

Remarks in a Roundtable Meeting With Business Leaders in Hanoi, Vietnam
September 11, 2023

I apologize to my friends, I'm going to repeat a little bit of what I said a moment ago in our private meeting.

And by the way, it's worth the trip watching the press assemble, carrying those cameras. *[Laughter]* I think we should have a couple medics on hand in case you hit one another with those cameras. You're really quite athletic. I'm impressed.

Look, Mr. Prime Minister, nearly 20 years ago—and I'm going to repeat myself a little bit here—nearly 20 years ago, your predecessor came to Washington marking the first time an American President and a Vietnamese Prime Minister would meet together in the White House.

At the time, the—he said the following, the Prime Minister. He said, "This event in itself shows that Vietnam-U.S. relations have in fact entered a new stage." Well, folks, we've really entered a new stage now. The fact is that even today, with all of you—some of the best businesses and best techs firms and best minds in the world—shows that our partnership has once again entered a new and profound stage.

It really is—it is a—a significant leap from what it was before—one marked by greater investment in each other's countries; greater innovation between our companies and our universities; and, as a result, greater prosperity for all our people—all our people in both countries.

And, folks, an example: We're strengthening our supply chains, including through a new semiconductor memorandum of cooperation that we signed today. We're deepening our collaboration on critical technologies like cloud computing, telecommunications, and artificial intelligence, which we should watch very carefully, I might add again.

And together, we're lifting up our people to make this all possible, including launching new programs to help Vietnam modernize its higher education system, strengthen its STEM workforce, and seize the digital economy—and seize it.

So much of this progress in our innovation, in our industries and our integration is—I think is, large part, due to the leaders in this room. And I want to thank them.

So my message today is quite simple: Let's keep it up and be precise about what we do. We're going to see more technological change—as I said, in the last—or the room—in the next 10 years, in my view, than we've seen in the last 50 years. And I don't think that's hyperbole. We're going to see more technological change in the next 10 years than we've seen in the last 50 years.

And we need all of you to help seize the moment and to manage the risks—you know, we risk the—associated with this to our economies and our national security as these develop. We need you to help drive our collaboration into key fields like critical minerals and clean energy.

We need you to continue forging partnerships with each other that will deliver benefits for all of our people. And I mean all of our people, not just the wealthy. I mean all of our people. This is an opportunity to change the dynamic in both our countries.

Partnerships like this landmark deal signed between Boeing and Vietnam Airlines to purchase 50 Boeing 737 aircraft, which will not only support Vietnam's booming travel industry, but it helps support more than 30,000 manufacturing jobs in the United States of America. Incredible. It's incredible.

But let me close with this. There's much more to say, but I want to hear from everyone else here.

As your former Prime Minister said in those years ago, this event itself shows how far Vietnam and the United States have come in our cooperation. And it really is—it's pretty remarkable when you think about it.

I looked out the window of my hotel today, and I thought to myself—you know, I was a young man in college and all of my friends and I were assuming we were coming to Vietnam, not to visit. And—no, look what—I'm serious—look what's changed.

One of the guys that taught me early on that it was going to change more was John Kerry, who was one of the leaders here.

All right, yet this is only the beginning. Together, we must go further and other countries in the region must benefit as well, because our partnership is about so much more than innovation and investments. It's about people. It's about our people. And that sounds simplistic, but it really is true.

It's about investing in the dynamism of our societies by creating opportunities for our students. It's about building secure supply chains for our small businesses. It's about creating a free and open Indo-Pacific for all our people—for all our people. These new—this new partnership is, I think, going to help unleash the potential—our peoples' potential and, with it, a range of possibilities we haven't even thought about yet sitting here.

And so I want to thank you all for being here. I look forward to working with you to seize these possibilities in the years ahead. And I thank you.

And I want to particularly thank the business community for being here and for your innovation. It really matters.

And I think we're at those inflection points in history. I really do. I think what we do in the next 3, 4 years is going to determine what the world looks like in the next three or four decades.

So thank you, thank you, thank you. [*Inaudible*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:29 p.m. at the Office of the Government. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Phạm Minh Chính of Vietnam; former President George W. Bush; and Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John F. Kerry. Also participating in the meeting were U.S. Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken, Ambassador to Vietnam Mark Knapper, Principal Deputy National Security Adviser Jonathan Finer, and International Development Finance Corporation Chief Executive Officer Scott Nathan; and Minister of Foreign Affairs Bùi Thanh Sơn and Minister of Information and Communication Nguyễn Mạnh Hùng of Vietnam.

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