, and backing Viet Nam's future sustainable growth.

Most recently, HSBC together with other initial members of GFANZ's Working Group have been working with partners in support of the Viet Nam Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP) by identifying barriers to sourcing the necessary private investment, advocating for the reforms necessary to address those barriers, and identifying approaches that could help bring in private finance at scale necessary to support Viet Nam's climate ambitions. This is yet another step forward that we have taken to support Viet Nam's green journey following on from our US\$12 billion green commitment made in early 2022, the recent signing of an MoU with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment last November to collaborate on their ESG agenda, and the list goes.

While moving forward with Viet Nam and opening up a world of opportunity for the country, its businesses and its people, we will continue to proactively play our part in further enhancing the Viet Nam-UK relationship, helping the two nations build a better future together, which is also the main theme of the 50th anniversary of the diplomatic relations between the two countries. As both countries will focus their attentions on education, trade and sustainability as key pillars to promoting their bilateral ties, HSBC looks forward to continuing to work with Viet Nam on all the exciting opportunities that this stimulating country offers in the years ahead.



VIET NAM: A PROMISING AND SUCCESSFUL DESTINATION FOR UK INVESTORS

By Minister of Planning and Investment, H.E. Nguyen Chi Dung

OVERVIEW OF VIET NAM'S ECONOMY

To maintain macroeconomic stability, Viet Nam has been proactive, flexible, accurate and timely in operating monetary and fiscal policies in order to improve the investment, business and international integration environment, and to successfully maintain a recent average annual GDP growth of 6 to 7 per cent. Viet Nam has transformed itself into a middle-income country with a modern, market-oriented economy with a socialist orientation. Viet Nam is a success story of poverty reduction and transforming economic growth.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic and various political and economic upheavals, Viet Nam still maintained growth between 2020 and 2021. Its successful approach to the health pandemic, while also recovering and developing its economy, has meant Viet Nam has become an economic bright spot. In 2022, Viet Nam's economy recorded an excess of US\$400 billion for the first time with a growth rate of 8.02 per cent. Investment and trade activities have both seen positive growth. FDI worth US\$441 billion and import and export turnover reaching US\$732.5 billion have led Viet Nam to become one of the top 20 countries attracting the largest FDI and the top 20 countries with the largest trade scale in the world.

Aside from its success in development, Viet Nam has become a model of international economic integration, and is valued as an active and responsible member of the international community. Until now, Viet Nam has negotiated and signed 15 FTAs, including new generation FTAs such as CPTPP, EVFTA, RCEP, etc., which have established free trade relations with more than 60 countries and partners with the largest and most developed markets in the world.

With the solid foundation of the aforementioned achievements, Viet Nam continues to be given positive forecasts for GDP growth (at a rate of 6.3 – 7.0 per cent for 2023 to 2024) by most international organisations. According to EuroCham's survey in January 2023, Viet Nam has been rated in the top five global investment destinations.

Viet Nam is striving to become a high-income developed country by 2045 through accelerating economic restructuring, transforming into the growth model of scientific and technological orientation and innovation, taking advantage and catching up with new trends of green economy, digital economy, circular economy and knowledge economy, in order to create new driving forces, new growth poles, and economic breakthrough. Viet Nam is the first country to commit and effectively deploy the National Strategy on Green Growth, continuing to affirm its role as an active and responsible member of the international community.

VIET NAM - UK ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Viet Nam and the UK established diplomatic ties back in 1973. Having developed over the course of 50 years, the relationship between the two countries is now at its best stage in all fields of politics, economics, social issues, education, healthcare, human resource exchanges, etc. As strategic partners, the two sides affirm to always support each other on the path of economic development, especially attaching importance to ensuring social justice in socio-economic development policies. Viet Nam and the UK signed the UK – Viet Nam Free Trade Agreement (UKVFTA) in 2020. This is an important legal framework to create and further promote the efficiency of economic - investment - trade cooperation between the two countries.

Until now, there have been 511 investment projects from the UK with a total registered capital of approximately US\$4.25 billion, ranking 15/142 among countries and territories investing in Viet Nam. Meanwhile, Viet Nam has 15 projects in the UK worth nearly US\$18 million. The two sides also actively promote cooperative activities through the Anglo-ASEAN regional funds such as the Newton Fund, the Prosperity Fund and a number of other bilateral funds. In 2022, bilateral trade has reached about US\$6.9 billion, of which exports hit nearly US\$6.1 billion and imports US\$771 million, leading the UK to be Viet Nam's third largest trading partner in Europe, and Viet Nam's ninth largest export market in the world.



PROSPECTS AND DIRECTIONS FOR COOPERATION IN THE FUTURE

There have been plenty of opportunities for the two economies to cooperate and complement each other in future development, especially in the sectors of finance, science, high technology and innovation, which are some of the UK's major areas of strength. These are also the fields that Viet Nam is focusing on in the near future.

Viet Nam's socio-economic development strategy and strategy of foreign investment cooperation in the period of 2021-2030 plans to heavily participate in the global chain of production, trade, investment and finance; plans to continue to expand its economy; plans to attract FDI with high-quality technology; and support domestic enterprises to improve their science and technology and production capacity for better development requirements.

Viet Nam has several advantages: (i) political stability; (ii) high economic growth; (iii) young and abundant human resources; (iv) competitive production costs; (v) market potential; (vi) extensive international integration; (vii) open policy with competitive incentives; and (viii) a strategic geographical location. This makes Viet Nam suitable for major participation in the global

supply chain, which has been further promoting effective economic - investment - trade cooperation with the UK as well as the business communities of the two countries by effectively implementing these following solutions:

- (1) Bilateral cooperation mechanisms, especially the Viet Nam-UK Joint Committee on economics, investment and trade cooperation – the mainstay of the UK-Viet Nam Strategic Partnership.
- (2) Promoting cooperation in development sectors such as high technology, renewable energy, green transformation, digital transformation, circular economy, education and financial services, while at the same time strengthening cooperation through investment funds
- (3) Implementing assistance from the UK government to support Viet Nam to form a regional and international financial centre.

With great efforts, determination and above all, the strong friendship of the two nations, I believe that trade and investment cooperation will continue to develop and be an important pillar in the bilateral relationship. The relationship between Viet Nam and the UK also plays as a driving force to bring the strategic partnership to a new level of prosperity for both sides.



UK - VIET NAM COOPERATION IN AGRICULTURE

Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Rt Hon Thérèse Coffey MP, discusses a mutually beneficial partnership that is gaining momentum

Viet Nam is a priority partner for the UK in the Indo-Pacific and our partnership has gone from strength-to-strength since diplomatic relations were established back in 1973, bringing real benefits to the British and Vietnamese people. Throughout the past decade we have made remarkable and reassuring progress on agriculture – and we share a desire to develop that even further in the years ahead.

Our strong partnership with Viet Nam is exemplified by our thriving bilateral trade, supported by the UK-Viet Nam Joint Economic Trade Committee.

In December 2020, we signed the UK-Viet Nam Free Trade Agreement. That means the British people continue to enjoy classic Vietnamese products like shrimp – and we are proud that the Vietnamese people can enjoy our iconic products as well, including Scotch Whisky and seafood from across the British Isles.

In 2021, we achieved £5.5 billion of total bilateral trade between our two nations.

In London in November 2022, we had the pleasure of welcoming Viet Nam's Vice Minister of

Agriculture and Rural Development, Phung Duc Tien. During this trip, we signed an historic Memorandum of Understanding on agri-food that paves the way for a new era of cooperation – opening new markets for agri-food and drink products, deepening collaboration, sharing best practice on sustainable agriculture, and helping us both meet our commitments to reach net zero by 2050.

Our new Agriculture, Food and Drink Attaché is about to take up his post in Hanoi – to help us make good on the promise of that agreement and catalyse even greater growth in imports and exports.

And this month, we continue negotiations for the UK to join the CPTPP trading bloc this year – a move that would open hundreds of new opportunities for agri-exporters and simplify trade in the region as it continues to grow.

So, as we celebrate the remarkable and reassuring half century of diplomatic relations between the UK and Viet Nam, I hope that both our countries will take inspiration from the remarkable and reassuring progress we have already made – as we write the next chapter of our shared story.



Signing ceremony of the cooperation agreement between the UK Permanent Secretary of the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Tamara Finkelstein and Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development of Viet Nam Phung Duc Tien on 12 November, 2022 in London.



THE DEVELOPMENT OF VIET NAM'S ICT INDUSTRY AND OPPORTUNITY FOR VIET NAM - UK COOPERATION

By Acting Director General, Authority of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Industry, Ministry of Information and Communications, Mr. Nguyen Thien Nghia

In recent years, the Party, State and Government of Viet Nam have paid attention and created favourable conditions for supporting and promoting the development of the ICT industry. Viet Nam's ICT industry has made significant breakthroughs in recent years, becoming one of the country's most important economic sectors. In 2022, the industry reached an estimated revenue of US\$148 billion, established a digital workforce of more than 1.2 million people with approximately 70,000 digital enterprises and generated a hardware and electronics export turnover of over US\$100 billion. Around 60 per cent of manufacturing enterprises have switched their focus from low-value single-stage processing to high-value full-process manufacturing. For the first time, the software solutions and services revenue of Vietnamese digital enterprise abroad has surpassed US\$1 billion, while the combined revenue in foreign markets of Vietnamese IT software and services enterprises exceeded US\$2.2 billion. Foreign direct investment in Viet Nam has been shifted from manufacturing industries to research and development activities, via the creation of new R&D centres in Viet Nam.

The 'Make in Viet Nam' guideline was first mentioned at the 2019 National Forum on Developing Vietnamese Digital Enterprises titled 'Aspiration, vision and development orientation for a strong and prosperous Viet Nam,' and later specified in the Prime Minister's Directive No. 01/CT-TTg dated 14 January 2020. This meant "Vietnamese enterprises striving to gradually master the technologies, proactively design and build products, and proactively create new services, solutions, and business models." Here the Ministry of Information and Communications (MIC) and the government expressed the wish for a decisive shift from assembling and manufacturing to proactive designing and creating, thereby allowing for Vietnamese-made digital products, contributing to the nation's development and going global.

In the four years since 'Make in Viet Nam' was initiated, Vietnamese digital enterprises have committed to implementing the national digital transformation strategy while simultaneously entering a new phase of development, bringing 'Make in Viet Nam' products to the world, solving Viet Nam's problems relating to digital transformation and digital economic growth, and becoming global enterprises.

Today, the IT consumer market has a gross value of around US\$1.803 trillion, only 30 per cent of which is

accounted for by the world's largest digital technology companies at US\$531 billion, while the remaining 70 per cent belongs to various IT software and services providers at US\$41.272 trillion. Thus, there are plenty of opportunities in the world's technology markets. Meanwhile, the Vietnamese market is too small in comparison with the scale of the IT workforce of today and the future. Viet Nam's digital enterprises have the advantage of a labour force that is not only highly creative and dynamic, but also highly competitive in terms of cost when compared to the global IT market. This is why Viet Nam's digital enterprises need to go abroad, bringing Vietnamese intellect and technologies into uncharted territories.

Based on this assessment, at the fourth National Forum on Digital Technology Enterprises in late 2022, the MIC encouraged Vietnamese digital enterprises to seek new opportunities and ways to explore foreign markets. In February 2023, the Ministry organised the 'Vietnamese Digital Technology Enterprises Going Global' roundtable. This event marked the beginning of MIC's support campaign for Vietnamese digital enterprises operating or planning to operate in foreign countries.


OPPORTUNITIES FOR VIETNAMESE DIGITAL ENTERPRISES IN THE UK

Viet Nam – UK relations have never been better, despite many global disruptions. In recent years, the Viet Nam – UK Strategic Partnership has continued to grow significantly and yielded positive results.

Viet Nam is one of the few Asian partners to have signed a Free Trade Agreement (the UKVFTA) with the UK, an important basis from which our bilateral economic and trade relations will reach new heights.

In the ICT sector, Viet Nam's MIC and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media, and Sports in the UK signed a 'Letter of Intent regarding cooperation in digital economy and digital transformation' on 1 November 2021. Today, several Vietnamese digital enterprises are providing digital products, services and solutions for the UK's e-commerce markets and supporting the digital transformation of some British factories and industrial zones such as FPT, VMO and NTQ.

In the near future, with the strategy to help Vietnamese digital enterprises go global, the MIC and the Viet Nam government wish the UK would further create favourable conditions for Vietnamese digital enterprises to bring 'Make in Viet Nam' products to the British market.



FPT's Journey to the West, Transforming and Elevating the UK Tech Industry

VIET NAM-BORN TECH COMPANY FPT'S JOURNEY TO THE WEST

Over a decade ago, FPT set its footprint for the first time in the European region, and also established the company's subsidiary, FPT UK. This initiative marked an excellent step for the Viet Nam-born tech company in its journey to the West, where standards are high, and market demands are escalating quickly amid digital transformation.

FPT targeted the UK and Europe among its key geographic locations for capital commitment in the vision of US\$1 billion in revenue by the end of 2023. The Hanoi-based tech corporation is also set to grow its workforce to over 1,000 in Europe, a 50 per cent annual growth rate, and become a strategic partner of 20 Fortune 500 companies. With a strong foundation built over two-plus decades in the region, FPT is well-positioned to help its clients in the area to transform digitally, especially at a time when the digitalisation of businesses and services is advancing at a rapid speed post-global pandemic.

With the plan set, the UK was chosen as one of the destinations for FPT to penetrate further into the European region. For years, the corporation has been becoming a key business partner, helping UK enterprises to ensure continuity, pace and cost-effectiveness, then to become agile globally. FPT expects a tremendous opportunity to bring its clients the most innovative thinking and capabilities. In 2023, the leading IT services provider aims to underpin critical programmes such as AI, Big Data, AR/VR, Blockchain, Cloud and Automation into its

strategy to enhance its UK customers and to further its market share. The company looks to position itself as the leading digital transformation company in the UK, setting its target industries as healthcare, insurance and automotive for 2023. With its constant investment in technical development – especially with a future establishing AI center in Quy Nhon, Viet Nam – FPT is confident to continue strengthening its position as a global strategic partner for businesses seeking to transform their operations.

Initially a Vietnamese tech enterprise, FPT's essential role is to strengthen the relationship between Asia and Europe in general, and between Viet Nam and the UK, in particular. With globalisation and digitalisation, enhancing these relationships is as crucial as ever. With a solid foundation of trained IT professionals, the company also expects to provide a strong workforce, highly trained in technical proficiency, to support UK companies in tackling emerging digital needs. As 2023 marks the 50th anniversary of the Viet Nam - UK diplomatic relations, FPT is committed to helping tighten this strategic bilateral cooperation using its world-class tech proficiency, boosting commercial trading between the two countries, as well as bridging its UK partners with strong human resources from FPT and other South East Asian countries.



OPPORTUNITIES AND POTENTIAL FOR EDUCATION COOPERATION

*Minister of Education and Training, H.E. Nguyen Kim Son writes
about education cooperation between Viet Nam and the UK*

Viet Nam has always considered education to be a top national policy. Indeed, education development is one of the three priorities to implement Viet Nam's socio-economic development strategy for 2021 to 2030: "Creating a breakthrough in fundamental and comprehensive innovation in education and training, developing high-quality human resources, attracting and appreciating talents. Promoting research transfer and strongly applying the achievements of the Industrial Revolution 4.0 to all areas of social life."

To implement this strategy, Viet Nam's government has issued numerous policies to renew the country's education system fundamentally and comprehensively, in order to strengthen international cooperation, and attract domestic and foreign resources to improve the quality of schools and universities according to international standards. The education sector has also built and perfected a legal and institutional system, creating favourable conditions for education integration.

International integration in education and training is carried out at bilateral and multilateral levels, and also through participation in international and regional mechanisms. Viet Nam has established educational cooperation relationships with over 100 countries and territories. This has helped to effectively implement the following: agreements with other countries on education cooperation, programmes of internationally recognised diplomas and credits, pilot projects of advanced education models and establish training links with other countries.

Within the education sector, Viet Nam has attracted over 500 foreign investment projects, worth over US\$4 billion, and has approved 500-plus joint training programmes with higher education institutions in other countries.

Established in 1989, education and training cooperation between the two countries has gone from strength-to-strength. An agreement on educational cooperation was signed in March 2008, and then a Memorandum of Understanding in October 2019. Since then, education and training cooperation with the UK has achieved important results, outlined below.

Currently, the UK is Viet Nam's leading partner in this field, with more than 97 joint training programmes at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. These are in fields of economics, business, English language training and technology transfer in the field of education, and all support professional capacity building of our Vietnamese teachers. At secondary school level, the Cambridge Integrated Programme has been implemented in Ho Chi Minh, Hanoi, Hai Phong and Da Nang. Over 100 private educational institutions use this integrated programme at primary and secondary school levels. Seven public institutions in Hanoi currently have pilot projects in place teaching the Cambridge Integrated Programme at secondary school level.

The British Council has also supported Viet Nam on various education and training projects. Firstly, to develop the content of the national core faculty training programme at ten key universities; secondly, pilot training to develop English teachers in primary, middle and high schools in 63 provinces and cities; and also by providing free, up-to-date learning resources, including online courses and activities for trainers, teachers and learners of all ages through British Council websites.

Total UK investment in education in Viet Nam is estimated to be over US\$200 million. So far, British investors have helped fund five schools and one university. Many British investors have also expressed an interest in investing in Vietnamese universities and bilingual schools.

EXPANDING COOPERATION IN THE FUTURE

The Viet Nam - UK relationship has great potential as both countries desire to further promote the strategic partnership. Educational cooperation between Viet Nam and the UK has grown in breadth; Viet Nam wishes to further develop this relationship in depth.

Viet Nam has a strong advantage in terms of its high international integration in education and training. And there has been a surge in demand for English language education programmes at all levels, in order to meet the needs of globalisation and to build young global citizens of Viet Nam.

The British government has identified Viet Nam as one of the five priority countries in its international education strategy developed in 2019. Thus, the potential for development, education and training cooperation between the two countries is very large.

Viet Nam has the appeal of a large market of learners who are willing to pay for international educational content at all levels of study. It is hoped that leading British universities will invest in establishing educational institutions, representative offices, plus education and training links, to create a high-quality international learning environment in Viet Nam, with reasonable costs to meet the needs of students.

The UK is the world's leading education exporter. We are delighted that our British partners are willing to cooperate with Viet Nam to improve the quality of our education and teacher training, English training and English teachers; and improve the capacity of education quality accreditation. We are also pleased our British partners will support the development of key industries like science, technology and innovation to help Viet Nam's workforce enter the digital era.

With the available and potential resources, education cooperation between the UK and Viet Nam will continue develop, commensurate with the potential and strength of both countries.



PARTNERSHIP FOR LIFE-LONG LEARNING

UK Government International Education Champion Professor Sir Steve Smith has his sights set on Viet Nam as a priority area

Celebrating the 50th anniversary of Viet Nam - UK diplomatic relations comes at a key time. Education is a driving force in the relationship and the large number of opportunities for collaboration are such that Viet Nam has been designated one of the five priority countries for me as the UK's International Education Champion.

The relationship is very much two-way. Viet Nam understands the importance of life-long learning, particularly the skills needed to drive the economy, and the UK seeks to develop a much closer trading relationship with South East Asia, and sees Viet Nam as a natural business partner. The UK education sector works to align with Viet Nam's ambitions and share expertise, particularly for guidelines and legislation, to create inclusive, sustainable, quality education and skills training. That includes offering advice on online pedagogy, which is currently being trialled in Viet Nam; demonstrating how the country is looking to adopt new teaching and assessment methods, to sit alongside traditional ones.

And the importance of the relationship is borne out by the two, very productive, Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) our countries have signed in recent years. Since the first, signed in 2019 during one of our missions to Viet Nam, four UK schools who joined us on that mission have now partnered in Viet Nam, showing just how keen UK independent schools are to work with Viet Nam. And I'm delighted that the Skills MoU of last year has laid the path for a UK skills mission to Viet Nam that took place in February this year.

I was able to visit Viet Nam at the end of 2022, my first trip as International Education Champion, when I had pleasure of meeting the Ho Chi Minh City Peoples Committee. During my visit, Viet Nam hosted the latest edition of the highly influential Wilton Park education dialogues; an impressive gathering of ministers and senior education officials from across South East Asia, where we were able to share experiences and discuss educational solutions, including green tech skills. This segues with our status as an ASEAN Dialogue Partner, for which education is a key theme under the cross-Government Plan of Action.

In all this work, my colleagues and I are working closely with the British Council on key initiatives; one area being English language teaching. Preparing students for the global employment market requires them to have excellent language skills, and raising the standard of English in young people also encourages investment from international companies seeking a multi-skilled and international-ready workforce. Demand for quality English language training for all ages has bounced back rapidly, as Viet Nam emerges from COVID-19. Primary school age children are the fastest growing segment, but demand for secondary academic-oriented courses is at its height, where students want to achieve success at universities both in Viet Nam and abroad. Other providers continue to invest in new locations in Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City and beyond.

UK higher education institutions continue to develop strong partnerships with institutions in Viet Nam, and there is continued interest in working together to develop the capacity of Vietnamese higher education in many subject areas, from business to teacher training. And I know that the Vietnamese government has outlined their intention to increase UK students studying in their nation, and there has been positive interest for UK students to study there under the Turing scheme.

In 2021-22, there were 2,660 Vietnamese students studying at UK higher education institutions, and a further 7,140 studying in Viet Nam for UK HE qualifications via the transnational education (TNE) offer, up from 5,165 in the previous year.



Sir Steve Smith at the Wilton Park Education Dialogue in Viet Nam in November 2022

In the same year, there were around 450 applications from UK students to spend time in Vietnamese schools and universities under the Turing Scheme. As well as TNE, digital transformation, quality assurance and innovation are key areas for the UK-Vietnamese partnership.

I'm pleased to say that, in the latter part of last year, QAA became the first UK accrediting body licenced in Viet Nam, a milestone in quality assurance in Viet Nam and something that will support the development and quality delivery of UK HE TNE programmes in the country.

Last September, trainees based in over 40 different countries – including Viet Nam – started their journey into teaching a new UK-government backed qualification: iQTS (international qualified teacher status). Delivered by Department for Education-approved English teacher training providers, the course is built on evidence-based methods and standards, with contextualisation for the wide variety of settings trainees may be in. This is exemplified by the high-quality courses currently being run in Viet Nam delivered by providers including the University of Sunderland and the University of Warwick. Over the coming years, the programme is expected to grow in Viet Nam with more trainees, schools and providers getting involved in the work to make quality teacher training

accessible to all, so that schools can recruit, retain and develop local talent and further contribute to the global pool of teachers.

Chevening scholarships were first introduced in Viet Nam in 1993, and since then, 500 Vietnamese scholars have benefitted. The Chevening alumni network in Viet Nam is dynamic and comprises talented people working in different sectors across Viet Nam, with scholars from the University of East Anglia, University of Warwick, Cardiff University, University of Leeds and University of Northampton.

Underlying the breadth of the education sector is Edtech, and its importance in Viet Nam and the wider region is exemplified by UK trade association BESA's BESS event held annually in the country; taking place this year in April.

The UK welcomes views on its education offer to Viet Nam, and reflections on challenges and areas of opportunity within the long-standing UK-Viet Nam relationship, together with creative suggestions for maximising this year's celebration year.

I very much look forward to returning to Viet Nam soon. In the meantime, I do hope that Vietnamese ministers can attend the Education World Forum being held in London this May, and that there be many more years of this important relationship to come.



EDUCATION & TRAINING

Vice Chancellor and President Professor Ray Gordon explains why British University Viet Nam is an example of the collaborative benefit that can be achieved between countries in higher education.

Viet Nam is an emerging economy with a strong GDP – many economists argue that it is the current ‘jewel of Asia’. The nature and speed of the nation’s growth, however, has left Viet Nam with a labour force skills gap. Viet Nam has been working to reform its education and training policies to facilitate the rapid re-skilling required to support the ongoing development of the nation, which, of course, will take time.

The Vietnamese people are aware of the heritage and quality of the British education system and hold it in high regard. Facilitating collaboration between Vietnamese education entities and high-quality international education systems, is therefore one of the central objectives of Viet Nam’s foreign policy.

Established in 2009, the British University Viet Nam (BUV) is an international QS 5-Star rated and QAA accredited university offering opportunities for undergraduate and postgraduate students from Viet Nam, and the region, to study full British degree programmes from the University of London and Staffordshire University. Students can also transfer to many British universities to complete their degrees in the UK.



Aligning with the heritage of the British higher education system, BUV’s mission is to produce graduates who are prepared for a challenging future; are trained in the ethic of kindness and caring for people and the environment; and, irrespective of their discipline of study they are also trained in design thinking, innovation processes and how to create opportunities for themselves and others.

BUV has built an award-winning campus located in the Ecopark Township, Hung Yen, approximately 30 minutes’ drive from the nation’s capital, Hanoi. Phase one of the campus construction opened in 2018 and was funded by an investment of US\$52 million and accommodates up to 3,000 students. Upon completion of the final phase in 2028, the total planned investment will be US\$165 million and will meet the training needs of more than 8,000 students. This level of investment allows Vietnamese students to experience learning spaces and technologies equivalent to the best in the world.

To provide greater access to the university for different socio-economic groups, the BUV also offers scholarships and financial aid programmes. In 2023, BUV officially increased its scholarships to a value of 45 billion VND (US\$1.9 million), which will include, but is not limited to British Ambassador Scholarships, Founders’ Scholarships and Lion’s Heart Scholarships - the latter being for talented students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

BUV also commits resources to more short-term training needs for Viet Nam. Prior to COVID-19 the university’s Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching collaborated with the Hanoi Department of Education and Training to train more than 2,000 Vietnamese high school teachers, administrators, and education leaders in short course programmes focusing on the introduction of contemporary pedagogical models and practices, the use of digital education technology, and contemporary education management practices. The university’s Centre for Research & Innovation is working on direct research projects and events that bring together international researchers from across the world with Vietnamese researchers and corporations to facilitate collaboration on projects that focus on the Viet Nam government’s economic and social priorities.

To summarise, the British University Viet Nam is considered an example of how meaningful impact and collaborative benefit can be achieved between countries in higher education. BUV will continue to invest in mutually beneficial projects that contribute to both the British and Viet Nam education sectors.



BLENDING OF TWO CULTURES

Principal of the British International School Ho Chi Minh City Anthony Rowlands highlights their outstanding British-style education for Vietnamese and international students



Established in 1997, The British International School, Ho Chi Minh City (BIS HCMC) has proudly provided an outstanding British-style education to Vietnamese and international students for 25 years. With around 2,400 students from 55 different nationalities, it is proud to be the leading international school in Viet Nam.

BIS has contributed significantly to increased standards of education in Viet Nam through its unique blended curriculum, personalised learning, dedicated and inspiring teachers along with extensive co-curricular activities. This holistic education approach fosters a love of learning, and balances academic success with character development and wellbeing. The blend of the renowned English Early Years Framework and National Curriculum, International Primary Curriculum, IGCSE's and International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP) ensures every student has the best possible learning opportunities and experiences.



Teachers are predominately British educated and benefit from extensive professional development from the UK, including a master's in Education at King's College London. Being a Nord Anglia Education school, a British-based organisation of over 80 schools, enables BIS to further deploy new and innovative world-class teaching models, develop its educational practices constantly and offer global opportunities for all students.

Academic results are significantly above UK and global averages. Hundreds of Vietnamese students have graduated from BIS HCMC and gone on to study at top universities across the world and UK, including the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge, UCL and Imperial College London.



The school is accredited by CIS, is an IB World School and a member of FOBISIA, and in 2022, following a British Schools Overseas inspection, retained its "Outstanding in Every Category" status.

Whilst BIS is a British school, its respect for Vietnamese culture is woven throughout. The blending of the two cultures is perfectly represented in the IBDP where Vietnamese students have the option of taking the bilingual IBDP and studying Vietnamese Literature.



UK Prime Minister's Trade Envoy to Viet Nam Graham Stuart MP and Her Majesty's Ambassador to Viet Nam Gareth Ward attending the inauguration of Reigate Grammar School Viet Nam on 4th April 2022.

REIGATE GRAMMAR SCHOOL IN VIET NAM: A NEW PATH IN EDUCATION COOPERATION

British education has an enduring and deserved reputation for excellence globally, including in Viet Nam. Education cooperation has been a key pillar of the Viet Nam - UK Strategic Partnership since the two countries established the education and training cooperation relationship in 1989.

The remarkable achievements in educational cooperation between the two countries can be seen in the increasing number of Vietnamese students studying in the UK in recent years, and the direct investment from UK educational businesses and organisations in Viet Nam. A recent project that offers the best British international education while preserving the values and principles of Vietnamese education for students aged 3-18 in Hanoi, is the Reigate Grammar School Viet Nam (RGS Viet Nam).

In recognition of this important milestone in strategic cooperation, Reigate Grammar School Viet Nam was honoured to have the UK Prime Minister's Trade Envoy to Viet Nam, Graham Stuart, and the British Ambassador to Viet Nam Gareth Ward, attend an inauguration ceremony unveiling the sign of the school's new name, and officially opening the school as Reigate Grammar School Viet Nam.

As the first school in Viet Nam to deploy this model of international education cooperation, RGS Viet Nam has become a member of international RGS schools. In the UK, Reigate Grammar School is one of the country's leading private schools for talented students, with nearly 350 years of educational experience. RGS Viet Nam is an exemplary case of successful educational cooperation between the two countries.

The success and continuous development of RGS Viet Nam over the past 10 years has created a wonderful international community of citizens, including students and teachers. As a not-for-profit, student-centred institution centred on inspirational learning – with a prestigious international high school training programme accredited by International Baccalaureate and Cambridge – RGS Viet Nam will continue to constantly improve the quality of its education, aiming to become one of the best international schools in the region.





A DEEP COMMITMENT

Vice President of Pearson Jane Baker discusses securing the right skills for Viet Nam's future

Pearson is deeply committed to Viet Nam; it is an important country for our international work. Over the past 18 years, Pearson has supported thousands of students to gain relevant skills and qualifications. With a focus on delivering skills for the future, our recent work in Viet Nam supports the country's long-term economic development by ensuring its sustainable growth and the formation of its skilled workforce of tomorrow.

In November 2022, I led the Pearson delegation to the Wilton Park Dialogue in Ho Chi Minh City. The event focused on green/digital skill development, and we shared our expertise with governments from across the ASEAN region. It was a great opportunity to discuss how we could support countries including Viet Nam to tackle the net zero challenge by developing the skilled workforce of the future.

As part of my trip, I was also privileged to visit Nova College in Ho Chi Minh City, who deliver Pearson's BTEC Higher National undergraduate qualifications in subjects including Business and Hospitality Management. We met with students and signed an MoU with the college to deliver more globally recognised Pearson qualifications, which will equip their learners with the skills for great careers. We were delighted that Sam Wood, UK's Deputy Consul General, witnessed the signing and recognised the importance of these kinds of partnerships to support the development of Viet Nam's skilled workforce.

I was also fortunate to visit FPT and Hanoi University of Technology (Hactech), which delivers a range of BTEC Higher National qualifications in key sectors including Computing and Business. Again, I was honoured to meet the students and learn more about the Pearson courses they are studying and their future ambitions.

BTECs provide a high-quality learning pathway to employment and/or further study, and on the college visits I was very impressed by the quality of teaching and learning, and the student's focus on developing key skills as part of their course. Technical and Vocational Education and Training is key to developing job-ready skills and the confidence to thrive in work, and it was wonderful to witness this in action.

On the 50th anniversary of Viet Nam's diplomatic relations with the UK – and beyond – we're proud to be working with these partners to secure the right skills for Viet Nam's future.





VIET NAM

- AN ATTRACTIVE DESTINATION

Minister of Culture, Sports and Tourism, H.E. Nguyen Van Hung says Viet Nam has a vast cultural heritage, 3,000 islands and beautiful beaches to explore, plus a rich and unique cuisine



Son Doong Cave
Oxalis Adventure / Ryan Deboodt

Since the Viet Nam - UK Strategic Partnership was established in 2010, bilateral relations have developed positively, effectively and comprehensively in many sectors. During this process, Viet Nam - UK tourism cooperation has become a highlight, contributing to a well-developed friendship, with mutual trust, understanding and confidence between the populations of both countries, which has strongly promoted bilateral cooperation.

The beautiful country of Viet Nam possesses natural, diverse and unique cultural resources, and has a safe, hospitable and developed tourism offering for its visitors.

Over 3,260km of Viet Nam's coastline plays host to more than 3,000 islands, 125 beaches and many beautiful bays. Hundreds of landmarks and monuments are included in the country's vast cultural heritage, along with a rich and unique cuisine. In recent years, Viet Nam's tourism has received many prestigious international awards, demonstrating recognition from the international community and affirming Viet Nam's attractiveness to international tourists. Over the past five years, these gongs have included: Asia's Leading Destination Award, Asia's Leading Cultural Destination, Asia's Leading Culinary Destination, Asia's Leading Heritage Destination, the World's Leading Heritage Destination, Asia's Leading Sustainable Tourism Destination, Asia's Best Golf Destination and the World's Best Golf Destination. Many places in Viet Nam have been voted as the world's top destinations by major news agencies and travel websites and newspapers such as CNN, BBC, Travel Channel, Trip Advisor, *The Telegraph*, etc. with Ha Noi, Ha Long, Ho Chi Minh City, Da Nang, Hoi An and Phu Quoc, being some of their top attractions to visit. Indeed, the world's largest natural cave Son Doong in Quang Binh, discovered by British and Vietnamese cave explorers, has become an attractive destination for adventure tourists all over the world.

Viet Nam's government has created favourable conditions for British tourists to experience and discover the culture, people and beauty of Viet Nam. The UK is among 13 countries to enjoy visa exemptions on entry into Viet Nam. Up to four direct flights a week from Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh City to London maintain the UK as one of the top two European countries in terms of tourist arrivals over the past 10 years. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of British tourists travelling to Viet Nam grew by 10 to 15

per cent per year, of which 2019 was a record number with more than 315,000 tourists coming to relax, and discover the nature and culture of Viet Nam.

After the COVID-19 lockdown, Viet Nam became the first country in South East Asia to fully reopen its tourism industry on 15 March 2022. Tourism has gradually recovered, achieving encouraging results, and the industry has also worked hard to evolve with the changing needs and tastes of tourists following the pandemic. In 2022, the number of international tourists travelling to Viet Nam reached over 3.6 million, 67,337 of which were British, a sharp increase compared to the same period in the previous year.

Viet Nam also re-attended the World Travel Market (WTM) – one of the world's largest tourism events held in London in November 2022 – affirming Viet Nam tourism's strong recovery. The Visit Viet Nam UK Office in the UK also reopened after a temporary closure during the health pandemic (1 Heddons Street, Regent Street, Mayfair, London W1B 4BD E: vietnam@pc.agency).

The developing bilateral friendship between Viet Nam and the UK also encourages tourism cooperation between the two countries, especially between tourism management agencies, local authorities, tourism associations, the travel agency network, hotels and airlines. Detailed agreements must be signed to create a framework for effective two-way tourism cooperation. This will do a number of things: support the Visit Viet Nam UK Office to operate effectively in the UK; simplify visa procedures; create favourable travel conditions for tourists from both countries; help develop diverse and attractive tourism products; strengthen cooperation in training and developing human resources for tourism; and encourage attendance at international tourism events held in each country such as WTM in London, VITM in Hanoi and ITE HCMC in Ho Chi Minh City.

In 2023, Viet Nam and the UK celebrate the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations, opening a new chapter in the long-term cooperation between the two countries. Cooperation between Viet Nam and the UK will continue to take great strides, contributing to the development of both countries, and helping to implement the 'Joint Statement on the Viet Nam-UK Strategic Partnership: Development Orientation in the Next 10 Years,' adopted in 2020, promoting peace and friendship around the world.



Vidotour team during Viet Nam Days in the UK 2022

VIDOTOUR PROMOTES VIET NAM TOURISM IN THE UK

A Dong Tourism and Trading Co. Ltd (Vidotour) was established in the 1990s. After more than 33 years of being in the market, Vidotour constantly improves its working methods, and applies science and technology to improve job performance. Vidotour has maintained its momentum in the market bringing visitors from the UK to Viet Nam, accounting for 20 per cent of the total number of visitors of this market across the country. Favourable environmental conditions have meant that many scenic areas have preserved their wild and natural characteristics, meaning Viet Nam is an up-and-coming tourist destination in the European region.



Vidotour Head Office – Ho Chi Minh City

On 29 March 2022, the General Statistics Office made an announcement that the number of international visitors to Viet Nam in the first three months of 2022 was estimated to be close to 91,000, representing an increase of 89.1 per cent over the same period in the previous year. The majority of British tourists still come to Viet Nam to enjoy the country's resorts, as well as learning and exploring the country's natural landscapes. They do, however, also come to Viet Nam for other reasons, such as conferences and seminars for business and work.

In order to attract more British tourists to Viet Nam, the industry is starting to implement various initiatives, including: building suitable tourism products; strengthening promotion and publicity; promoting links between aviation and tourism; simplifying entry procedures; promoting international cooperation and setting up a tourism representative office in the UK.

With its many years of experience, Vidotour is also working with the UK tourism market by participating in events such as the World Travel Market, which takes place every November in London. Vidotour has a wealth of experience in the tourism industry, capturing and understanding the needs of tourists. Furthermore, while the tourism industry was recovering from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, Vidotour collaborated with the Vietnamese Embassy and local businesses to organise Viet Nam Week in the UK as part of the celebration of HM The Queen's Platinum Jubilee in 2022. Vidotour was also one of a group of Vietnamese companies that committed to taking part in COP26 in Glasgow back in 2021. The company also works closely with the British Embassy in Viet Nam to organise events to encourage business and facilitate new connections between British companies. This also adds to an understanding of Vietnamese culture while fostering opportunities for investment and growth in the two countries' respective commercial sectors.

Because Viet Nam is a developing destination, it offers a diverse range of products that can cater to the requirements and preferences of UK market segments. Additionally, Viet Nam is conveniently connected to several other tourist hotspots in the region, making it an attractive option for British travellers. The UK and Viet Nam are approximately 12 hours apart in flight time, when travelling direct between the two countries.

In addition, Vidotour encourages market research as well as regular marketing activities, plus links with market partners and strengthening communication through cultural exchange activities and trade promotion events between the UK and Viet Nam. This will help to connect the two nations even more in the years to come.



VIETNAM AIRLINES



CEO of Vietnam Airlines
Le Hong Ha



Vietnam Airlines, a member of Skyteam Alliance, is the flag carrier of Viet Nam, connecting the world's most thriving destinations, domestically, regionally and globally, operating 96 routes to 22 domestic and 27 international destinations.

Vietnam Airlines boasts one of the newest and most modern fleets in Asia, highlighted by their Boeing 787-9, 787-10 Dreamliners, Airbus A350-900 XWBs and Airbus A321neo.

Vietnam Airlines (www.vietnamairlines.com) is the only airline operating nonstop services between London Heathrow and both Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. Flights are operated by the latest Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner featuring Economy, Premium Economy and Business Class cabins offering impeccable levels of comfort and service throughout every journey.

The airline takes great pride in the fact it enhances connectivity between British, European and Vietnamese markets, boosting commercial ties and economic recovery following the pandemic. In 2019, the UK was ranked as Vietnam Airlines' top 10 largest source of international visitors to Viet Nam.

The carrier is recognised as one of the region's finest airlines thanks to its modern fleet and its commitment towards innovation and development — earning it international acclaim as validated by numerous prestigious awards such as World's Top 100 Airlines; 4 Star ranking by Skytrax (the international air transport rating organisation); Asia's Leading Airline Brand, and the World's Leading Cultural Airline as recognised by the World Travel Awards.

These achievements stand as a testament to the airline's quality across a range of products and services.

Vietnam Airlines has spearheaded Viet Nam's aviation market — one of the fastest-growing domestic markets in the world — throughout its 30 years of development. Fuelled by a vibrant domestic market and rapidly growing international traffic, Vietnam Airlines is well on the way to establishing itself as a major force in Asia.



BRITISH COUNCIL IN VIET NAM

British Council Country Director in Viet Nam, Donna McGowan, discusses 30 years of connecting the UK and Viet Nam in education and culture

The British Council is the UK's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities. Established in 1934, we now have operations in over 100 countries. Through combining the UK's deep expertise in arts and culture, education and the English language, we build connections, understanding and trust between people in the UK and countries worldwide, supporting peace and prosperity.

We opened in Viet Nam in Autumn 1993 when the first Country Director arrived in Hanoi to set up a modest operation with a handful of staff working on English Language Training (ELT), education and science exchange programmes. At that time, the British Council was the cultural section of the British Embassy.

In 1994, the first UK/Viet Nam exchange took place with higher education links forged between the Hanoi Science University and the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine. In addition, the first series of ELT workshops were held across the country, introducing colleges and institutes to new English teaching methodologies. English teaching for senior government officials and UK scholarship schemes were set up in 1995, funded by the UK government. Former Deputy Prime Minister of Viet Nam, Pham Gia Khiem, was among the first group of government officials participating in this ELT programme.

We continued to expand, resulting in several office moves in Hanoi as well as ensuring our programmes and services reached beyond the capital to most provinces in Viet Nam. In 2001, we were given independent status under an agreement between the Viet Nam and UK governments. In 2009, under Decree 18 we were awarded status as a 'Foreign Independent Cultural and Education and Non-Profit Organisation'. This has been subsequently renewed and updated, recognising both the UK and the British Council's long-term commitment to Viet Nam and its status by the Vietnamese government as a trusted partner and facilitator. In 2002 our first English language courses for the wider public started in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, with high demand in both cities. Our ability to expand our teaching and exams/UK qualifications services was further enhanced in 2017 with the establishment of our local commercial entity. We currently have seven language teaching centres in Hanoi and in Ho Chi Minh City with plans to open 15 more centres in the next three years.

Our portfolio has grown and developed across English language, education, youth leadership and empowerment, and arts and culture, with many diverse projects and programmes with government and non-government partners, arts and education institutions and organisations from both the UK and Viet Nam. We were a pioneer in introducing concepts of the creative economy and industries to Viet Nam, supporting Vietnamese artists and encouraging intercultural exchange and connections across multiple arts forms. We have prioritised cooperation in education and science, supporting the Ministry of Education and Training with the National Foreign Languages Project, sharing the best ELT teaching methodologies, as well as helping scientists conduct research in key areas and supporting the professional development of early career researchers. As English is the language of science and technology, commerce, trade and diplomacy, it is key to enabling a transfer of information around the globe. This is evidenced by the ever-increasing demand for IELTS from candidates across the country. We harness our connections with young people in Viet Nam and globally, supporting them to develop and implement their cross-sectoral climate mitigation projects, engaging with their communities in the Mekong Delta, and showcasing these at COP26 in Glasgow.

Much has changed in the past 30 years. When the British Council was established in Viet Nam in 1993, the World Wide Web hadn't long been created, social media didn't exist, there were only 34 million mobile phone subscribers worldwide and Viet Nam wasn't yet a member of ASEAN. There was a sense of order across the world, as the recent end to the Cold War had led to greater stability in many regions.



As English is the language of science and technology, commerce, trade and diplomacy, it is key to enabling a transfer of information around the globe

In 2023, we face a very different world, where over five billion global citizens are connected through the internet, and more than 91 per cent of the world's population owns a mobile phone. The perceived global order has been challenged from many sides with shifts and changes. Viet Nam has been a member of ASEAN since 1995 and a stronger more confident ASEAN of 10 countries increases cooperation globally. The UK became ASEAN's 11th Dialogue Partner in 2021 having departed the European Union in 2020. People around the world have become more conscious of the climate emergency directly impacting us all, with many actively engaged in mitigation activities and campaigns. And the world is a changed place in so many ways following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Whilst all of this has had an impact on the British Council and our ways of working and engaging with our partners and stakeholders, the purpose of the British Council in Viet Nam and around the world has remained steadfast. Our experiences in Viet Nam, and the experiences of our UK and Vietnamese partners across all areas of our operation, highlight the positive power, influence and lasting impact of cultural relations and of cooperation and collaboration in the arts, education and the English language. These highlight the enduring partnerships between institutions, organisations and people in both countries that together create opportunities,

engender knowledge and understanding, and build trust between the UK and Viet Nam.

The 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the UK and Viet Nam and the 30th anniversary of the British Council's presence in Viet Nam are hugely significant milestones in the history and relations of both countries.

In celebrating both, we look forward to the British Council's 'UK / Viet Nam Season 2023,' which will run between June and December 2023, with a range of projects, activities and events across our three sectors of arts and culture, education and English language focused on our two themes of 'Climate and the environment' and 'Shared heritage'. Most activities will take place in Viet Nam with some activity in the UK. We are working with the UK Embassy in Viet Nam, the Vietnamese Embassy in the UK, the Ministry of Culture, Sport and Tourism, the Ministry of Education and Training and multiple education and arts organisations and institutions in both countries.

Cultural relations are among the strongest and most important tools that the UK and Viet Nam have for building trust and understanding that will be mutually beneficial for both countries. Therefore, we very much look forward to our season elevating the wider UK-Viet Nam bilateral cultural relationship, providing new opportunities for UK and Vietnamese institutions, organisations and individuals to work together, strengthening connections to highlight and address shared challenges, and creating a legacy for ongoing connection and partnership for the next 30 years and beyond.

<https://britchamvn.com/about/>

Saigon River in Ho Chi Minh City





DEFENCE COOPERATION

Minister of State at the Ministry of Defence, Baroness Goldie DL,
outlines deepening ties in defence cooperation between the two countries

I am absolutely delighted to have this opportunity to contribute to this special edition marking the 50th Anniversary of Viet Nam – UK diplomatic relations. As a Minister of State, I have been privileged to be part of an increasingly warm relationship between our two nations. Specifically, I have witnessed our deepening ties in defence cooperation. We have achieved so much since we established a formal defence relationship in 2011, and it is extremely pleasing to see how that growing connection has been of such mutual benefit.

The current geostrategic environment poses a range of severe challenges not seen in recent times. It is therefore increasingly important that our countries share our deep commitment to upholding the international rules-based system that has been so essential in reducing major conflict. I know that our relationship will develop further as we promote the vital importance of international conventions, which act as the main mechanism for dispute settlement. It is for this reason that I am very proud of our work to develop our combined understanding of the particularly challenging maritime environment. The UK's enduring naval presence in the region is a clear demonstration of our lasting commitment. But there is much more we can do together, and we are committed to delivering even greater opportunities for bilateral activity to develop capability, concepts and doctrine in a concerted drive to maintain stability in a region that is of such global significance.

We were delighted to be a key partner as Viet Nam began to consider participation in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations, a relationship that flourished as we worked jointly to improve field medical provision in Bentiu in South Sudan during Viet Nam's initial UN deployment. This was the first time in UN Peacekeeping history that a field hospital continued to operate without any break in clinical cover – a fact that should make us both very pleased, and that is a testament to the deep strength of our bilateral relationship. Subsequently, after joining a second mission in Abeyei, Viet Nam has rapidly gone on to secure a reputation for both expertise and a deep commitment to the protection of civilians – both fundamental peacekeeping principles that the UK strongly upholds as a Permanent Member of the Security Council. The UK is fully committed to a continued UN Peacekeeping partnership with Viet Nam as both our countries champion the drive to tackle conflict related sexual violence and sponsor greater gender equality through our steadfast support to Women in Peace and Security initiatives. As Viet Nam seeks to develop its contribution to further peacekeeping activity, we stand ready to engage in this exceptionally important joint enterprise. We will aim to combine our energy, knowledge and proficiency to improve the overall level of performance on peacekeeping operations.

Over the years, it has been very exciting to see how Viet Nam has approached each new challenge with seemingly endless determination and a fervent desire to evolve and develop its professional competency. As the security environment has presented new challenges, Viet Nam has been quick to seize the initiative and has identified the need to modernise. Recognising this need for innovation comes with challenges that require trusted partners, and the UK is just that. We too, are faced with the constant task to accelerate change and maximise all the tools at our disposal to remain credible and competitive in an increasingly insecure environment. Central to this is the investment in our people and then our equipment which, when combined with vital advances in doctrine, allow us to maintain a genuine competitive edge. It is perhaps here where our partnership can be most mutually beneficial in the future. Joint training and in-depth conversations on the development of concepts and doctrine, in the context of current and emerging security challenges, seem to me an ideal next step in building an even stronger bilateral relationship. We have managed to develop close ties with UK defence industrial partners, to ensure that they understand our requirements and that we understand the full potential of emerging technological advances. It is quite clear that Viet Nam recognises this in equal measure, with December's extremely successful Defence Expo in Hanoi a clear signpost to the importance that Viet Nam attaches to modernisation. I am convinced that there is a lot that we can do together to take these initiatives forward.

Any relationship requires personal commitment, and both the Secretary of State for Defence, Ben Wallace, and I have had the distinct pleasure to be part of our growing bilateral defence affiliation. My colleague, Minister for the Armed Forces James Heappey, attended the Defence Expo in Hanoi to further re-enforce the importance of our security and defence relationship in advance of a year where I have no doubt that we will continue to go from strength to strength. We can look forward to a series of important events and landmark visits that will show our unambiguous commitment to developing this critical relationship and I know we can expect an exciting level of ambition as we advance our defence policy dialogue.

It is my firm belief that we have much more to achieve together. We have an opportunity to demonstrate that, while geographically-distanced, we have a close allegiance to the core principles of the international system and an associated determination to drive for enduring stability both in the Indo Pacific region and globally.

I look forward with excitement to what this year will bring and in continuing to contribute towards a deeper and mutually rewarding partnership.



The First Viet Nam – United Kingdom Migration Dialogue in Hanoi , 15 August 2022

ENHANCING RELATIONS BETWEEN VIET NAM AND THE UK IN PREVENTING AND COMBATTING CRIMES

By Vice Minister of Public Security, Lieutenant General Le Quoc Hung

Bilateral relations between Viet Nam and the UK have been developing solidly, raising the political trust and deepening our Strategic Partnerships, especially in 2023 when we celebrate the 50th anniversary of diplomacy between the two countries. Both countries signed the Joint Declaration on ‘Viet Nam - UK Strategic Partnership: Forging Ahead for Another 10 years’ in September 2020; the UK – Viet Nam Free Trade Agreement in December 2020; and participated in the 8th Viet Nam - UK Strategic Dialogue in Hanoi in March 2022.

Furthermore, the relationship between the Viet Nam Ministry of Public Security and UK law enforcement agencies has strengthened with close cooperation in various fields. In the fast-paced world we live in, where criminals quickly transform their modus operandi to evade prosecution from the law enforcement agencies, the two sides have agreed to simultaneously implement effective measures to promote strong cooperation and solve security issues such as organised transnational crimes, human trafficking and smuggling and high-tech crimes. This will help protect national security, social order and safety in both countries.

1. Completing the legal frameworks for crime prevention and suppression

Legal frameworks are crucial for creating a solid and effective basis for mutual cooperation in the fight against crime. Both countries have signed 06 documents for cooperation in security and policing: (1) Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Immigration issues, (2) Treaty on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons, (3) Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, (4) Memorandum of Understanding on the exchange of information between Viet Nam and the UK for immigration-related purposes, (5) Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the fight against serious crime and matters of mutual interest, (6) Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in countering human trafficking. The two sides are also developing an Extradition Treaty for negotiation and signing in the near future.

2. Delegation exchange

Delegation exchange between Viet Nam's Ministry of Public Security and UK law enforcement agencies will be important to implement deeper, more comprehensive and more effective mutual

cooperation in security and order, especially in countering transnational crimes. Meetings, talks and working sessions between the heads of Viet Nam's Ministry of Public Security and their counterparts at the UK Home Office have helped to establish various programmes and activities. These high-level meetings are important to consolidate trust, while cultivating and strengthening the cooperative relationship between the two countries. At the same time, they provide an opportunity for leaders to recognize, evaluate and propose cooperation solutions and directions in the next period. Notably, our Minister of Public Security paid an official visit to the UK in November 2021 and the Secretary of State of the Ministry of Home Affairs to Viet Nam in August 2022.

The exchange of working-level delegations between the two sides continues to strengthen high-level agreements, focusing on the research, evaluation and promotion of cooperation in specific fields in the fight against crimes, coordinating in the verification, investigation and arrest of fugitives as well as sharing information on transnational crimes.

3. Cooperation in preventing and combating human trafficking and smuggling

In recent years, the Viet Nam Ministry of Public Security and the UK Home Office have considered the fight against human trafficking and smuggling as one of the most important areas of cooperation. As part of executing the Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in countering human trafficking, the Ministry of Public Security sent officers to Scotland to coordinate with UK law enforcement forces on these issues; closely coordinating to investigate the case of 39 Vietnamese citizens' death during their illegal immigration into the UK in 2019. Together, the two sides continue to investigate other cases of

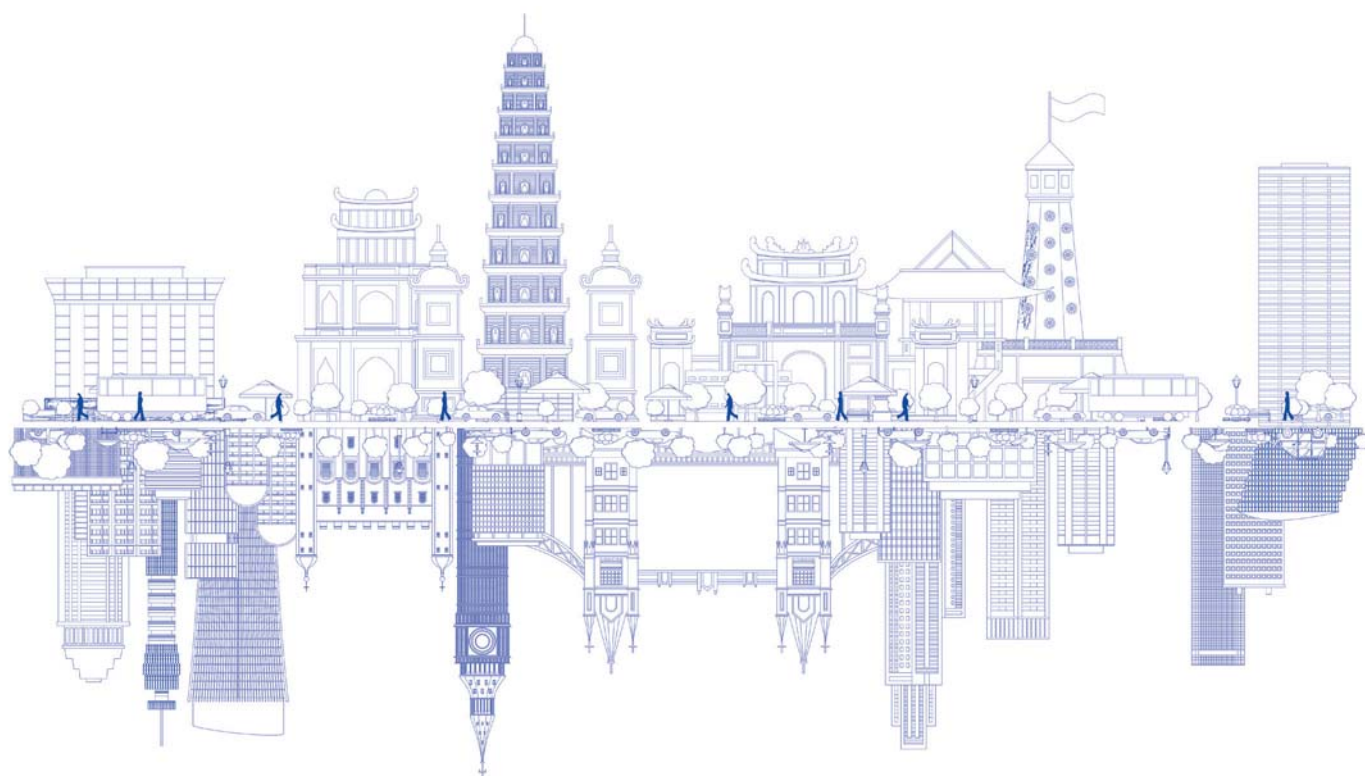
human smuggling. In August 2022, the first Viet Nam - UK Migration Dialogue agreed various issues on cooperation in countering human trafficking, combating illegal migration and facilitating safe migration.

4. Preventing and combating cybercrime, high-tech crime and money laundering

Nowadays, criminal activities have become more and more sophisticated. Criminals take advantage of high technology as well as products of the 4.0 Industrial Revolution for criminal activities. The Ministry of Public Security and the UK Police coordinate to investigate cases related to Bitcoin fraud, domain name spoofing and money laundering. In May 2021, the Ministry of Public Security of Viet Nam, with the support of the UK National Crime Agency (NCA) and the UK Police dismantled four virtual currency and gold exchanges that attracted 12,000 players from 27 countries.

In addition, law enforcement agencies on both sides cooperate closely in the investigation, verification, arrest and extradition of criminals. For example, in January 2022, the Vietnamese Ministry of Public Security arrested and handed over Divers Kennethm, who was wanted by the UK Police on charges of 'sexual assault and harassment.' The two sides have also supported each other in capacity building, training and equipment, making an important contribution to the fight against crime related to the two countries, and across the world.

As part of the larger strategic partnership, cooperation between the Ministry of Public Security and UK enforcement helps promote peace and happiness of the people in the two countries, contributing to the peace and development of the region and the world.





CO-OPERATION WITH AN IMPORTANT PARTNER

Permanent Secretary at the Home Office, Sir Matthew Rycroft KCMG CBE, offers his reflections on visiting Viet Nam

As we mark the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the United Kingdom and Viet Nam, it is important to remember the shared interests and challenges that have brought our two nations close together. The UK and Viet Nam have worked together over the past 50 years to strengthen both political and personal relationships, to enhance cultural exchanges and increasingly promote each country as places for for UK and Vietnamese nationals to visit and work.

In August 2022, I was pleased to be able to travel with colleagues to the wonderful nation of Viet Nam and, along with Viet Nam Vice Minister of Public Security Senior Lieutenant General Luong Tam Quang, co-chair the inaugural UK – Viet Nam Migration Dialogue.

Among topics of discussion between our two countries were communication on the importance of safe and legal routes, migrant returns, the issue of fraudulent documents, updated policies on immigration as well as enhancing collaboration on human trafficking. The UK and Viet Nam have a strong migration relationship and I underlined the UK's continued interest in strengthening this collaboration with Viet Nam, together addressing challenges and bringing mutual benefits to both countries.

I was also happy to be able to meet with Viet Nam's Minister of Public Security To Lam, Vice Minister of National Defence Hoang Xuan Chien, and Vice Minister of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs Nguyen Van Hoi. We had an open discussion on continued collaboration in tackling human trafficking focusing on victim support, and I confirmed the continuous financial and technical support of the UK government for Viet Nam in this field.

Taking some time to visit the People's Police Academy (PPA), I had the opportunity to meet with PPA Principle Lieutenant General Nguyen Van Hung. The Anti-Trafficking Programme, funded by Home Office Modern slavery fund since 2018, has completed four training manuals on human trafficking investigation skills and trained a total of 1,000 police officers, judges, prosecutors, and border guards across the country. Building on that success, I was able to announce the continuity to support the PPA in a new three-year project to build electronic evidence handling skills within the police in human trafficking cases. This project will help to standardise the procedure of digital evidence handling in human trafficking cases, which will hopefully lead to increased prosecutions. During discussions both sides agreed on increasing exchanges by sending PPA lecturers to the UK to



Politburo member and Minister of Public Security General To Lam, receives Permanent Secretary at the UK's Home Office Sir Matthew Rycroft, in Ha Noi on 16 August 2022



Permanent Secretary Sir Matthew Rycroft at the Ministry of Public Security of Viet Nam in Hanoi on 16 August 2022

work with UK police experts and to host UK police experts at the academy to develop a quality training manual and training programme.

One of the joys of visits like this is time that can be spent with bright and talented individuals from the younger generation in Viet Nam, answering questions they may have and developing a deeper feeling of their opinion of the UK-Viet Nam relationship. I was delighted to be able to hold a roundtable discussion attended by approximately 250 students at the Foreign Trade University in Hanoi. Speaking about the possibilities of studying in the UK as well as preferential policies of the UK government to support international students, including those from Viet Nam, I remarked that “We are committed to delivering an immigration system that offers clear opportunities to the brightest and best talent from Viet Nam and around the world to come to the UK to study, work and live.” The UK is also increasing its partnerships with universities in Viet Nam to support greater movement between our two countries for students and academic faculty alike.

Visits like this can be an important tool to advertise new schemes, and it was good to be able to attend a briefing event organised by Home Office staff in Hanoi and the British Council to update 100 education agents and UK institutions about the UK’s newly introduced Graduate Route, Study UK market, UK visa policy for international students. We are approving record numbers of visa applications from Vietnamese students, comfortably going back to pre-COVID levels.

Speaking at the event, the Home Office’s International Director, Asim Hafeez, said: “Understanding the culture and culture exchange is important to the bilateral relations between UK and

Viet Nam. The current 15,000 Vietnamese students studying in the UK make a significant impact in the UK to British culture. Agents are part of the process, conduit and vehicle to bring young Vietnamese to the UK and we are happy to work with you.” British Council Viet Nam through its Global Agent Engagement Strategy will work closely with the Home Office, UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) to raise standards and practice in the agency industry, that supports Vietnamese students’ quality choice to study in the UK and grows the UK’s education position.

Taking advantage of a rare free moment, I was able to spend some time walking in Hanoi’s Old Quarter and enjoying a traditional ‘egg coffee’ drink at a streetside coffee shop. The interest from Vietnamese press and the fact this activity made headlines caused some amusement amongst colleagues but is a clear indicator of how important this relationship is to all sections of UK and Vietnamese society. I also had the privilege of visiting the 1,000-year-old Imperial (Thang Long) Citadel. It was easy to see why Viet Nam is an increasingly popular destination for British tourists and Viet Nam is certainly an enchanting place should you ever have the opportunity to visit.

In summary, I repeat the words of Prime Minister Sunak in November 2022, when he stated that “The Indo-Pacific is increasingly crucial for our security and our prosperity. It is teeming with dynamic and fast-growing economies, and the next decade will be defined by what happens in this region.” My short time in Viet Nam impressed on me the importance of this relationship in the context of the region’s growing importance and I look forward to being a part of further co-operation in the future.



PARLIAMENTARY COOPERATION: A KEY CHANNEL IN VIET NAM - UK RELATIONS

By Member of the Party Central Committee, Member of the Standing Committee, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National Assembly H.E. Vu Hai Ha

Viet Nam and the UK officially established diplomatic relations in 1973 and the UK has since become one of Viet Nam's most significant partners. Viet Nam - UK relations have witnessed robust development across all fields and reached a milestone when the strategic partnership was identified in 2010. In December 2020, the two countries concluded the UK - Viet Nam Free Trade Agreement (UKVFTA), one of the first agreements that the UK signed with another country after leaving the EU, laying an important foundation for the strong and sustainable development of bilateral economic-trade relations.

Along with the development of the Viet Nam-UK Strategic Partnership, ties between the National Assembly of Viet Nam and the British Parliament are also on a good development track, at both bilateral and multilateral levels. These have been increasingly deepened, becoming a bright spot in the overall relations between the two countries. The two sides have maintained exchanges of delegations and contacts between the Leadership of the National Assembly, the Specialised Committees, the Parliamentary Friendship Group and Parliamentarians via online and face-to-face meetings. The exchange between high-level delegations has helped foster strong momentum in relations between the two countries and their legislative bodies.

The two sides have actively promoted the role of parliamentary diplomacy in the friendship parliamentary channel. The British Parliament has established the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Viet Nam, and the 15th Legislature of the National Assembly of Viet Nam established the Parliamentary Friendship Group with the United Kingdom¹. Over the past several tenures, the two Parliamentary Friendship Groups have remained active, helping to enhance understanding and friendship between Vietnamese National Assembly deputies and British MPs, making contributions to advancing the bilateral relations. At multilateral parliamentary forums, the two sides have maintained close collaboration, and coordinated stances on regional and international issues of mutual concern.

In June 2022, parliamentary relations between Viet Nam and the UK marked a new milestone with the official visit to the UK by President of the National Assembly Vuong Dinh Hue and a high-ranking delegation of the National Assembly of Viet Nam. After more than two legislatures, this was the first visit of a Vietnamese National Assembly President to the UK, affirming the importance that Viet Nam attaches to the Viet Nam - UK Strategic Partnership. The visit was also important to maintain and deepen bilateral relations, to share interwoven interests and enhance political trust, as well as to advance bilateral parliamentary cooperation. During the visit, the President of the National Assembly of Viet Nam and members of the delegation held numerous meetings with British senior leadership and partners to connect and promote bilateral cooperation in many fields: economy, trade - investment, health, education - training, defence - security, climate change, green growth, sustainability and fulfilling commitments made at COP-26. In particular, the visit focused on promoting cooperation in parliamentary channels to review, develop and complete a favourable legal framework to facilitate economic cooperation for the effective implementation of the UKVFTA.



Chairman of the National Assembly of Viet Nam H.E. Vuong Dinh Hue holds talks with Speaker of the UK's House of Commons Sir Lindsay Hoyle in London on 29 June 2022 as part of his official visit to the UK

The positive outcomes of the visit have helped create a new impetus, demonstrating a new stature of cooperation between the UK, a global development power, and Viet Nam, a dynamic developing country in the strategic South East Asian region.

FUTURE DIRECTION

Building on the excellent outcomes achieved along with the available potential, the legislatures of the two countries should make greater efforts to strengthen cooperation on the following:

First, further strengthen the exchange of high-level delegations, agencies of the Parliaments, Friendship Parliamentary Groups and MPs of the two countries; strengthen exchange of experience on how to build institutions and share information on the parliamentary activities of each country; and the two Friendship Parliamentary Groups should build on the existing progress to become an active bridge to further promote cooperation between the two legislative bodies.

Second, strengthen coordination to monitor and push for the effective implementation of cooperation agreements signed by the two governments, especially the UKVFTA and strategic cooperation projects; and support the two governments, localities, businesses and people to expand exchanges and cooperation for mutual benefit.

Third, further strengthen consultation, coordination and mutual support at multilateral parliamentary forums; enhance exchange on regional and global issues of mutual concern; and on the basis of the 'Plan

of action of the UK-ASEAN Dialogue Partnership for peace, stability and development,' support the UK to join ASEAN-led regional mechanisms.

Fourth, closely coordinate the role of Parliaments in Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) implementation, ratify international conventions and agreements on environmental protection and climate change response; promulgate policies to promote innovation and restructuring the economy towards achieving sustainable economic growth, green growth, circular economy, clean energy and digital transformation.

As the world is witnessing profound changes in geopolitics and geo-economics, Viet Nam and the UK are presented with new opportunities and challenges, which require the two countries, and in particular, the two legislatures, to strongly promote their roles in elevating and deepening bilateral relations across various fields, especially parliamentary cooperation. In the spirit of unity between senior leadership on both sides and building on the outcomes of the visit to the UK by President of the National Assembly of Viet Nam Vuong Dinh Hue, the two legislative bodies should further strengthen cooperation, helping to deepen the Viet Nam - UK Strategic Partnership in a more effective and substantive manner. This will promote global parliamentary cooperation, in the practical interests of the two peoples, and at the same time contribute to maintaining peace, stability, cooperation and prosperity in the region and the world at large.

¹ The Viet Nam - UK Friendship Parliamentary Group of the 15th Legislature of the National Assembly of Viet Nam is chaired by Mr Nguyen Phu Cuong, Chairman of the Finance and Budget Committee.

Golden Bridge in Da Nang, also known as the 'Hands of God'





A PARLIAMENTARY SUCCESS STORY

Chair, All-Party Parliamentary Group for Viet Nam, Mr Wayne David MP, says the best is yet to come in the special relationship between Viet Nam and the UK

It was on the 11 September 1973 that formal diplomatic relations were established between the United Kingdom and Viet Nam. Looking back, we can see that this was a truly historic moment. In the years that followed, the relationship developed steadily, gaining some momentum in the 1980s. But in 2010, the relationship really began to blossom when the 'Strategic Partnership' between Viet Nam and the UK was agreed.

This partnership agreement covered a wide range of areas, and its significance cannot be overestimated. From that point on, there was unprecedented political and diplomatic cooperation, there was a new impetus given to trade and investment, fresh initiatives between our two countries were embarked upon in education and training, science and technology, security and defence and much more. The result was the creation of a mutually beneficial relationship, which has now been made more productive and relevant than ever before.

Indeed, in recent years, that Strategic Partnership has not only held firm, but it has been revitalised and refreshed. Recently, practical commitments have been made to extend meaningful dialogues at various levels and additional areas of cooperation between the UK and Viet Nam have been identified and acted upon.

Towards the end of 2020, a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) was signed between the UK and Viet Nam, building on the European Union's FTA. This agreement is of enormous importance and now Viet Nam is supporting the UK's wish to join the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP). In the autumn of 2018, I had the privilege of leading a parliamentary delegation to Viet Nam with the British Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). It was, I believe, an extremely successful visit that gave us the opportunity to see first hand the real benefits of the UK and Viet Nam's developing relationship. Although we were in Viet Nam for only a week, we travelled the length and breadth of the country and were able to see for ourselves the very real success of our partnership.

One of our most impressive visits was to the University of Da Nang; a university which has 50,000 students. Our group heard about the wide range of learning opportunities being provided and were struck by the sheer enthusiasm of the students we met. They correctly saw 'education' as a process that could enable them to fulfil their potential and, at the same time, help to transform their country. What was especially impressive was the real sense of 'internationalism' that was evident in so many of the students. They were clear that their future was inextricably linked to the extent to which Viet

Nam would be able to play an active role in the global community. In this context, developing the links that the university had with the UK was seen as being crucial.

Our visit to the university reinforced our view that educational links between the UK and Viet Nam are of huge importance to the University of Da Nang and elsewhere as well. It must be a priority to build on these links.

The environment and green technology are other areas where cooperation between the UK and Viet Nam is particularly important. Viet Nam faces major challenges as it combats the impact of climate change (especially in and around the Mekong Delta) and moves towards a low-carbon economy. In this area, the UK can assist Viet Nam to meet the challenges it faces, given the expertise and experience that British companies have developed.

In recognising and celebrating this 50th anniversary, the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Viet Nam has an important role to play. The APPG meets regularly and brings together Members from both the House of Commons and the House of Lords, and it draws from all political parties, as well as from Crossbenchers in the House of Lords. As such, the APPG is well-placed to give full Parliamentary support to the UK-Viet Nam special relationship, and its work has been given a formal framework by the Memorandum of Understanding which has been agreed by the Vietnamese National Assembly and ourselves.

During the past 12 months, the APPG has received and had meetings with a number of important delegations from Viet Nam, and has maintained regular contact with the Vietnamese Ambassador to the UK and the British Ambassador to Viet Nam. The Group has also liaised on a regular basis with British businesses, facilitated in large part by the Viet Nam – UK Network, and a number of non-governmental organisations which are active in Viet Nam.

The developing relationship between the United Kingdom and Viet Nam is a success story. Much has been achieved during the past 50 years and it is appropriate that we join together in celebrating those achievements. But at the same time, we should recognise that so much more can be achieved if we remain enthusiastic about the relationship. If we do this, then I firmly believe the best is yet to come.



AstraZeneca

VNVC
Vietnam Vaccine JSC

LỄ KÝ HỢP ĐỒNG THƯƠNG MẠI SONG PHƯƠNG ĐẶT MUA VẮC XIN PHÒNG COVID 19 CỦA ASTRAZENECA VÀ HỆ THỐNG TIÊM CHỦNG VNVC

INVESTMENT ANNOUNCEMENT & AGREEMENT SIGNING CEREMONY



VNVC successfully negotiated to purchase 30 million doses of AstraZeneca's COVID-19 vaccine and transferred on a no loss-no profit basis to the Government of Vietnam during the peak of the pandemic.



VIETNAM VACCINE J.S.C (VNVC) CONGRATULATES ON THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DIPLOMATIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN VIETNAM AND THE U.K. (1973-2023)

"The two nations share a desire to deepen cooperation, particularly in the healthcare sector that will bring greater value and prosperity to the people of both. The bilateral collaboration between Vietnam and the United Kingdom will continue to expand, and we pledge to be an important part of it."

Mr. Ngo Chi Dung,
Chairman,
Vietnam Vaccine JSC

Who we are

VNVC is a system of premium vaccination centers providing the people of Vietnam with a full range of high-quality vaccines for children and adults at an affordable and stable price. VNVC is the first organization in Vietnam to own a GSP standard cold-chain system, a GDP standard distribution system, a certified medical team, safe vaccination procedure and dedicated customer services. VNVC is currently accounted for 75% market share of commercial vaccine in Vietnam. VNVC employs approximately 6,000 doctors and nurses who are formally trained in safe vaccination procedures and are certified with the required skills.

Our Services

Vaccine Import & Vaccination Services

With 103 centers nationwide, VNVC provides a variety of vaccination services for individuals and families; including vaccine packages, online vaccine reservation, and on-site vaccination for B2B (business-to-business) customers. VNVC also shares financial burdens with the customers by offering zero interest rate for up to 02 year installment plans. VNVC is currently accounted for 75% market share of commercial vaccine in Vietnam.

Education & Training and Scientific Research

VNVC is a regular organizer of medical education & training programs, specifically Continuing Medical Education (CME) programs on vaccination and preventive healthcare; and medical seminars and symposiums with the participation of many prestigious experts. In addition, VNVC also conducts weekly internal medical training for thousands of medical staff in the system.

International Cooperation

VNVC is a comprehensive strategic partner with world leading pharmaceutical companies, namely GlaxoSmithKline (U.K.), AstraZeneca (U.K.), Sanofi-Pasteur (France), MSD (USA); and is also an important partner of many significant others namely Pfizer(USA), Abbott(USA), etc. giving the opportunity of bringing in large quantities of new and under-supply vaccines into Vietnam.



MOU signing ceremony between VNVC and GSK



TAHC - VNVC - AstraZeneca Vietnam signed MoU on medical research and clinical trials of drugs & vaccines



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The Partnership for Health System Sustainability and Resilience (PHSSR) between AstraZeneca Viet Nam and the Health Strategy and Policy Institute (HSPI) began its second phase in July 2022.

ASTRAZENECA: THE ADVANCES OF UK LIFE SCIENCES CONTRIBUTE TO VIET NAM'S HEALTHCARE

AstraZeneca is a proud example of the advances of the UK healthcare industry that is changing lives across the world, including in Viet Nam.

A global company with a long-term commitment to Viet Nam

Headquartered in Cambridge, UK, the global company now has over 83,000 employees in 100 countries, and its innovative medicines are used by millions of patients around the world.

In Viet Nam, AstraZeneca is close to celebrating three decades of operations. This company was one of the first pharmaceutical multinationals to transition into a local foreign-invested enterprise, now with over 500 employees and regularly ranks amongst the top 100 best places to work. In addition to importing medicines and vaccines, in late 2021, as part of Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh's working visit to the UK, AstraZeneca announced a US\$90 million investment into local contract manufacturing of medicines in Viet Nam to uplift domestic manufacturing capabilities and increase patients' access to vital medicines. This raised the total amount that AstraZeneca is investing into Viet Nam from 2020 to 2030 to US\$310 million – with an ambitious plan to strengthen the sustainability and resilience of the healthcare system and transform patients' lives.

Partnering to fight the pandemic

In mid-2020, AstraZeneca entered into a historic partnership with the University of Oxford to develop and deliver a COVID-19 vaccine for the world at no profit. Three billion doses of the vaccine were released to over 180 countries, two-thirds of which were lower-middle-income countries.

Mr Kapoor said: "Our COVID-19 vaccine was the first to be authorised and used in Viet Nam, with over 72 million doses supplied or donated to date. We have supported the national COVID-19 vaccination programme, protecting lives, and subsequently reducing the impact of the Omicron wave, to allow the economy and tourism to fully reopen. We are thankful for the collaboration of the Vietnamese Government, UNICEF and VNVC to ensure our vaccine could protect local communities."

AstraZeneca Viet Nam recently received a prestigious Certificate of Merit from Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh for the company's exceptional contributions to Viet Nam's vaccine diplomacy efforts. In addition, Mr Kapoor was also awarded a Friendship Medal from the Vietnamese President.

Building a sustainable future with Viet Nam

Aside from COVID-19, non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as cancer; cardiovascular, renal and metabolic; respiratory and gastrointestinal diseases, are actually the leading causes of death and account for about 70 per cent of the disease burden in Viet Nam. Recognising this reality, AstraZeneca always strives to support Viet Nam to address the challenges of the dual burden of infectious diseases and NCDs. The company's medicines are improving the lives of millions of patients each year. On the R&D front, they have been a leader in a number of clinical trials over the last 10 years, with more than 40 ongoing studies at various hospitals across the country.

AstraZeneca has also run a series of sustainability programmes such as Healthy Lung, Young Health Programme, CAREME, in coordination with partners. These programmes aim to strengthen the healthcare ecosystem through early disease detection and raise quality standards in disease management.

In addition, AstraZeneca's Partnership for Health System Sustainability and Resilience in collaboration with the World Economic Forum, London School of Economics and Vietnamese Ministry of Health will comprehensively strengthen global health systems, preparing them for future challenges.

In January 2020, AstraZeneca launched their 'Ambition Zero Carbon' programme, where they committed to have zero carbon emissions by 2025, and ensure their entire value chain is carbon negative by 2030.

Sir Pascal Soriot, AstraZeneca Chief Executive Officer, said: "Looking ahead, our talented 500-plus team in Viet Nam, along with colleagues around the world, remain as committed as ever to playing our part in alleviating the dual burden of infectious diseases and NCDs, protecting vulnerable and high-risk populations in this hopefully last phase of the pandemic, and partnering to help Viet Nam build a sustainable health system and future."



Ambassador Nguyen Hoang Long and his spouse Vu Huong Giang, Deputy Chief Medical Officer for England Professor Sir Jonathan Van-Tam and Professor Sarah Gilbert of Oxford University at the Launching Ceremony of Viet Nam – UK Friendship Year 2023, Locarno Suite, FCDO on 22 February 2023



H.E. Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh welcomed AstraZeneca CEO Sir Pascal Soriot to Viet Nam in May 2022.



SCOTLAND AND VIET NAM

Secretary of State for Scotland, Rt Hon Alister Jack MP says the UK – Viet Nam relationship is widening in scope, and deepening in strength

Xin chào from Scotland as together we mark the auspicious occasion of a full half-century of diplomatic relations between Viet Nam and the United Kingdom.

Truly this is a milestone worth celebrating, and I am delighted that a series of events in both our countries will take place throughout the year to mark the significance of this 50th anniversary.

On a personal note, both I and the Scotland Office are fortunate to enjoy a very warm and positive relationship with His Excellency Nguyen Hoang Long, and his team at the Vietnamese Embassy.

I have had the pleasure of meeting with His Excellency on numerous occasions, and know how well our views are aligned on both the current strength and importance of our countries' bilateral relationship, as well as its future potential.

In 2021, I was further honoured to meet with His Excellency Prime Minister Phạm Minh Chính during his time in Scotland for the hugely significant COP 26 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Glasgow. The final COP26 text followed two years of intense diplomacy undertaken by the UK Presidency to raise ambition and secure action from all countries. We were most grateful for our international partners' contributions to this success, and salute Viet Nam's important role.

We have particular expertise to share in the field of renewable energies, which is a common interest of both our countries – and indeed Viet Nam has been leading the drive within the South East Asian region towards renewable energy sources. This is an area rich with potential benefits for both our countries.

The wider links between Viet Nam and the UK are long and enduring, and they are no mere thing of the past. Today, they are vibrant and evolving positively. Our relationship is widening in scope, and deepening in strength.

For instance, in 2021, our countries reinforced our bilateral relations with the signing of the UK-Viet Nam Free Trade Agreement and the UK-Viet Nam Strategic Partnership Agreement. There is no question in my mind that these accords set the foundations for another 50 years – and more – of excellent relations between our two nations.

And for its part, Scotland has a significant share in the overall trading relationship. In 2021, Scotland exported £44 million of goods to Viet Nam, accounting for 7.9 per cent of total goods exports for the year.

It is therefore a great pleasure to contribute to his special publication as I very much look forward to celebrating with our Vietnamese friends, whilst taking the opportunity to showcase all that Scotland has to offer.

I am confident that, as we mark the 50th anniversary of our bilateral relationship, the unique bond between our two countries will continue to be mutually beneficial.



Chairman of the Hanoi People's Committee Tran Sy Thanh and UK's Ambassador to Vietnam Iain Frew

PROMOTING HANOI - UK RELATIONS FOR COMMON PROSPERITY

*Building on the foundations of the Viet Nam – UK Strategic partnership, and various other cooperation agreements, **Chairman of the Hanoi People's Committee Mr. Tran Sy Thanh** considers the friendly relations between Hanoi and UK municipalities*

Since diplomatic relations were established in 1973, Viet Nam - UK links have developed steadily over the past 50 years, creating a solid foundation for bilateral relations to advance into a strategic partnership.

Over the past 15 years, relations have seen concrete growth. During an official visit to the UK in March 2008, Prime Ministers Gordon Brown and Nguyễn Tấn Dũng issued a Joint statement affirming their wish to deepen relations and position them towards a 'Partnership for Development.' On the occasion of Vietnamese Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs Pham Gia Khiem's visit to the UK in September 2010, the Viet Nam - UK Strategic Partnership Declaration was signed. Over the years, a host of different bilateral cooperation mechanisms have been established, and the two sides have continued to cooperate closely and effectively at regional and international forums. Building on this track record, friendly relations between Hanoi and the UK and its municipalities have enjoyed sustained growth, and important progress has been made, thereby increasing the substance of the bilateral relationship.

Trade, investment and tourism, plus cultural and educational exchanges are all highlights of the bilateral relationship. As of 2022, UK businesses have invested approximately US\$949.89 million in Hanoi, over 104 projects. Twenty of these projects have registered capital increases totalling US\$40.89 million; and there have been 55 stocks, acquisitions of Hanoi businesses totalling US\$112.59 million. These successful investments have been in various sectors including real estate, education and training, information and telecommunications, manufacturing and processing.

Many cultural events organised in both capitals have been welcomed by the local people. In 2017, the London Symphony Orchestra (LSO) performed live in Hanoi. The response to the event was so successful that Hanoi co-organised another outdoor performance by the LSO with Vietnam Airlines and the UK Embassy in Viet Nam in 2019.

Hanoi is also a destination of choice for many British tourists. In 2019 alone, Hanoi welcomed 214,645 travellers from the UK. In education, Chevening scholarships continue to be granted to numerous Vietnamese students each year.

Following the opening of both countries post-COVID, the exchange of delegations quickly resumed, helping to increase mutual understanding and political trust, as well as highlight cooperation opportunities. In September 2022, a delegation from Hanoi headed by the Chair of the People's Council paid a working visit to the UK to discuss and share experience on socioeconomic policy planning and development, as well as how to better the role of elected agencies in monitoring policy implementation.

In recent years, Hanoi has welcomed high-level delegations from the UK, including President of COP26 Sir Alok Sharma KCMG, Minister of State at the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine with special responsibility for Food, Forestry and Horticulture Andrew Doyle, the Prime Minister's Trade envoy Ed Vaizey and Minister for Education in the Welsh Government Kirsty Williams. Many agreements were reached during these visits, spanning investment, education, services, tourism, cultural heritage conservation and preservation.

The 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Viet Nam and the UK is a good opportunity to promote the Strategic Partnership, thereby helping municipality cooperation to become more substantive and in-depth. In that spirit, our capital Hanoi will strive to further promote cooperation with the UK and its municipalities.

Hanoi's areas of priority cooperation include: capital-to-capital municipal cooperation; investment, trade, tourism promotion campaigns and exchange of B2B delegations; plus cooperation partners in HR training, vocational training, and English language training for Hanoi's senior executives. Agricultural produce processing, agricultural machinery and equipment have also been among the highlights in Hanoi - UK relations. Hanoi also wishes for its produce to be sold in the UK in the future. The city is also open to facilitating various cultural exchanges and exhibitions about the UK in Hanoi to further promote people-to-people exchange.

Building on a sound foundation of bilateral relations, Hanoi is confident the city can work closely with the UK and its municipalities to realise their programmes of cooperation, thereby contributing positively, substantively and effectively to the promotion of Viet Nam - UK bilateral relations.



DA NANG – UK LOCAL-LEVEL COOPERATION

Permanent Vice-Chairman of the Da Nang People's Committee, Mr. Ho Ky Minh says there is lots of space for development in Da Nang - UK cooperation

After almost 50 years of development, Viet Nam - UK cooperation in both bilateral and multilateral arenas has made positive strides, and is expected to develop further still, in order to reach new heights. The UK has become one of Viet Nam's important strategic partners, and within that, Da Nang - UK local-level cooperation has been vibrant and is marked by many notable achievements.

As one of the five cities under the Central Government of Viet Nam, Da Nang is in the centre of the country and is an important transport hub in terms of road, rail, sea and air routes, providing access to several UNESCO World Heritage Sites in the central region. Over the past 20 years, Da Nang has made great strides in improving its socio-economic development, as well as its infrastructure and urban planning. Although the global economic crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic have affected Viet Nam's economic development, the city has maintained positive economic growth. To date, Da Nang City has established friendly, cooperative relations with 47 provinces and cities in 22 countries around the world. For 12 consecutive years (2009-2020), Da Nang topped the 63 provinces and cities in the country on the Viet Nam ICT Index. Surpassing many big names such as Seoul, Tokyo and Dubai, Da Nang also became number one in the top ten trending destinations on Google in 2020. In 2022, the city was honoured to receive the Viet Nam Smart City Award for 'Innovative Startup Attractions.'

In order to achieve the goal of developing Da Nang to become the socio-economic centre of the region, the city government is focused on investment attraction and trade promotion, while constantly improving the investment and business environment and adopting appropriate policies to create favourable conditions for businesses and foreign enterprises to work there. With the implementation of the Viet Nam - UK Free Trade Agreement, the two-way trade relationship has made a leap. Import-export turnover between Da Nang and the UK in 2022 reached US\$37 million, of which exports were at US\$1 million, with major export items including aquatic food, textile goods, finished rubber products and handicrafts. Up to now, Da Nang city has attracted British businesses and investors to 21 projects – with a total investment of US\$1.92 million – concentrating in fields of education and training, trade and services, among others. The British Chamber of Commerce Viet Nam (BritCham) and Da Nang have cooperated in various activities to promote the investment environment. Many representative offices and branches of British enterprises are now operating in Da Nang. Nine enterprises from Da Nang currently have import-export relations with various British partners. Trade and investment cooperation is expected to become a bright spot and priority pillar in the partnership between Da Nang City and the UK.



Da Nang City leaders participate in Routes Asia 2022, held in Da Nang by Manchester-based Informa Routes



Da Nang City leaders met British organisations and businesses at the Vietnamese Embassy in the UK, September 2022

Regarding education and training, the UK is one of Da Nang City's most important partners in university education cooperation. The city has implemented many educational cooperation programmes with British partners, notably the establishment of the Viet Nam - UK Research and Training Institute (VNUK), which is now the Viet Nam - UK International University. The Da Nang People's Committee has also signed a cooperation agreement with the British Council in Viet Nam within the framework of the city's High Quality Human Resource Development Project. Accordingly, many officials and employees of the city's governmental agencies have participated in undergraduate and postgraduate training courses at these UK training institutions.

With regards to tourism, Da Nang has proactively coordinated with UK partners to promote the organisation of British events in Da Nang, notably the Clipper Round the World Yacht Race in 2016, the sixth Asian Golf Tourism Congress - Da Nang 2017 (in association with International Association of Golf Tour Operators), and Routes Asia 2022 (with Manchester-based Informa Routes). As a result, Da Nang has surpassed many destinations to be honoured twice as Asia's Leading Festival and Event Destination (in 2016 and 2022) at the World Travel Awards.

Furthermore, Da Nang regularly welcomes UK diplomatic, government and business delegations every year to visit the city, and vice-versa. These city-level visits create momentum for the dynamic and positive relationship between Da Nang and British partners. Da Nang is also home to various British non-governmental organisations, such as Newborns Viet Nam, Facing the World, Happy Children Lotus Foundation, Basic Needs, Marie Stopes International,

Siloam Christian Ministries and Save the Children International. When Da Nang leaders visited the UK in September 2022, several British businesses expressed their desire to invest in educational institutions in Da Nang. This signals ongoing progress in investment and trade cooperation between Da Nang and the UK, in the context of growing bilateral relations and the UK's commitment to strengthen its presence in Asia-Pacific and South East Asia.

2023 marks the 50th anniversary of Viet Nam – UK diplomatic relations. Bilateral cooperation is at its best stage, however there is still plenty of potential and space for development, especially now Viet Nam and the UK have become Strategic Partners and have signed the Viet Nam - UK Free Trade Agreement (UKVFTA).

In this favourable context and on the basis of Plan No. 170/KH-UBND (dated 21 September 2022 of the People's Committee of Da Nang City on promoting and strengthening the cooperation relationship between Da Nang city and European partners), Da Nang is fully taking advantage of the development opportunities between the two countries. Da Nang is proactively establishing and expanding cooperation with UK partners in many fields, exploring the possibility and mobilising support to participate in British development cooperation programmes, while fostering activities to attract investment from British businesses into Da Nang's Hi-Tech Park and Concentrated Information Technology Park. In addition to investment-trade relations, the city also aims to cooperate in other sectors including tourism, culture, education and training, science and technology, all contributing to building a strong, effective and substantive Viet Nam - UK strategic partnership in the future.



AN ALL-TIME HIGH

As the UK's Consul-General to Ho Chi Minh City and Director for UK Trade in Viet Nam, Ms. Emily Hamblin says she has been delighted to play a part in this bilateral relationship

As we mark 50 years of UK-Viet Nam diplomatic relations, 2023 offers a chance for us to celebrate a partnership that is at an all-time high and to look ahead to further cooperation in the decades to come.

As Director for Trade, I have been focussed on deepening our commercial connections. I was pleased to support the signing of our bilateral UK-Viet Nam Free Trade Agreement in 2021, removing most tariffs and improving mutual market access. Bilateral trade tripled between our two countries over the decade running up to 2019 and, following the COVID-19 pandemic, we have returned to stellar growth rates with a 12 per cent year-on-year increase in our bilateral trade last year. Our two countries are working together, through implementation of our FTA and via our annual Joint and Economic Trade Committee, to remove trade barriers, build new commercial partnerships, and further deepen our trade relationship and do justice to its immense potential.

Looking ahead, the UK is focused on acceding to CPTPP, the world's largest trade bloc, of which Viet Nam is a founding member. The UK's accession has the potential to take CPTPP from a trade bloc of £9 trillion, to one of £11 trillion, and our accession will act as a further boost to UK bilateral trade ties across the region.

I'm also proud that the UK's strengths in high-tech, in green goods and services, and in education, are helping Viet Nam to realise its ambitions to become a high income country by 2050 and to achieve net zero by 2050. I'm delighted that the UK, as part of the International Partners Group, has now agreed a Just Energy Transition Partnership with Viet Nam mobilising \$15.5 billion in technical and financial assistance to support Viet Nam in its transition towards renewable energy. In terms of education, there are currently 15,000 Vietnamese students in the UK, and we are also celebrating 30 years of our Chevening scholarships supporting the best and brightest to study in the UK, and 30 years of the British Council.

As Consul-General in Ho Chi Minh City, I'm focussed on ensuring that the UK's relationship with this vibrant city continues to go from strength-to-strength. I'm pleased that in the past few years the UK has provided expertise to help tackle some of the city's most pressing challenges – strengthening resilience to climate-related issues such as flooding and easing traffic congestion through the implementation of new technologies. We worked closely with City authorities to face the COVID-19 pandemic, and I was proud to welcome the very first delivery of Oxford AstraZeneca vaccines into Ho Chi Minh City's Tan Son Nhat airport.

In early February we were pleased to welcome the Royal Navy's HMS Spey, on her first visit to Ho Chi Minh City, further evidence of our commitment to the Indo-Pacific region, our strategic partnership with Viet Nam, and our ever-growing friendship with Ho Chi Minh City. Looking ahead, we're offering the UK's world-class expertise to support Ho Chi Minh City with its ambition to become a regional finance and business centre.

It has been a privilege to represent the UK government in Viet Nam at such a vital and positive time for our relationship. I am excited to see what the next 50 years will bring as we continue to work together to build for the future.



STRENGTHENING TRADE RELATIONS UNDER THE MOMENTUM OF UKVFTA

By Chairman and President of Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Mr. Pham Tan Cong

Having established diplomatic relations half a century ago and with a strategic partnership for more than a decade, Viet Nam and the UK are close and trusted partners in various fields, grounded in diverse and substantive cooperation agreements. Despite that, a fundamental framework on unified trade policy between the two sides was only recently recognised, with the signing and implementation of the Viet Nam - UK Free Trade Agreement (UKVFTA) on 1 May 2021.

As the first Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between Viet Nam and the UK, UKVFTA opens a highway connecting the two dynamic economies. Along with that, as a new-generation FTA covering various areas of trade and development – including extensive liberalisation commitments and high institutional standards – UKVFTA carries high expectations for sustainable bilateral trade and investment relations.

Two years on, UKVFTA has already demonstrated a positive and practical impact. However, there still remain other potential areas for development under the UKVFTA.

UKVFTA and its unprecedented opportunities

From a trade exchange perspective, two-way trade will rapidly move toward to comprehensive market liberalisation, as 99 per cent of tariffs will be eliminated over the next ten years. The UK immediately eliminated tariffs on 85.6 per cent of goods from Viet Nam (including 100 per cent on vegetables and natural honey, 50 per cent on seafood, 83 per cent on wood products, and so on), while Viet Nam immediately lifted 48.5 per cent on tariff lines for UK goods (including 71 per cent on pharmaceuticals, 70 per cent on chemicals, 61 per cent on machinery and appliances, etc). This is a great opportunity for both Viet Nam and UK businesses as the two economies have great purchasing power, plus a fundamental commodity structure that doesn't directly compete with one another, but rather enhances it.

From an investment cooperation and sustainable development perspective, the opportunity to increase investment between Viet Nam and the UK is huge. The UK is the world's fourth largest source of outward investment, and Viet Nam is the door connecting the major economies in Asia. Furthermore, Viet Nam is secured by reliable investment protection mechanisms through recent new-generation FTAs. With Viet Nam's strong commitment to opening up for investment and services, UKVFTA has created new impetus for the

business communities to enhance collaboration and work together for mutual success and development.

Under the UKVFTA, there are ample opportunities for investment cooperation in clean energy and green technology, particularly as the UK holds a competitive edge in investing in these areas, while Viet Nam is committed to implementing sustainable development, and net zero emissions by 2050.

Investment opportunities for the green economy are wider than ever given the International Partnership Group, of which the UK is an active member, has just agreed to mobilise US\$15.5 billion to finance Viet Nam's green transformation under the Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP).

The first 'fruits' and potential for future development

After two years of the UKVFTA, businesses and people in both Viet Nam and the UK have begun to enjoy the first 'fruits' of the Agreement.

In the first year of implementation (2021), exports from Viet Nam to the UK increased by 16.4 per cent, while imports from the UK to Viet Nam increased even more rapidly to 23.6 per cent, according to the General Department of Viet Nam Customs.

The Ministry of Industry and Trade of Viet Nam reports that under the terms of the UKVFTA, nearly US\$1 billion worth of goods exported from Viet Nam to the UK qualified for preferential tariff treatment in 2021, benefiting thousands of businesses and millions of workers, particularly those involved in the production of rice, footwear and seafood.

According to the Viet Nam Foreign Investment Agency, the UK invested US\$303 million into Viet Nam in 2021, up 21 per cent from 2020, and has become the twelfth largest source of foreign investment in Viet Nam.

To fully realise the potential of UKFTA, in order to convert these opportunities into corporate profits, boost worker earnings and promote sustainable development in both Viet Nam and the UK, governments and businesses on both sides should make considerable investments and take decisive action. With these efforts, our hope is that UKVFTA will pave the way for new prosperity milestones in Viet Nam and the UK's trade and investment relations.



STANDARD CHARTERED BANK

Since the UK-Viet Nam Free Trade Agreement (UKVFTA) was signed in 2020, the two nations have maintained preferential trade conditions and economic benefits through market-opening commitments. In recent years, there have been numerous developments and opportunities in the Viet Nam-UK strategic partnership.

As an UK-backed bank, which has unrivalled knowledge of the local market from its 119 years of operating in Viet Nam, we are in a favourable position to facilitate trade and investment between the two countries. Standard Chartered have been a consistent and reliable institution committed to supporting the country in its endeavours to forge a sustainable green future. Our purpose is to drive commerce and prosperity through our unique diversity, and our heritage and values are expressed in our brand promise, here for good.

The Bank has been prioritising green finance to support Viet Nam's journey to achieve net zero emissions by 2050 and making an impact in the communities by providing finance to where it matters most. Recently, leaders from Viet Nam and the International Partners Group have agreed a bold Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP) in Brussels. The JETP will mobilise an initial US\$15.5 billion of public and private finance over the next three to five to support Viet Nam's green transition. Standard Chartered Viet Nam is supporting the government, business leaders and civil society in this process to deliver climate action and create new jobs.

In September 2022, Standard Chartered Viet Nam signed a Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in response to climate change with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment. Under the MoU, the bank will support the ministry with capacity building and private sector engagement in climate action and the development of green, sustainable and/or transition finance frameworks, as well as carbon market development and knowledge exchange.

2023 is a very significant year for the UK and Viet Nam as we celebrate 50 years of diplomatic relations. May we extend our heartfelt congratulations to the impressive achievements of both countries. We wish for this relationship to develop even more strongly in the future, and Standard Chartered will continue acting as a catalyst to facilitate foreign investment into Viet Nam as well as bringing Viet Nam to the world.



Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh received Standard Chartered CEO Bill Winters in Hanoi on 5 September 2022



THE UK FINANCIAL MARKET REACHING OUT TO VIETNAMESE PARTNERS

In his role as international ambassador for the UK's financial and professional services sector, Rt Hon Lord Mayor of the City of London Nicholas Lyons discusses potential opportunities for UK business in Viet Nam

The British novelist L.P. Hartley once wrote that “the past is a foreign country,” meaning that as you think back, perhaps you may recognise aspects of yourself or your own habits, but its differences are equally identifiable. When considering the UK's financial services 50 years ago in 1973, then I believe this statement to be true. Imagine: today's ATM, now ubiquitous, had only been invented in the last five years; only 18 months had passed since decimalisation had been brought into force, getting rid of the shilling and farthing that had been in place since the 1800's; and it would be another three years until the Bank of England took a more supervisory role in financial services.

Now, that past is – indeed – a different place, but back in 1973, the future, too, was a foreign country, as it was in that year that the UK formally began its trading relationship with Viet Nam, a relationship which has gone from strength-to-strength, thanks to initiatives like the UK Viet Nam Joint Economic and Trade Committee. In fact, UK-Viet Nam bilateral trade in the first nine months of 2022 improved significantly, with exports to Viet Nam increasing by 17 per cent on-year. No doubt this magazine you're reading goes into more detail of our relationship, how our two countries have exchanged cultural ideas and commercial principles, and indeed traded successfully with each other. I believe that our financial services sector has played an important part in this relationship.

The connections between our financial services organisations have grown ever since the World Trade Organisation Agreement in 2007, which opened up the Vietnamese financial services sector to the UK, and vice versa. Viet Nam's banking sector continues to improve and diversify its offer, which means it has become a very attractive environment for foreign direct investment. Much like in the UK, their financial service centre has played a crucial role in their economic development in recent years, and I am delighted we continue to build on our partnership for mutual benefit. This will only get stronger with the plans for Ho Chi Minh City to become a major international finance centre, with further plans to double GDP per capita by 2030, another project which the UK is delighted to support you with.

I believe part of this success is down to our shared principles, and what we value the most. In the UK, we are dedicated to financial innovation. Indeed, much of my time is spent meeting with business leaders, tech entrepreneurs and regulators to ensure that we have the right environment in place for business to develop and innovate. Because of that work, fintech is worth £6.6 billion to the UK economy, US\$11.6 billion dollars was invested into the sector in 2021 and – importantly – all these changes have meant that people and businesses can get access to their finances in ways thought unimaginable back in 1973.

Likewise in Viet Nam, there is great support for fintech. In 2019, there were over 100 fintech firms operating across Viet Nam, with payments being the leading sector. Fast forward to 2023, and Viet Nam has topped the tech growth market index compiled by the *Financial Times*. This is an impressive achievement, one that is only going to grow even more impressive as Viet Nam's digital economy is expected to grow almost ten per cent annually over the next five years. Driven by a young, tech-savvy population, digitisation is becoming a key driver for Viet Nam's economic growth – which also shows how Vietnamese government policy is helping to shape the future economy.

Another shared priority is, of course, sustainability. I am proud to be the international spokesperson for one of the most sustainability-focused financial and professional service sectors in the world. We have seen huge growth in sustainable asset classes and our mix of research, legal services, risk management and investing means we are a one-stop-shop for partners who want to improve their sustainable infrastructure, like Viet Nam. In fact, energy projects and green bonds have been behind a large part of our trade, and I was delighted to see that the UK joined France, Germany, the United States of America – and many other leading markets – in agreeing a Just Energy Transition Partnership with Viet Nam. This financial support means Viet Nam can accelerate the peaking of its greenhouse gas emissions and transition away from fossil fuels to clean energy. The UK Prime Minister described the deal as ‘a game changer’ to bring about a cleaner and greener Viet Nam. I couldn't agree more.

When I met with the Vietnamese Ambassador just before Christmas, I explained how pleased we are to celebrate this milestone in our trading relationship, and that I believed we were mutually focused on the right priorities. I believe they fit perfectly into my Mayoral theme for my year in office – ‘Financing Our Future’ – ensuring the City of London remains resilient to future shocks and provide a global hub for insurance, that we remain resourceful by attracting and retaining a talent workforce focused on innovation, and that we remain responsible by supporting sustainable business and investment across our financial and professional services sector.

Whatever the next 50 years holds, we know that the UK and Viet Nam have a strong foundation for our future successes to be built; we are like-minded allies that have so much to offer each other. Whatever challenge comes our way, I know that we can look forward to the 100-year celebrations in 2073, where we will have so much good work to look back on.



BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

Chairman of the UK-ASEAN Business Council, The Rt Hon the Lord Vaizey of Didcot, says there has never been a better time to do business with Viet Nam

This September marks the 50th anniversary of UK-Viet Nam diplomatic relations. It comes at an exciting time for our bilateral relationship but also at a time of great global challenges. Our half-century milestone, our refreshed strategic partnership, the UK-Viet Nam FTA and our two-way trade with Viet Nam ranking as one of the highest with an ASEAN Member State, offers a strong foundation to build on for the future.

Two-way trade between Viet Nam and the UK is worth almost £6 billion. This is only expected to grow. As such Viet Nam is now a country that any UK business must consider when going global.

In 2022, while many economies were struggling to recover from the pandemic, Viet Nam posted the fastest growth in Asia with 8.02 per cent. Since 2000, it has achieved an enviable average growth rate of 6.3 per cent. Its 103 million population is young, increasingly educated, increasingly wealthy and increasingly digitised. Urbanisation and city development is on the rise with the urban population expected to reach 44 per cent by 2030. There has never been a better time to do business with Viet Nam. And the UK has much to offer.

The UK's 'Indo-Pacific Tilt' highlights the importance the UK places on the region seeing it as critical to growing the UK economy. A key part of that tilt is the recognition of the centrality of the ASEAN. That is why the UK applied for, and secured, Dialogue Partner status, the first new Dialogue Partner in 25 years.

Viet Nam's economic openness and commitments to multilateral trade agreements makes it a natural partner for the UK. Since joining the World Trade Organisation in 2007, Viet Nam has engaged in more than 500 bilateral and multilateral agreements including seven free trade agreements.

In 2021, the UK-Viet Nam Free Trade Agreement (UKVFTA) took effect and is helping British business gain greater access to Viet Nam's markets. As an example, in the first nine months of 2022, UK pharmaceutical exports to Viet Nam grew at a phenomenal rate of 32 per cent. Being a member of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), to which the UK is seeking to accede this year, opportunities for wider market access and supply chain participation through Viet Nam are significant. CPTPP member countries have a population of 500 million and a GDP of £9 trillion.

As the UK's longest serving Tech and Culture Minister, I am passionate about linking the UK's tech prowess with the significant opportunities across the ASEAN region. South East Asia's digital economy is on course to be worth USD\$1 trillion by 2030. Digital financial services have surpassed e-commerce as South East Asia's top investment sector and it is Viet Nam that is the ASEAN country most likely to attract investors in the longer term according to a study by Google, Temasek and Bain & Co. In 2022, Viet Nam's internet penetration rate was 73.2 per cent of the total population and additionally they rank in the top ten smartphone users in the world. Almost 80 per cent of Viet Nam's population above 15 years of age is a digital consumer.

Viet Nam's geography makes it one of the world's most vulnerable countries to climate change. As a rapidly growing, energy hungry economy, Viet Nam surprised many at COP26 in Glasgow by pledging to achieve net zero by 2050, to phase out coal by 2040 and to stop building new coal power plants altogether. Viet Nam cannot achieve this ambitious target alone and we were delighted to see Viet Nam's Just Energy Transition Partnership signed last December providing US\$15.5 billion in initial funding over the next three to five years to support their energy transition.

Another key sector for the UK, and UKABC's partners, is education. There are over 15,000 students currently studying in the UK, one of the highest from an ASEAN country. This year also marks the 30th anniversary of Chevening scholarships in Viet Nam and the alumni include many of our friends in the ASEAN diplomatic community including Viet Nam Ambassadors to the UK. UK education providers are also increasingly delivering their services in country and online and given Viet Nam's young population, it is an exciting sector to be in.

Our bilateral relationship with Viet Nam is based on mutual respect and shared values. The UKABC looks forward to continuing to work with Viet Nam to ensure the next 50 years are as productive and mutually beneficial.



FROM HUMBLE BEGINNINGS...

Founder, Senior Adviser and Chairman of Britcham Viet Nam, Mr Kenneth Atkinson OBE discusses the substantial contribution of British enterprises in Viet Nam to the strategic partnership between the two countries

Having first ventured into Viet Nam in 1989 to undertake a feasibility study for a hotel development in Hanoi on behalf of one of my Asia based clients, I feel immensely proud some 33 years later to be contributing this article in celebration of the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Viet Nam and the United Kingdom.

That first visit in 1989, resulted in my moving my consultancy business from Hong Kong and China to Viet Nam once I received my first business license in 1993, and becoming part of the Grant Thornton International Network the following year.

At that time, foreign direct investment was quite low in Viet Nam, but British companies were starting to build the base for a strong presence with Standard Chartered establishing an office in 1990 and a branch by the late 1990's, and similarly for HSBC. BP established a compound in District 2 and a head office in Hanoi by the early 1990's and were drilling offshore from Vung Tau. Prudential established a representative office in the mid 1990's and converted to a 100 per cent foreign invested enterprise (FIE) in 2007. Other companies who were serious investors at that time included Shell, Castrol, and several accounting firms and lawyers. The British Council established in Viet Nam in 1993 and were also responsible for teaching English to many government officials.

In 1996, the British Chamber was established as a chapter of the Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Two years later, BBGV, as we called ourselves, became one of the first two licensed chambers. The then British Ambassador to Viet Nam HE Peter Williams inaugurated the modest office on Nguyen Hue Boulevard in Hồ Chí Minh City, with two full-time staff and 30 to 40 corporate and individual members.

Since those humble beginnings, the Chamber, British investment and trade have grown significantly. This reflected the growth of Viet Nam's economy, which in 1990 had total foreign trade of US\$5 billion (and per capita GDP of US\$100), which grew to over US\$700 billion in 2022 (and per capita GDP of over US\$4,000) with GDP growth of 8 per cent, one of the highest in the world. British companies and the Chamber have significantly contributed not only to GDP growth, but also through their advocacy to Viet Nam's maturing legal and regulatory environment.

I feel privileged to be part of Viet Nam's modern-day story, as an early investor, as a contributor to business and the Chamber – having served as its chairman from 1998 to 2001, again from 2014 to 2017 and more recently from 2021 to present – and now as one of the few to have been granted dual nationality.

The UK was one of the first countries to be visited by Prime Minister Vo Van Kiet in 1993 and although an invitation for a reciprocal visit was issued at that time, it was not until 2015 that the then UK Prime Minister David Cameron paid an official visit to Viet Nam. However, a strong bilateral relationship had started to develop, due to the significant UK foreign investment and trade, the work of DFID and the now the Department of Trade and Industry, plus royal visits from Princess Royal and the Duke of

York as Trade Ambassador, not to mention a visit from Sir David Beckham in 2003. Of course, we were fortunate to have many regular ministerial visits and parliamentary delegations. During the past three years, we have had more ministerial visits than any other European country. 2022 saw the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the Viet Nam UK Strategic Partnership, and the signing of the UK Viet Nam Free Trade Agreement, which resulted in an over 12 per cent increase in bilateral trade in the first nine months of 2022.

During a visit to the UK, Chairman of the National Assembly His Excellency Vu Dinh Hue remarked that the strategic relationship was at its strongest point ever and is very much appreciated by Viet Nam and the UK alike. Shortly after that visit, Britcham, represented by myself as Chairman, was appointed as a member of the Vietnamese government's Advisory Council for Procedural Administrative Reform.

In addition to high-level bilateral exchanges, British companies have also been playing an important part on the ground particularly in pharmaceuticals – and one has to mention the significant work done by AstraZeneca – renewable energy and education. Not only do we have a British Internal School with campuses in Ho Chi Minh, Hanoi and Nha Be but we also now have the British University in Viet Nam with a campus in Hanoi. I have already mentioned the British Council and their great work, but there is also an array of British universities and schools beating a path to Viet Nam's door. We also should not overlook the 15,000 Vietnamese students attending universities in the UK.

The strategic partnership is being further strengthened by Viet Nam's support for the UK to become a member of the Comprehensive and Progressive Partnership Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), and the UK has been supportive of Viet Nam's broader role in regional and world politics.

As we move through 2023 and look to celebrate the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between our two countries, we can build on the establishment of the Just Energy Transition Partnership with Viet Nam, the CPTPP and of course the UK Viet Nam FTA. Through the British Corporate Advocacy Council and Co-Chairmanship of the Viet Nam Business Forum in 2023, Britcham will also be supporting British Companies to achieve their ambitions and resolve issues relating to trade and investment. We are also pleased, along with many of our corporate members, with the cooperation that has been established with the Vietnamese Embassy in London and their highly proactive role in promoting Viet Nam and Vietnamese companies, in the UK.

I would like to close by wishing all a happy and successful 2023 and to our Vietnamese friends Chuc Mung Nam Moi in the year of the Cat.



POSITIVE LINKS

*As **Chief Executive of TheCityUK**, the industry-led body representing British-based financial and related professional services, **Miles Celic** says they are delighted to be working to strengthen bilateral ties across the two financial services ecosystem*

Viet Nam is one of the most exciting high-growth markets for British financial and related professional services businesses. Its dynamic economy, future vision, and commitment to the transition to net zero provide many opportunities for a partnership with the UK. As the industry-led body representing British-based financial and related professional services (FRPS), TheCityUK is delighted to be working to strengthen the bilateral ties across our two financial services ecosystems. The industry we represent contributes over 12 per cent of the UK's total economic output, is the nation's largest taxpayer and employs over 2.2 million people across the country.



As we celebrate the 50th year of successful diplomatic relations, we can see the benefits of these strong foundations. The past year has been a busy and productive one for UK-Viet Nam ties. In 2022, I was delighted to speak at the Viet Nam Investment Forum and meet with His Excellency Tran Tuan Anh, Chairman of the Commission for Economic Affairs of the Communist Party of Viet Nam Central Committee, during his visit over the summer. We were also pleased to take part in the High-Level Forum on Economy and Trade and to meet with His Excellency Vuong Dinh Hue, Chairman of the National Assembly last June. These occasions reinforced the potential for our two countries to work together on topics such as economic empowerment, green finance and fintech.

Our countries' positive links have been enshrined through the refreshed bilateral Strategic Partnership Agreement signed in 2020 as well as the UK-Viet Nam Free Trade Agreement, which entered into force in 2021. These will serve as a key enabler for future two-way trade as well as a stepping stone as the UK seeks to become the first new member to

join the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), of which Viet Nam is a founding member.

We welcome the Government of Viet Nam's intention to develop a regional financial centre, as outlined in the Economic and Social Development Strategy for 2021-2030 and Vision for 2045. Viet Nam's rapid development and growing middle class are boosting demand for increasingly sophisticated financial and professional services products. A regional financial centre would help deepen Viet Nam's financial links with the rest of the world by offering a business and regulatory environment that is attractive to global investors seeking to enter the market and support the transition to net zero.

We are well placed to support these ambitions. The UK is widely recognised as one of the world's leading international financial centres, and our FRPS industry has longstanding and strong links to Viet Nam and expertise in green finance, innovation systems and digital transformation. These areas present opportunities to partner to deliver growth for both our markets as well as increase prosperity across the ASEAN region.

We are pleased to be working with the UK and Vietnamese Governments to support the development of a regional financial centre in Viet Nam, offering expertise on the legal, policy and regulatory frameworks, that will help to develop the financial and related professional services ecosystem, support long-term sustainable growth across the country and provide a gateway to attract further UK and international investment to Viet Nam.

In partnership with both governments, we will work with our members to provide the technical expertise to further strengthen the regulatory, financial, and professional services framework conditions and the business environment. We will also engage with local authorities to provide a structured roadmap to develop a regional financial centre customised to the needs of the market.

We look forward to contributing to this important initiative to enhance links between the Vietnamese economy and global financial markets. The UK and Viet Nam have much to gain from our economic partnership. I look forward to the next 50 years of our diplomatic relationship.



PRUDENTIAL AIMS TO STRENGTHEN ITS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COMMITMENT IN VIET NAM

2023 marks a milestone for Prudential as it celebrates 175 years of its global presence and 100 years in Asia. As the first UK life insurance company to be awarded a licence in Viet Nam, Prudential has been proud to support the development of Viet Nam's financial sector since it began operating there in 1999.

Since then, Prudential has deepened and developed Viet Nam's insurance and asset management sectors. Insurance has an important role to play in providing protection and stability to families; domestic capital market development, mobilising investment in local currency for long term assets; and 'recycling' that money to support the country's socio-economic development. Now of course, the insurance sector also has a role to play in supporting the country's journey to net zero emission by 2050.

Prudential is a proud partner in this. In December 2022, leaders from Viet Nam and the International Partners Group agreed a Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP).

The Partnership will support Viet Nam in working towards a number of ambitious new targets: bringing forward the projected peaking date for all greenhouse gas emissions in Viet Nam from 2035 to 2030; reducing peak annual power sector emissions by up to 30 per cent (from 240 megatons to 170 megatons); limiting Viet Nam's peak coal capacity to 30.2GW (down from a current planning figure of 37GW); accelerating the adoption of renewables so that renewable energy accounts for at least 47 per cent of electricity generation by 2030 (up from the current planned generation share of 36 per cent).

The successful delivery of these ambitious targets will result in around 500 megatons (0.5 billion tonnes) of emissions saved by 2035.

Mark FitzPatrick, CEO, Prudential Plc: "As the first foreign insurer in Viet Nam, over the past 30 years, we have been a proud partner on the country's financial sector development, deepening the capital market, insuring Vietnamese families and building resilience in the economy. In recent years, both our asset manager and insurance businesses have been working with Vietnamese policy and regulatory partners on the question of sustainability, and we are therefore thrilled to represent our sector on the JETP Working Group. A just and inclusive transition to net zero is of critical importance across Asia and we believe that the financial community has an important role to play. We will therefore look forward to supporting the Vietnamese and the IPG government partners, along with other financial institutions in Viet Nam to realise their own vision of a just transition."

Mr Phuong Tien Minh, CEO of Prudential Viet Nam: "As a life insurer, asset owner and manager, we are interested in the sustainable development of the Viet Nam market and our approach to the just and inclusive transition is to make sure the local market stands ready to respond to the global energy transition."

This year also marks an important milestone in the Viet Nam and United Kingdom relationship. In this important year, Prudential's ambitions in the country will continuously support both capitals towards the future.



FRIENDSHIP TIES

Chairman of the Viet Nam - UK Friendship Association and Chairman of the Petrovietnam Board of Directors, Mr. Hoang Quoc Vuong discusses the important role the Viet Nam – UK Friendship Association has contributed to people-to-people diplomacy between the two countries

The diplomatic relationship between Viet Nam and the United Kingdom has undergone outstanding development over the past 50 years and is experiencing some of the warmest, closest times ever today. We have successfully established a strong and cooperative friendship between the people of the two nations. The Viet Nam – UK Friendship Association is proud to contribute a considerable part to this monumental accomplishment. Recently, the two states have been arranging high-level meetings, in which our association (VUFA) has had the privilege of taking part. These meetings have significantly enhanced the amity and collaborative bond between the two countries and strongly promoted bilateral trade and investment activities.

Since the establishment of the strategic partnership in 2010, the trading turnover has doubled and reached a total value of US\$6.8 billion in 2022, with momentum driven by the UKVFTA. Moreover, Viet Nam's energy and industry sectors are moving in a greener, more sustainable direction with great support from the UK, as evidenced by the Just Energy Transition Partnership with Viet Nam and COP26 commitments. The UK is now positioned as the fifteenth largest foreign investor in Viet Nam with US\$4.2 billion in FDI capital, which is largely located in the energy, industry and finance sectors.

Over the past five decades, we have witnessed the growth of the relationship between the two countries in various areas, including economic and trade cooperation, education, culture and public affairs. The Viet Nam-UK Friendship Association has honourably played a central role in promoting people-to-people diplomacy between the two nations. Established in 1998, the association has worked tirelessly to foster friendship, cooperation and mutual understanding between the people of Viet Nam and the UK. With branches located across cities and provinces of Viet Nam, the association frequently organises activities promoting connections between Vietnamese people and the people of the UK, and facilitates cultural events, tourism, students and research exchanges, educational programmes, as well as trading and investment promotion. These activities provide opportunities for individuals from both countries to connect and learn from each other, helping promote the rich cultural heritage of Viet Nam to the people of the UK, and vice versa.

In 2022, the Association was pleased to be involved in a visit to the UK, joining 'The Viet Nam Days in the UK' event, and speaking at the Viet Nam Investment Forum. We also engaged in discussions with our partners in the UK, such as the Viet Nam – UK Network, Viet Nam Embassy in the UK, Viet Nam Business Association in the UK, Viet Nam Intellectual Society in the UK and Ireland. We were also pleased to witness the historical changes in the UK with King Charles III's accession to the throne after Queen Elizabeth II's 70-year reign, as well as the new Prime Minister taking up office.

2023 is a special year, with many big events celebrating 50 years of diplomatic relations between two countries, and 25 years of establishing the Viet Nam – UK Friendship Association. We expect to be the bridge, the central factor in organising large events marking this historical milestone, contributing to leveraging diplomatic, economic and trade cooperative relationships to a higher level.

With a strong foundation and long-term vision for extensive cooperation, I hope that the bilateral relationship between the two countries will grow many times over in the next decade, making Viet Nam and the UK top partners in the region and around the world.



Chairman Hoang Quoc Vuong attending Viet Nam Days 2022 in the UK



A TEN-YEAR JOURNEY FOR THE VIET NAM-UK NETWORK

Her Majesty's former Ambassador to Viet Nam and co-founder and Chairman of the Viet Nam-UK Network, Warwick Morris, explains how the organisation came into being

The anniversary of half a century of diplomatic relations between the UK and Viet Nam has a particular resonance for me. 50 years ago, in January 1973, I was working at the British Embassy in Paris on my first overseas posting as a diplomat. Part of my job as Press Officer was to help British journalists and photographers obtain accreditation to attend important conferences and high-level governmental meetings held in France. On 27 January 1973, I found myself at the Paris Peace Conference, watching as the parties involved in the war in Viet Nam announced an accord which led to a truce and, more significantly, to the end of US involvement in the war. One participant in that Conference, in an eye-catching black ao dai, was the leader of the Viet Cong delegation, Nguyen Thi Binh.

Fast-forward nearly 30 years and, as Britain's Ambassador to Viet Nam, I had the honour of calling in on that same Madame Nguyen Thi Binh, then the distinguished Vice-President of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam. What a pleasure it was to meet her.

During my time as Ambassador to Viet Nam (2000-2003), the bilateral relationship was growing, mainly in the form of trade and investment links, financial business – Prudential, for example, were just establishing their insurance presence – and higher educational ties; but Viet Nam still received a considerable amount of aid from around the world, including Britain, and British citizens were only just starting to see Viet Nam as a desirable holiday destination. Cooperation on global issues was by no means commonplace, and doing business with Viet Nam was not always seen as straightforward. I remember when Her Royal Highness Princess Anne visited Viet Nam for several days in 2003 – joining our celebrations to mark the 30th Anniversary of diplomatic relations – her programme included visiting Save the Children Fund projects in a poorer central part of Viet Nam, an English language training school, Glaxo's new office, and the staff and families of BP's off-shore gas project.

Now, two decades on, the UK and Viet Nam work together in a far wider range of sectors, including on global and regional issues, and with much greater intensity.

These include such diverse areas as alternative sources of energy, the Green Agenda and climate change, security and policing matters, fintech and hi-tech, food products, and the health sector to name just a few. The establishment of Strategic and Economic Partnerships between the two governments has led to frequent ministerial visits in both directions, while the successful negotiation and implementation of a bilateral Free Trade Agreement (FTA) is making trade easier and boosting business for both sides. The 'Made in Viet Nam' label is increasingly common in the UK, while British cars and consumer goods are making their mark in Viet Nam, as I've seen for myself on return visits. Immediately prior to COVID-19, thanks in part to the establishment of direct flights by Vietnam Airlines, the number of British tourists travelling to Viet Nam reached 250,000 annually, a figure that I hope will be achieved again before too long.

In reality, it's not simply the fact that diplomatic relations have now been in place for 50 years that merits celebration. Rather, that over the years since 1973 the governments of the two countries, and especially their citizens, have got to know, understand and trust each other so much better. To my mind, nothing beats these people-to-people links to enhance understanding and friendship. This was why several of us felt it was high time in 2011 to establish in the UK a forward-looking, non-governmental body, run by British and Vietnamese volunteers, to bring together individuals, businesses and organisations of all kinds, with a common interest in finding out more about each other, and about the opportunities this creates. In London on 22 January 2013, in the presence of visiting Party Secretary-General Nguyen Phu Trong, and Viet Nam's Ambassador to the UK, HE Mr Vu Quang Minh, the Viet Nam-UK Network (VUKN) formally came into being.

Now, after scores of events and activities involving a wide range of topics and sectors, and with several hundred British and Vietnamese followers, the Viet Nam-UK Network is proud to be able to celebrate its own 10th anniversary in 2023, alongside the two governments' 50th anniversary celebrations. A very special year indeed!



Comment from Mark Kent, Her Majesty's former Ambassador to Viet Nam and new Chairman of the Viet Nam UK network:

It is a great honour for me to succeed Warwick Morris as Chairman of the Viet Nam UK network. This is a tough act to follow, given that Warwick was the founder of the network, which is now celebrating 10 years at the same time as UK and Viet Nam celebrate 50 years of diplomatic relations. I think I speak for many in thanking Warwick for his great contributions to bringing our countries closer together and I will do my best to follow his example. I have just returned from my first visit to Viet Nam for over 10 years – and I was very impressed with how the country has moved forward in the years since I left office as Ambassador in 2010. I was also impressed by the way UK Viet Nam bilateral relations have strengthened, broadened and deepened and I look forward to further progress in the coming years!



MEDICAL AND SCIENTIFIC AID FOR VIET NAM, LAOS AND CAMBODIA

Chair of Trustees at Medical and Scientific Aid for Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia, Peter Lidgard, recounts the charity's work that began back in the Viet Nam War and still continues today

For over 50 years, Medical and Scientific Aid for Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia (MSAVLC) has been giving aid to the most vulnerable people in Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia, the wounded, the sick, the disadvantaged and the poor.

Our story began in June 1965, when a meeting was held at the House of Commons to establish the 'Medical Aid Committee for Viet Nam' (MACV). Founders Dr Joan McMichael and Renee Short MP had met representatives from both North and South Viet Nam at the World Congress of Women in Moscow. They had heard accounts of the terrible suffering of the Vietnamese people, in a war which was escalating as a result of greater participation by the United States forces. The following year, 74 people with interests in the arts, science, medicine, politics, religion, trade unions and the theatre, agreed to become sponsors of the Medical Aid Committee for Viet Nam. Its stated aim was "to send medical aid to where the bombs were falling, and the casualties were highest." The first consignment of medical supplies – antibiotics, was sent to the Liberation Red Cross in November 1966, and from then on medical supplies and equipment were sent to both North and South Viet Nam.

It was not long before people all over Britain were giving their support. Concerts, exhibitions and film shows brought in a considerable income. In 1967, a Blood Transfusion Unit was established and within six years, 6,567 pints of blood, given by British donors had been sent to help injured Vietnamese people.

In February 1969 it was agreed to build and equip a hospital near the 17th parallel. Funds were raised and the British Friendship Hospital was built in Ky Anh, Ha Tinh Province. It was officially opened in September 1980 by Dr Joan McMichael.

During the Viet Nam War, MACV's support included medicines, medical equipment, books and journals, blood, food and clothing. When the war ended, the charity had expected gradually to close. But they found that support was needed as much as ever because of the stringent economic embargo imposed by the USA and its allies, which even included medical supplies.

It was in 1979, following the liberation of Cambodia from the genocidal Pol Pot regime, that MACV began providing medical aid to the people of Cambodia. The charity changed its name to 'Medical and Scientific Aid for Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia' and began the 'Mother and Child Campaign' to give support to midwifery training, post-natal care and a cervical cancer screening in all three countries.

1985 saw the charity launch a Campaign for Vietnamese

Victims of Chemical Warfare. Soldiers and civilians had been severely harmed by the spraying of toxic chemicals (known as Agent Orange) in Viet Nam, by the American Forces during the war. Victims, suffering respiratory difficulties and cancers, were helped by the charity, as the perpetrators took no responsibility. It is an ongoing problem for the victims because birth defects and deformities are passed on to future generations, and we still provide aid for those worst affected, their children and their grandchildren.

In the 1990's the charity established an artificial limb project using the 'Jaipur limb', a prosthetic made in Viet Nam. Thousands of people injured in accidents or by landmines benefitted from the fitting of these arms, legs and feet throughout the 1990's.

Following this the charity became aware of the problem of trachoma, the commonest form of infective blindness, which was affecting many children in Thanh Hoa Province. MSAVLC provided funds to help deal with this disease through a combination of public education, antibiotics and the provision of thousands of face towels.

In the past 20 years, MSAVLC has funded 18 courses to train traditional village midwives in modern methods in the remote Northern Highlands of Viet Nam. To date 1,700 midwives have received training and as a result, the lives of countless mothers and babies have been saved.

MSAVLC has also provided equipment, medicines, beds and incubators for the British Friendship Hospital, and to Ha Tinh General Hospital, and given support and equipment for victims of Agent Orange in children's residential 'Peace Villages' in Hanoi, Ha Tinh and Ho Chi Minh City. Most recently, the charity has provided over 2,000 wheelchairs which have been distributed to Agent Orange victims living at home, in provinces throughout Viet Nam.

For the past 40 years the charity has been run entirely by a small group of enthusiastic volunteers, who have raised over £4 million in large and small donations given by the people of Britain. Honorary officers have visited Viet Nam on many occasions to monitor our projects, and over the years a strong bond of trust and lasting friendships have been built between MSAVLC volunteers and project and foreign office staff in Viet Nam.

In recent times, as Viet Nam has developed, the charity's aid has targeted the most vulnerable, particularly the Agent Orange victims, who were severely affected by the devastating war, even though it ended over 50 years ago. Our work continues...

<http://msavlc.org/>



THE CHRISTINA NOBLE CHILDREN'S FOUNDATION

The Christina Noble Children's Foundation (CNCF) is a third generation family British charity proudly operating in Viet Nam since 1989.

CNCF are dedicated to serving the healthcare, education and community needs of vulnerable children. We believe that every child is an individual who deserves love, respect and freedom from all forms of exploitation.

In collaboration with local government partners and agencies, CNCF has implemented 175 projects providing holistic care across three main areas since inception: education, healthcare and community development. CNCF believes by addressing these areas collectively, children and families stand a much greater chance of breaking the cycle of poverty for generations. To date, CNCF has directly impacted over 900,000 vulnerable children with an indirect impact on over two million people.

Over the past 34 years, the Foundation has evolved tremendously. This would not be possible without the support of the Vietnamese government and the exemplary long-standing working relationships with local partners. Such important relationships are based on our mutual commitment to working towards the progressive betterment of the communities we work side-by-side for, and increasing our collective impact. Having this support brings about real sustainable lasting change for future generations in Viet Nam.

CNCF's Medical Exchange Programme (MEP) is one example of many programmes with long-term and sustainable benefits. Established in 2004 by founder Christina Noble, in partnership with the Royal College of Surgeons, Operation Childlife and Paediatric Hospital #2 Ho Chi Minh City, the MEP brings world-class medical expertise to Viet Nam in the form of renowned surgical delegations that assess complex cases and perform surgeries that may be otherwise unavailable in Viet Nam.

The programme has also facilitated local Vietnamese medical professionals to travel abroad for intensive surgical training, experience that they can then apply to their local country hospitals. The programme encourages higher learning capabilities in the medical field for local professionals to apply world-class medical practises.

In recent years, we have witnessed a rapidly changing Viet Nam and CNCF continues to evolve with it. We aspire to break new ground as Viet Nam develops into a dynamic emerging market. We feel incredibly proud and humbled to have witnessed this development over the past three decades, and in our own way, to have been part of this evolution.

Central to the Foundation's philosophy of a holistic approach to childhood development, we continue to identify what community and state structures are now achieving to create sustainable impact. In doing so, we identify the areas where children and young adults fall outside these structures and still remain in need of support; for such rapid development of a country can also negatively impact those who continue to live in abject poverty in new ways.

CNCF must cultivate, nurture and prepare the next generation of children for this new world. Our services on their behalf, must reflect the incredible development of Viet Nam and the growing opportunities available to this new generation, so not one child is left behind or denied a chance to thrive in the promising future Viet Nam can now offer for all, regardless of background and circumstances.

CNCF has received many awards for services to humanity across 30 countries. Most notably, Christina and CNCF were awarded the Order of Friendship Medal by the President of Viet Nam in 2010 and 2019 respectively. The award is the highest honour given to a foreigner, and at the time Christina was the first woman to receive this. CNCF was the first INGO to receive this honour also, for which Christina and CNCF are deeply proud of.



Mission clinic: Craniofacial consultant Mr Christopher Forrest examines patient during a clinic at 108 Military Central Hospital's Center for Craniofacial and Plastic Surgery as part of the FTW Craniofacial mission to Hanoi in November 2019.

FACING THE WORLD

Katrin Kandel, voluntary CEO, is the driving force behind the medical foundation's groundbreaking achievements over the past 20 years

Facing the World is a UK-registered medical charitable foundation set up in 2002 to treat children from developing countries with craniofacial defects. In 2007, the foundation was invited by a US charity to Viet Nam where there is a very high rate of birth defects. Following this visit, my colleagues and I felt very strongly that Facing the World's focus should be to develop craniofacial centres in Viet Nam.

In order to achieve this goal, the foundation has established a unique and sustainable strategy by applying a 'teach a man to fish' approach which has been achieved via a multi-pronged method:

- An International Fellowship Programme
- National Training Missions
- Technology

Fellowships for Vietnamese medics are key to the foundation's success and to building capacity for specialist treatment and care in Viet Nam for the children born with craniofacial conditions. The programme launched in the UK in 2015 and has since expanded to include placements at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto, Canada; the Women's and Children's Hospital, Adelaide, Australia; and The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, Johns Hopkins Hospital, Seattle Children's Hospital, and University of Maryland Shock Trauma Center in the USA. Since inception, over 100 Vietnamese medics have been offered fellowships to these institutions, giving them an opportunity to observe and learn new techniques and approaches, as well as to work and establish relationships with doctors in centres of excellence throughout the world.

In-country training via medical missions to Viet Nam builds on the fellowships and is delivered by the foundation's international teams working alongside the Vietnamese teams to operate jointly, putting the new approaches and techniques to use. Since 2008, there have been on average two missions to Viet Nam per year. Smaller additional missions covering specific surgical topics and approaches have proven a success.

Technology plays a vital role in a post-pandemic surgical theatre. The importance of telemedicine is paramount to the foundation's strategy and through the Teladoc platform, Facing the World has been able to donate telemedicine capability to all partner hospitals in Viet Nam which has enabled the development of a 'hub-and-spoke' outreach

programme within Viet Nam. The platform facilitates a two-way mentoring and educational system for both international and domestic partners. The foundation has collaborated with its Vietnamese partners to identify game-changing technology needs, which are met through donations.

Facing the World has also signed Memoranda of Understandings with the Viet Nam Agency for Victims of Agent Orange (VAVA), the Viet Nam Red Cross, Direct Relief, The Department of Health and each of the partner hospitals. Developing these relationships has enabled life changing results for thousands of children born with adverse conditions.

Facing the World's efforts have been recognised by the governments of Viet Nam and the UK. In 2017, I was delighted to be commended with a Points of Light award by the then British Prime Minister. The Viet Nam Union of Friendship Organisations awarded the foundation with the medal for Peace and Friendship among Nations. It was also presented with the Viet Nam President's Medal for Friendship and has been officially endorsed by the UK All-Party Parliamentary Group for Viet Nam and the Viet Nam-UK Network.

Through intensive collaborative working with Da Nang General Hospital, Viet-Duc University Hospital, 108 Military Central Hospital, and Hong Ngoc General Hospital and their respective networks, the foundation has leveraged its approach and expertise through the vast range of hospitals networked throughout Viet Nam's three medical systems. In late 2018, the foundation opened the Centre for Craniofacial and Plastic Surgery at 108 Military Central Hospital, the first of its kind in South East Asia. In the next five years, Facing the World plans to enable 40,000 operations to be performed by its trained Vietnamese doctors. The foundation expects to send at least another 200 Vietnamese doctors abroad for training, and will continue to donate medical equipment.

The longer-term goal is for Viet Nam to be part of the surgical expertise at Facing the World, acting as a craniofacial centre in South East Asia. When the foundation can expand into one of the neighbouring countries, Viet Nam is expected to become part of the training scheme similar to the UK, Canada, Australia and the US.

<https://facingtheworld.net/>



VIS with Vietnamese Ambassador Nguyen Hoang Long and Professor Jonathan Van Tam among others

BEYOND KNOWLEDGE DIPLOMACY

By **VIS Vice President, Dr. Que Anh Dang** from Coventry University and **Dr. Le-Nam Tran** from University College Dublin write about the Vietnamese Intellectual Society in the UK and Ireland

Our strengths lie in collective intellectual capacities

The Vietnamese Intellectual Society (VIS) is a professional volunteer-based society of Vietnamese intellectuals living and working in the UK and the Republic of Ireland. VIS UK & Ireland was formally established in December 2020 with the support and recognition of Viet Nam's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Vietnamese Embassy in London. By the end of 2022, the society had brought together about 100 members of whom 95 per cent are academics (PhD candidates to professors) working in more than 30 disciplines at over 60 higher education institutions in the UK and Ireland.

VIS members are accomplished individuals who collectively possess huge intellectual capacities and global professional networks forged in their career trajectories and academic mobility across many countries. Several members are prominent scholars; many are rising stars in cutting-edge technologies. Regardless of whether they have resided in the UK and Ireland for several decades or recently relocated here, they all share common objectives:

- To foster connections and collaborations among VIS members in the UK and Ireland while building bridges with their global networks.
- To strengthen academic links with Vietnamese partners to contribute to the socio-economic development and international integration of Viet Nam.
- To engage in people-to-people connectivity and enhance the ties between the UK, Ireland and Viet Nam.

Looking back to see ahead

In recent years, VIS representatives have had opportunities to exchange ideas with Vietnamese leaders. Notably, they met the Vietnamese Prime Minister at COP26 in 2021, and the Chairman of the National Assembly, the Minister of Education and Training and the Chairman of the Party Central Committee's Economic

Commission in 2022. These direct dialogues have facilitated knowledge diplomacy and supported the efforts of VIS UK & Ireland to build stronger knowledge partnerships with Viet Nam. Different from the 'soft power' concept, knowledge diplomacy is based on principles of collaboration, reciprocity and achieving mutual but different benefits.

One of the most impactful initiatives undertaken by VIS UK & Ireland is the 'Mentorship and Talent Development' (MTD) programme embraced by many Vietnamese universities. The programme is designed to help PhD candidates and early career researchers enhance their research capability and skills to succeed in publishing their research internationally. Bespoke mentorship matches each mentee with a dedicated VIS member acting as a mentor for up to nine months. As a testament to its effectiveness, the British Council Viet Nam has invited VIS to be a delivery partner for their 'Researcher Connect' programme.

These concrete activities demonstrate VIS' commitment to enhancing academic collaborations and supporting the socio-economic development of Viet Nam, going beyond knowledge diplomacy.

Enabling the flow of knowledge

A special lecture was delivered in May 2022 by Sir Professor Jonathan Van-Tam, the VIS honorary Chair, former Deputy Chief Medical Official for England. Sir Jonathan, who is British of Vietnamese origin and advised the British government during the COVID-19 pandemic, shared his reflections: "Scientists should never compromise professional ethics and integrity. Always speak truth to power. Be considerate and kind to your colleagues, especially in pressing situations."

VIS has transformed the traditional 'brain drain' concept into a 'brain gain' model by facilitating the circulation of skills and turning the outflow of human resources into a valuable and accessible asset through expanded networks.

VIET NAM – THE UNITED KINGDOM: MILESTONES IN 50 YEARS OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

11 September 1973

The Socialist Republic of Viet Nam and the United Kingdom established diplomatic relations at Ambassador level

July 1993

Official visit of Prime Minister Vo Van Kiet to the UK

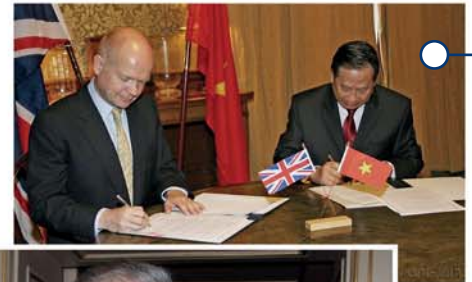


2003

Official visit of Deputy Prime Minister Vu Khoan and Foreign Minister Nguyen Dy Nien to the UK

May 2004

Official visit of President Tran Duc Luong to the UK



October 1993

Official visit of Chairman of the National Assembly Nong Duc Manh to the UK

1994, 2002

Official visit of Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal to Viet Nam

September 1994

Official visit of First Secretary of State and Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Douglas Hurd to Viet Nam

April 1998

Visit by Prime Minister Phan Van Khai to the UK to attend ASEM 2

2001

Official visit of Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott to Viet Nam



March 2005

Official visit of Chairman of the National Assembly Nguyen Van An to the UK

March 2008

Official visit of Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung to the UK. The two sides issued a joint statement to boost the bilateral relations in the direction of 'Partnership for Development'

June 2008

Official visit of Secretary of State for Business, Enterprises and Industrial Reform John Hutton to Viet Nam

September 2008

Official visit of Secretary of State for Justice Jack Straw to Viet Nam

April 2009

Official visit of Deputy Prime Minister Truong Vinh Trong to the UK

October 2009

Official visit of Deputy Prime Minister Hoang Trung Hai to the UK

September 2010

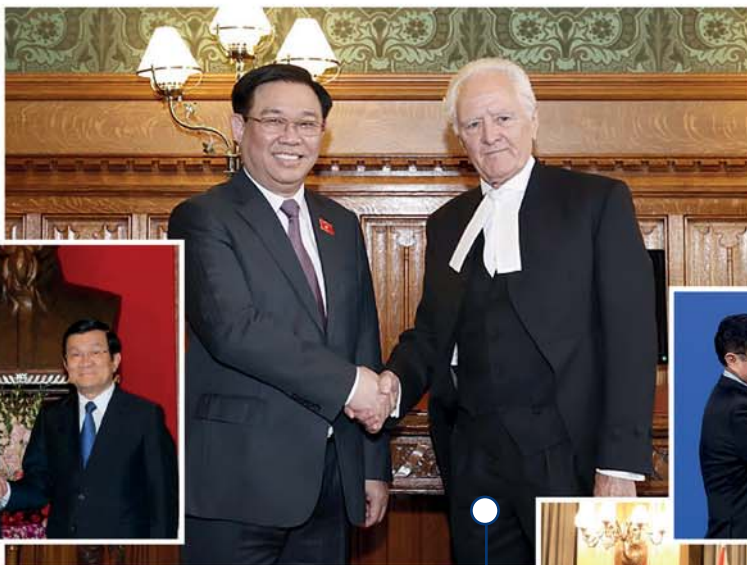
Official visit of Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs Pham Gia Khiem to the UK. The two sides signed the Joint Statement to officially upgrade the relations between Viet Nam and the UK into Strategic Partnership

December 2011

Official visit of Chairman of the National Assembly Nguyen Sinh Hung to the UK

April 2012

Official visit of First Secretary of State and Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs William Hague to Viet Nam



September 2020

Official visit of First Secretary of State and Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs Dominic Rabb to Viet Nam. The two sides agreed a Joint Refreshed Strategic Partnership Agreement

December 2020

Official visit of Secretary of State for International Trade Elizabeth Truss to Viet Nam. The two sides signed the UK-Viet Nam Free Trade Agreement



January 2013

Official visit of General Secretary of Vietnamese Communist Party Nguyen Phu Trong to the UK

July 2015

Official visit of Prime Minister David Cameron to Viet Nam

April 2016

Official visit of Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Philip Hammond to Viet Nam

November 2016

Official visit of His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge to Viet Nam

February 2017

Official visit of Secretary of State for International Trade Liam Fox to Viet Nam

October 2018

Official visit of Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs Pham Binh Minh to the UK

February 2020

Official visit of Minister of Planning and Investment Nguyen Chi Dung to the UK



June 2021

Official visit of First Secretary of State and Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs Dominic Rabb to Viet Nam

July 2021

Official visit of Secretary of State for Defence Ben Wallace and Minister for Asia at the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office Nigel Adams to Viet Nam

November 2021

Working visit of Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh to the UK and attending COP 26 (Glasgow)

June 2022

Official visit of Chairman of the National Assembly Vuong Dinh Hue to the UK

February 2023

Launching the Viet Nam - United Kingdom Friendship Year 2023



VIET NAM UNITED KINGDOM FRIENDSHIP YEAR 2023

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

JANUARY	07 January	Lunar New Year Celebration of the Embassy of Viet Nam in the UK	The Embassy of Viet Nam in the UK
	14 January	Annual General Meeting and Lunar New Year Celebration of the Vietnamese Intellectual Society	Wadham College, University of Oxford, Parks Road Oxford, OX1 3PN
	15 January	Lunar New Year Festival "Tết Cộng đồng - Xuân Quý Mão" of the Vietnamese Community in the the United Kingdom	Deptford Lounge, 9 Giffin St, SE8 4RJ
	22 - 25 January	Viet Nam Pavilion at the Birmingham Furniture Show 2023	National Exhibition Centre, North Ave, Marston Green, Birmingham B40 1NT
	29 January	Lunar New Year Celebration of Viet Nam Business Association in the United Kingdom (VBUK)	China Palace R1 Warehouse Excel West, 2 Western Gateway E16 1DR
FEBRUARY	13 February	Roundtable on Sustainability and Green Agenda with the University of Cambridge	The Old Schools, Trinity Lane, Cambridge CB2 1TN
	13 February	Roundtable on Medical Research and Digital Health with AstraZeneca	AstraZeneca Eastbrook House, Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 8DU
	13 February	Roundtable on How to Enhance the Engagement of Vietnamese Young Talents in the UK to Support Viet Nam Socio-Economic Development	Cambridge Union Dinner Room
	13 February	Vietnamese Ambassador's Lecture: The Miracle Viet Nam: The Economic Reform, The Socio-Economic Achievements and the Strategic Partnership with the United Kingdom	The Cambridge Union Society 9A Bridge Street, Cambridge, CB2 1UB
	18 February	LEADER CAMP 2023 of the Vietnamese Students Association in the United Kingdom (SVUK)	London South Bank University 103 Borough Road, London, SE1 0AA
	22 February	Launching Ceremony of The United Kingdom - Viet Nam Friendship Year 2023: Celebrating 50 years of Diplomatic Relations	Locarno Suite, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, King Charles St, London SW1A 2AH
MARCH	07 March	Connecting Viet Nam - Scotland: Celebrating 50 years of the United Kingdom - Viet Nam Diplomatic Relations	Scotland House, 58 Victoria Embankment, Temple, EC4Y 0DS
	28 March - 07 April	Vietnamese Contemporary Arts Exhibition: "Colours of The Motherland" and Ao Dai Exhibition by designer Lan Huong	D contemporary, 23 Grafton Street W1S 4EY
	30 March	Lectures of the British Museum and the British Library Experts: A Glimpse of Viet Nam - Art of Ceramics, Textiles and the History of Trade Relations with the United Kingdom	D contemporary, 23 Grafton Street W1S 4EY
	30 March	Vietnamese Traditional Costume - Ao Dai Fashion Show by designers Lan Huong and Jordan Nguyen	D contemporary, 23 Grafton Street W1S 4EY
APRIL	03 April	Roundtable: How the British Non-Governmental Organizations Better Support Viet Nam Socio-Economic Development	The Embassy of Viet Nam in the UK
	13 April	Roundtable by the United Kingdom -Vietnam Higher Education Network: Promoting the Cooperation in Higher Education between Viet Nam and the United Kingdom	The Embassy of Viet Nam in the UK
	18 April	Roundtable with the United Kingdom Prime Minister's Trade Envoy for Viet Nam Mark Garnier MP: "Viet Nam - the United Kingdom: New Area of Trade & Business Cooperation", and Launching of the Special Report of the Diplomat Magazine: "Viet Nam - United Kingdom, Half a Century of Diplomatic Relations"	D contemporary, 23 Grafton Street W1S 4EY
	23 April	Vietnamese Traditional Performance Night: Celebrating 50 years of Viet Nam - the United Kingdom Diplomatic Relations by the Vietnamese Community in Birmingham	Aston Student's Union, 8 Coleshill St, Birmingham B4 7BX



VIET NAM UNITED KINGDOM FRIENDSHIP YEAR 2023

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

APRIL	24 – 26 April	Vietnamese Food & Drink Pavilion at Birmingham Expo 2023	National Exhibition Centre, North Ave, Marston Green, Birmingham
	24 April	Meet Viet Nam – Birmingham: Celebrating 50 years of Viet Nam – the United Kingdom Diplomatic Relations	No5 Barristers' Chambers, 5 Fountain Court, Steelhouse Lane, Birmingham, B4 6DR
	27 April	Meet the Vietnamese Ambassador: The Past, Present and Future of International Business Relations: a case of Viet Nam – the United Kingdom	London South Bank University 103 Borough Road, London, SE1 0AA
MAY	05 May	Meet the Vietnamese President: Celebrating 50 Years of Viet Nam – United Kingdom Diplomatic Relations	London
	May (Date TBC)	Viet Nam – UK Golf Day: Celebrating 50 Years of Diplomatic Relations	Hainault Golf Club, Romford R, Chigwell IG7 4QW
	10 – 13 May	Viet Nam Agrifood Pavilion at Balmoral Show 2023	Belfast, Northern Ireland
	10 – 13 May	Meet Viet Nam – Northern Ireland: Celebrating 50 Years of Viet Nam – the United Kingdom Diplomatic Relations	Northern Ireland
	15-18 May	Viet Nam Business and Trade Roadshow with KPMG	Glasgow, Manchester, Birmingham, London
	19 May	President Ho Chi Minh and the United Kingdom: A Legacy to Remember	Newhaven, East Sussex in England
	May (Date TBC)	Meet Viet Nam – Wales: Celebrating 50 Years of Viet Nam – the United Kingdom Diplomatic Relations	Newhaven, East Sussex in England
JUNE	12 – 13 June	Viet Nam – the United Kingdom Strategic Dialogue	London
	14 – 15 June	Meet Viet Nam – Manchester: Celebrating 50 Years of Viet Nam – the United Kingdom Diplomatic Relations	Manchester
	19 June	"Viet Nam – United Kingdom Education Innovation" Conference by the Vietnamese Intellectual Society (VIS)	Middlesex University, London
	21 June	Annual Dinner of Viet Nam – UK Network: Celebrating the 50 th Anniversary of Viet Nam – the United Kingdom Diplomatic Relations and the 10 th Anniversary of the Viet Nam – UK Network	The House of Lords, the Parliament
JULY	July (Date TBC)	Meet the Vietnamese Prime Minister: Enhancing the Viet Nam – United Kingdom Strategic Partnership	London
	03 – 05 July	VIET – UK GOLF TOURNAMENT: Celebrating 50 years of Viet Nam – the United Kingdom Diplomatic Relations	The Belfry Hotel & Golf Resort, Lichfield Road, Wishaw, Sutton Coldfield B76 9PR
	July (Date TBC)	Meet Viet Nam – Nottingham: Celebrating 50 Years of Viet Nam – the United Kingdom Diplomatic Relations	Nottingham city Nottinghamshire, East Midlands, England
SEPTEMBER	07 September	"A Journey Through Music" Vietnamese classical concert: Celebrating the 50 th Anniversary of Viet Nam – the United Kingdom Diplomatic Relations and the 10 th Anniversary of the Viet Nam – UK Network	Royal College of Music, Prince Consort Rd, South Kensington, SW7 2BS
	12 September	Viet Nam National Day and Official Ceremony to Celebrate the 50 th Anniversary of Viet Nam – the United Kingdom Diplomatic Relations	The British Museum
OCTOBER	October	Meet Viet Nam – Scotland: Celebrating 50 Years of Viet Nam – the United Kingdom	Scotland
	October (Date TBC)	Deepening Viet Nam – the United Kingdom Interparliamentary Cooperation with the All-Party Parliamentary Groups for Viet Nam	House of Parliament London SW1A 0AA
NOVEMBER	06 – 08 November	Viet Nam Tourism Pavilion at World Travel Market London 2023	ExCeL London, Royal Victoria Dock, 1 Western Gateway, E16 1XL
	November (Date TBC)	Viet Nam Tourism & Investment Conference	London
	November (Date TBC)	Viet Nam Music and Dance Festival: Celebrating 50 Years of Viet Nam – the United Kingdom Diplomatic Relations	Central Hall Westminster Storey's Gate, London SW1H 9NH



Ambassador Nguyen Hoang Long and members of Embassy of Viet Nam in London.



Ambassador Nguyen Hoang Long and his spouse Vu Huong Giang with members of the Embassy of Viet Nam in London and their families.



A WARM & HAPPY FRIENDSHIP

Chairman of Dragon Capital Dominic Scriven OBE outlines his company's unquestioned commitment to the long-term interests of Viet Nam

Dragon Capital began life in Ho Chi Minh City in 1994, as 'Renovation' began to get firmly underway. Thirty years later, the firm counts as one of the larger capital market institutions in Viet Nam, with clients that range from international sovereign wealth funds, endowments and families, through to a rapidly emerging population of domestic Vietnamese savers, investors and pensioners. With our unquestioned commitment to the long-term interests of Viet Nam, Dragon Capital is delighted to celebrate 50 years of friendship between the UK and Viet Nam. As the third largest population in South East Asia, Viet Nam's role in trade, investment, diplomacy and culture continues to increase in the region, and as the UK settles after Brexit, the two countries form a bridge between Europe and Emerging Asia to address contemporary issues such as climate change and biodiversity, mobility and financial technology. Dragon Capital wishes the governments and peoples of both countries a further resoundingly warm and happy friendship, for the next 50 years.





SPECIAL THANKS

