

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2023

Remarks to Members of the Press With General Secretary Nguyễn Phú Trọng of Vietnam in Hanoi, Vietnam

September 10, 2023

General Secretary Trọng. Your Honorable Joe Biden, President of the United States of America, distinguished delegates, on behalf of the leaders of the party, state, and people of Vietnam: I'd like to extend my warmest welcome to his Honorable President Joe Biden, who has great affection for the country and people of Vietnam, and for his various contributions to the strengthening of the friendship and cooperation between Vietnam and the U.S. in different capacities.

His visit to Vietnam on this occasion is of great significance, for it coincides with the celebration of the 10th anniversary of the comprehensive partnership between the two countries.

I always recall the fond memories of his cordial reception and warm welcome and that of the American—the U.S. Government, as well of the affection of the American people during my visit to the U.S. in July 2015. Most notably, I always recall the very sincere and interesting discussion between myself and President Biden during this visit.

I'd also like to thank him for his letter in June this year to invite me to visit the U.S. again, which has regrettably not been arranged.

In an air of friendship, equality, understanding, and mutual respect, President Biden and I held very extensive and fruitful bilateral talks in the capital city of Hanoi. The two sides agreed that over the past years, the Vietnam-U.S. ties have enjoyed—have grown by leaps and bounds in a very substantive and effective manner since the normalization of relations and following the establishment of the comprehensive partnership.

On this occasion, on behalf of the people of Vietnam, I'd like to extend my thanks—my greetings and thanks to organizations and individuals in the U.S. for their contributions to the strengthening of the friendship and cooperation between our two countries.

On this basis, for the interests of the two peoples and in line with the aspiration to further bolster cooperation for peace, cooperation, and sustainable development in a new context, President Biden and I represented the two countries to adopt the joint leader statement to elevate the Vietnam-U.S. ties to a comprehensive strategic partnership for peace, cooperation, and sustainable development.

This is the most important aspect of this visit. That says it all. This partnership shall continue to be built upon the basis of the full respect for the fundamental principles guiding our bilateral ties thus far. These include respect for the U.N. Charter, international law, and each other's political system, independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity.

Vietnam also underscores the fact that mutual understanding of each other's relevant situation, respect for each other's legitimate interest, and noninterference in each other's domestic affairs are fundamental factors with great significance in our bilateral relations and in international relations as a whole.

Vietnam highly appreciates and attaches importance to the U.S. reiteration of its support for a strong, independent, resilient, and prosperous Vietnam.

The items of this new partnership are built upon existing cooperation items between the two countries and elevate it to a new height through the strengthening of economic trade and

investment cooperation with innovation serving as the basis, the core, and the driver for our bilateral ties.

Other pillars include strengthening scientific and technological cooperation, serving as a breakthrough for the Vietnam-U.S. comprehensive strategic partnership for peace, cooperation, and sustainable development.

In the time to come, relevant authorities from both countries will work closely in effectively implementing these agreements, and only then can we say that we have achieved success. These are only initial success, even if they are a great beginning, laying the foundation for our steps forward.

Vietnam will continue to strengthen its ties with U.S. and others international partners in the spirit outlined by President Ho Chi Minh after Vietnam reclaimed its independence. That is, Vietnam wishes to be a friend with all countries.

For the U.S., President—President Ho Chi Minh affirmed Vietnam's full independence and affirmed that Vietnam stands ready to engage in full cooperation with the U.S. This independence and this cooperation will benefit the entire world.

We are well aware that in the many years afterwards, the people of Vietnam have had to endure arduous struggles to safeguard its independence and reunification.

The 13th National Party Congress also identified the guidelines to further deepen and strengthen its bilateral relations under the foreign—consistent foreign policy of independence, self-reliance, peace, friendship, cooperation, development, multilateralization, and diversification of external relations.

Vietnam is a friend, a reliable partner, and an active and responsible member of the international community. President Joe Biden and I have provided each other with information on the situation in each country and expressed the appreciation for the efforts and outcomes achieved thus far, be it in terms of social economic development in each country.

Regarding complicated developments in international conflicts, Vietnam hopes that parties concerned will engage in dialogue and peacefully settle disputes on the basis of respect for fundamental principles of international law and the U.N. Charter.

I do hope that through this important and meaningful visit, Mr. President, his delegates, and all distinguished guests present here will have an opportunity to experience firsthand a reformed Vietnam with a robust growth, a longstanding history and culture, and a people that is hospitable, friendly, and a peace-loving nation.

I am confident that this visit to Vietnam by President Joe Biden will be a great success. I wish you, Mr. President, greater successes. And I wish you, your distinguished delegates, and all distinguished guests present here today, as well as your families, good health and happiness.

Thank you. Thank you very much.

President Biden. Secretary General, thank you for welcoming me to Vietnam for this truly historic moment.

Today, we can trace a 50-year arc of progress in the relationship between our nations, from conflict to normalization to this new elevated status that will be a force for prosperity and security in one of the most consequential regions in the world.

We are evolving our partnership directly to a comprehensive strategic partnership, Vietnam's highest tier of partnership. And we're excited about that. A critical step for our nations that

reflects the strength of our relationship as we take on the challenges that matter most to the future of our region and, quite frankly, to the world.

We're deepening our cooperation on critical and emerging technologies, particularly around building a more resilient semiconductor supply chain. We're expanding our economic partnership, spurring even greater trade and investment between our nations.

For example, last year, a Vietnamese company signed a \$4 billion deal to build electric vehicles and batteries in North Carolina in the United States, which will create more than 7,000 jobs in the United States of America. World-class Vietnamese technology companies are going public on the U.S. stock market. And we're welcoming more important new deals during this visit.

We're working to tackle the climate crisis and to accelerate Vietnam's clean energy transition; strengthening global health security, advance treatments for cancer and HIV/AIDS; enhance our security cooperation, including countering trafficking in persons.

I also raised the importance of respect for human rights as a priority for both my administration and the American people. And we'll continue to—*[inaudible]*—our candid dialogue on that regard.

Perhaps most vital to our future, we are doubling down on our people-to-people ties. They're the very heart of our partnership. That includes millions of Vietnamese Americans who strengthen communities all across the United States of America every single day and are looking forward to the outcome of this meeting.

Just this year, the U.S.-supported Fulbright University in Vietnam graduated its first class, and they're working to expand its new campus. One of my oldest and closest friends, Tommy Vallely, is very much involved in that.

Ladies and gentlemen, we're also investing in strengthening the skilled STEM workforce, promoting educational exchanges and collaboration among our scientists, our entrepreneurs, innovators to better work together to capture the enormous opportunities—and I mean enormous opportunities—of this new age of technology.

Let me close with this. All the progress over the past 50 years—none of it was inevitable. It required years of hard work from leaders in both countries, including my friend who's here today, the former Senator and Secretary of State, now Special Presidential Envoy on Climate, John Kerry. We got it done because of another friend who is no longer with us—I miss him—whose memorial we'll be visiting tomorrow, the late John McCain.

Both men saw so clearly, as I and so many others did, how much we had to gain by working together to overcome the bitter past. Years later, I remember the hard work it took, as a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, to be able to normalize relations in 1995.

And 10 years ago, when I was Vice President, we reached a new milestone: the launch of our initial comprehensive partnership. I'm incredibly proud of how our nations and our people have built trust and understanding over the decades and worked to repair the painful legacy the war left on both our nations.

It's work that we pledge today to continue: clearing unexploded ordnance, remediating environmental damage from dioxin, expanding support for people with disabilities, and accounting for every American servicemember still missing in action in Vietnam as well as the fallen or missing Vietnam soldiers from that war.

Our cooperation on these painful issues, as well as on forging new legacies, is one of shared peace and prosperity. It's a testament—I mean this—it's a testament for the resilience and spirit of both our peoples.

It's a powerful reminder of all we can accomplish when we're able to transcend the pain of the past and embrace a future of progress, one grounded on the unity of our people.

So thank you again, Secretary General. Vietnam is a critical power in the world and a bellwether for—in this vital region. And I look forward to continuing this new chapter in the story of our Nation.

Godspeed. Thank you, Mr. President.

General Secretary Trọng. Therefore, my mission and yours, Mr. President—[*inaudible*]—successful meeting. And going forward, we would hopefully embark on a new journey together as President Joe Biden mentioned. I myself have—[*inaudible*]. I speak from my heart in this regard.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 6:40 p.m. at the Central Office of the Communist Party of Vietnam. In his remarks, he referred to Thomas J. Vallely, senior adviser for mainland Southeast Asia, Kennedy School's Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation at Harvard University. General Secretary Trọng spoke in Vietnamese, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. Audio was not available for the verification of the translation of General Secretary Trọng's remarks.

Categories: Interviews With the News Media : Joint news conference, Vietnam General Secretary Trọng.

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Names: Kerry, John F.; Trọng, Nguyễn Phú; Vallely, Thomas J.

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