

**HO CHI MINH NATIONAL ACADEMY OF POLITICS**

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**THE PROCESS OF PROTECTING NATIONAL  
INDEPENDENCE OF VIETNAM IN THE FIELD OF  
FOREIGN AFFAIRS FROM 1986 TO 2015**

**SUMMARY OF HISTORICAL DOCTORAL THESIS FIELD OF  
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## **LIST OF WORKS PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR RELATED TO THE THESIS**

1. Chuc Ba Tuyen (2015), "Looking back on 20 years of Viet Nam-US relation: Achievements and Issues set out for Vietnam", *Journal of International Studies*, (1).
2. Nguyen Van Lan, Chuc Ba Tuyen (2015), "Vietnam-China Relation's 65 Years: Achievements and Prospects", *Journal of National Defense Relations*, (30).
3. Chuc Ba Tuyen (2016), "Vietnam's role in ASEAN - Looking back and forward", *Journal of Theoretical Study*, (1).
4. Chuc Ba Tuyen (2016), "The Party's Cognitive Development Process of Foreign Affairs Policy (1986-2016)", *Journal of Party History*, (8).
5. Chuc Ba Tuyen (2016), "The Vietnam-India Strategic Partnership in the field of politics and foreign affairs (from 2007 to 2016)", in the *Proceeding of the International Conference "Vietnam - India: New Context, New Perspective"*, Political Theory Publisher, Hanoi.
6. Thai Van Long, Chuc Ba Tuyen (2016), "External Relations with the Protection of Socialist Homeland of Vietnam in the Renewal Period", *Journal of Theoretical Study*, (8).
7. Chuc Ba Tuyen (2017), "Vietnam - Japan Strategic Partnership: Impacting Factors and Prospects," *Journal of National Defense Relations*, 38.
8. Chuc Ba Tuyen (2017), "Vietnam-India Comprehensive Strategic Partnership: Opportunities and Prospects", *Journal of Theoretical Study*, (6).

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1. The necessity of the thesis**

In the context of strongly expanding globalization and the geo-political competition between emerging countries nowadays, the renewal and implementation of a flexible foreign affair policy which ensures both the national interest of the country and the creation of an international environment of peace, cooperation and development for the country is a strategic issue for nations and peoples, especially for developing countries. Countries putting in place the appropriate direction, contents, and process of implementing foreign policy, fostering international cooperation in order to attract resources for national development is the best way to protect and strengthen national independence in the present context.

Vietnam is widely known as a country with a long history and a tradition of friendly diplomatic relations that has contributed significantly to the success of the struggle for national building and defense. After the unification of the country (1975), the Party and State of Vietnam were deeply aware of the importance of creating an environment of international peace, stability and effective cooperation, which not only has the meaning to promote the socio-economic development of the country, but also directly contributes to the success of the struggle to protect and consolidate the national independence.

In 1986, the Communist Party of Vietnam initiated a comprehensive reform of the country, including the renovation of foreign policy. The appropriate reform of the foreign policy pursued by the Party and State over the past 30 years has met the demands of the struggle for the protection and the consolidation of national independence. The actual implementation of Viet Nam's foreign policy and guidelines have helped Vietnam to exploit the external forces, the power of the era, to develop the country, to circumvent the encirclement, restricting the economic strength of hostile forces againsting the cause of socialist construction, thereby strengthening the national independence.

However, during the implementation of external activities aimed at protecting national independence of Vietnam in the past time there are still inadequacies, obstacles due to our perceptions, thinking, resources,

... not keeping up with the reality of the region and the world. Thus, the analysis of the process of protecting national independence of Vietnam through the content and implementation process of foreign policy of the Party and State of Vietnam in the renovation period, from which to evaluate successes, at the same time looking at the limitations and inadequacies encountered to find solutions and draw lessons learned in the foreign policy of Vietnam to protect and firmly strengthen national independence as an important task with both theoretical and practical significance.

For the above reasons, the author selects the topic: "The process of protecting national independence of Vietnam in the field of foreign affairs from 1986 to 2015" as a doctoral thesis in history, majoring in History of the communist movement, international workers and national liberation.

## **2. Research purposes and research tasks**

### **2.1. Research purposes**

The dissertation analyzes the content and process of implementing the protection of national independence of Vietnam in the field of foreign affairs in the renewal period (1986-2015), and draws comments on achievements, limitations and experiences.

### **2.2. Research tasks**

To achieve the above purposes, the dissertation focuses on solving the following main tasks:

- Firstly, analyzing the theoretical and practical basis of the Party's and the State's foreign policy making process to protect national independence from 1986 to 2015.

- Secondly, to analyze the content and the implementation process of foreign affairs policies to protect Vietnam's national independence from 1986 to 2015.

- Thirdly, to draw comments and experiences on the process of protecting national independence of Vietnam in the field of foreign relations from 1986 to 2015.

## **3. Subjects and scope of research**

### **3.1. Research subjects**

The thesis focuses on the process of protecting Vietnam's independence in the field of foreign affairs in the renewal period.

### **3.2. Research scope**

- Regarding space: To study the process of protecting the national independence of Vietnam in the field of foreign affairs in the context of the Party and State conducting a comprehensive renewal of the country and opening up for integration.

- Scope of content: The dissertation focuses on the foreign policy set out by the Communist Party of Viet Nam from the 6th Congress to the 11th Congress (1986 - 2015) and the implementation process of diplomatic activities of the State of Vietnam with the aim to protect national independence from 1986 to 2015. The dissertation does not mention the Party's external relations and the people's external relations.

- Regarding timing: The study period of the dissertation was limited from 1986 to 2015. The year 1986 is the year when the Communist Party of Vietnam initiated the comprehensive reform of the country, including the renovation in foreign policy to protect national independence and build successful socialism. The milestone 2015 is the time when Vietnam reviewed 30 years of renovation, national independence and socialist-oriented country, including in the field of foreign affairs.

## **4. Theoretical basis and research methodologies**

### **4.1. Theoretical basis**

The thesis is based on the methodology of dialectical materialism and the historical materialism of Marxism-Leninism, Ho Chi Minh's ideology on the times, international perspectives on ethnicity and national self-determination, on national independence and socialism, on foreign policy set out by the Party and State of Vietnam from the 6<sup>th</sup> Congress to the 12th Congress. The author considers this to be the source of theoretical, scientific and practical bases for ideological direction when studying this subject.

All the judgments and assessments in the dissertation will be based on the analysis and generalization of the actual data, original documents and materials adopted at congresses and conferences of the Party taking place from year from 1986 to present, and at the same time the dissertation also selectively selects the results of published scientific works related to the topic.

### **4.2. Research Methodologies**

The main research method of the thesis is combining the historical method and the logical method. In addition, the methods of analysis, synthesis,

comparison, comparison, statistics... are also applied appropriately to the study of each specific content of the thesis.

### **5. New scientific contribution of the thesis**

- The dissertation clarifies the concept and basis of foreign policy making to protect the national independence of Vietnam from 1986 to 2015.

- The dissertation analyzes the content of Vietnam's national independence in the field of foreign relations from 1986 to 2015, including the Party's and the State's ideals, principles, objectives, tasks and motto. This clearly clarifies the process of implementing foreign policy to help Vietnam firmly defend national independence during the two phases (1986-1995, 1995-2015). The thesis also commented on the successes, limitations and experiences of the process of protecting Vietnam's independence in the field of foreign affairs from 1986 to 2015.

- The dissertation provides more scientific justifications, which help to raise some practical issues in Vietnam's foreign policy making in order to protect national independence in the coming time.

- The dissertation can be used as a useful reference for the study and teaching of the History of the Communist Movement, International Workers and National Liberation, History of the Communist Party of Vietnam, History of the contemporary world, international studies and international relations.

### **6. Structure of the thesis**

Apart from the introduction, conclusion, list of references and appendix, the content of the thesis consists of 4 chapters, 8 sections.

## **Chapter 1**

### **OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH SITUATION**

Foreign policy research aimed at preserving national independence, building and developing the country as well as related issues has been paid much attention by foreign and domestic politicians and scholars directly or indirectly with different aspects and levels. These research results are the database, the important basis for the author to focus resources, inherit and continue to study the content of the thesis.

#### **1.1. ISSUES RELATING TO THE THESIS THAT HAVE BEEN STUDIED**

The research works of authors both in the country and abroad, which are in large numbers, directly or indirectly related to many contents of the thesis topic. Overall, there are the following contents:

Firstly, many works and articles have commented on national independence in general and the protection of national independence of Vietnam in particular in both theoretical and practical terms. A number of projects have referred to the international, regional and national contexts as the basis for the Party and State of Vietnam to formulate foreign policy during the Renovation period, gaining important achievements, contributing to the cause of national development and solid protection of national independence.

Secondly, research on Vietnam's foreign policy content aims to protect national independence. In this direction, the authors mainly comment on the need to renew the foreign policy in line with the international and regional context and the situation of revolutionary tasks in Vietnam. Many works and articles have mentioned quite comprehensively about the process of developing the renovated foreign affair viewpoints and direction of the Party through the Congresses from 1986 to present.

Thirdly, many works and articles have researched on the implementation of Vietnam's foreign policy both on a bilateral and multilateral basis. Accordingly, the foreign policy of Vietnam in the renovation period has been active, with the direction of multilateralization and diversification, with international relations of Vietnam being increasingly enhanced in depth, towards practicality, contributing to improve Vietnam's position in the international arena, contributing significantly to the success of the cause of renewal and the struggle for national independence.

Fourthly, on the basis of the renewal of foreign relations and the great development of Vietnam's foreign relations in the past period, many projects have been able to evaluate the achievements, the limitations still encountered that need to be resolved, and initially draw lessons learned from experiences. Basically, however, the major achievements have been made in assessing the achievements and limitations of Vietnam's foreign affairs in general. There have been no works explaining in-depth these achievements and limitations in the association with the process of protecting national independence.

### **1.2.2. Issues need studying by the thesis**

The above-mentioned studies have approached the process of protecting Vietnam's independence in the field of foreign affairs from many angles and levels, providing important data for the authors of the dissertation to refer and inherit to complete the set out purposes and tasks of the thesis. However, there

has not been a comprehensive analysis of the system of Vietnam's national independence in the field of foreign affairs from 1986 to 2015. Therefore, the thesis will continue to study the following contents:

Firstly, the dissertation focuses on clarifying the theoretical basis of national independence and protecting national independence in the field of foreign affairs. In which, there lies the protection of national independence in the field of foreign affairs of Vietnam. At the same time, analyzing the situation in the world, in the region and in the country as the basis for the foreign policy formulation of the Party and State of Vietnam from 1986 to 2015 to firmly protect national independence and develop the country.

Secondly, on the basis of clarifying the content of national defense in the field of foreign affairs of Vietnam, the dissertation analyzes the contents of protecting national independence in the foreign policy of the Party and the State of Vietnam during renovation period. At the same time, the thesis clarifies the practical implementation of the foreign policy of the Party and the State of Vietnam during the period of international integration in order to firmly defend national independence and development.

Thirdly, the thesis comments on the achievements and limitations of Vietnam's national independence in the field of foreign affairs from 1986 to 2015; at the same time draws some experience.

## **Chapter 2**

### **BASIS FOR THE FORMULATION OF FOREIGN AFFAIR POLICIES OF THE PARTY AND THE STATE OF VIETNAM TO PROTECT NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE FROM 1986 TO 2015**

#### **2.1. THEORETICAL BASIS**

##### **2.1.1. Some conception**

##### **2.1.1.1. The concept of independence and national independence**

Independence: Independence is the right of every nation to determine its destiny, first of all liberating itself from the oppression and exploitation of imperialism, by establishing a state, building a legal system in accordance with socio-political institutions and an economy driven by the goals of each country.

The concept of national independence: National independence is a concept that refers to the state of a non-dependent state, not being dependent on any other external force as well as territorial integrity. It is the sacred, inviolable mastery of a nation expressed in all its aspects: politics, security, national defense, economy,

culture, society and foreign affairs, being guaranteed in all aspects, both legislative, executive and judicial of a country within its territory and internationally recognized.

### **2.1.1.2. Concept of protection of national independence**

Defending national independence is ensuring a nation with peace and political stability, economic and cultural development, territorial and sovereignty unity, being independent in the relations with other nations on the basis of equality of mutual benefit.

Defending national independence also means defending the elements of national independence, which are: protecting the sacred and inviolable values of the people; is to safeguard national sovereignty over territorial, political, economic, cultural, social, security and foreign sovereignty in international relations, independent from the outside world; is to protect the national interests and sovereignty associated with the guarantee of human rights; to fight against all kinds of repression and enslavement of the nation, the exploitation of international integration to fight against national independence, the violation of the national security of hostile forces... in the close, inseparable relationship with each other.

### **2.1.1.3. The concept of protection of national independence in the field of foreign affairs**

In the current trend of globalization, the protection of national independence does not mean "closed door" as the way of selfish nationalism before, because it is self-isolation, self-lag. To develop, peoples must now "open up" and establish multilateral, multi-faceted cooperation; to combine the interests of our people with the interests of other peoples and more generally the interests of the whole of humanity.

Defending national independence in the field of foreign affairs means that each country must find its own direction, a foreign strategy appropriate to the trend of the time, in accordance with the characteristics of the country, of the people, being a urgent need of countries to be able to both develop and ensure stability and maintain national independence.

### **2.1.2. Viewpoints of Marxism-Leninism, Ho Chi Minh's ideology on national independence and protection of national independence**

Marx's point of view on national independence and the protection of national independence is expressed in many works, writings, typically in the "Communist Manifesto", Marx says that the proletariat class wanting to fulfill its

mission, first of all, must win the government, to build itself into a nation, to decide for its own destiny, to become a nation. Marx also stated: "Without restoring national independence and unification, in an international context, it is impossible to achieve the unity of the proletariat and the peaceful and self-conscious cooperation of the peoples to reach the common goal".

V.I. Lenin's view of national independence is reflected in the first draft of the Essay on Ethnic and Colonial Issues (1920). According to V.I. Lenin, a nation having independence when they have "self-determination means the right of the state to be separated from other nationalities, i.e. the establishment of an independent nation". It also means that the people have the right to self-determination both in the domestic and foreign affairs, have autonomy, self-control for the destiny of their nation.

After many years searching for a way to save the country, in 1920, Ho Chi Minh came to Marxism-Leninism and found the correct solution of the national liberation revolution and the problem of "national independence, freedom, the right to equality and self-determination for the whole nation" became the core of his thought. Ho Chi Minh said that national independence is to rid the nation of the oppression, exploitation and subjugation by the foreign forces. Independence of the nation must be the real, complete independence and freedom, not fictitious independence. An independent nation must have a status of equality in the international arena, with a democratic state in place to ensure that the state's power is of the people.

### **2.1.3. The view of the Communist Party of Vietnam on national independence, the protection of national independence and the protection of national independence in the field of foreign affairs.**

In the new conditions, national independence is an undeniable value, the primary goal of all nations. For Vietnam, national independence is the goal of the national liberation revolution, a condition and precondition for building socialism in our country, and is always a fundamental benefit of our people.

National independence in the renewal process in Vietnam today is to continue the cause of national liberation along the cause of proletarian revolutionary; national independence is linked to socialism; is the rise out of poverty, backwardness, affirming that Vietnam's position is equal to all other nations in the world in all fields of economics, politics, culture, defense, security, and foreign affairs ...; is to make the people rich, strong, democratic, equal, civilized.

The protection of national independence in Vietnam is an integral part of the task of defending the socialist fatherland of the Vietnamese people in the new situation. Defending national independence is also an indispensable requirement of integration, which is a factor ensuring the success of international integration. Ensuring national independence for the purpose of "prosperous people, strong country, democracy, justice and civilization" and socialist orientation is the viewpoint and goal of the Party and the State of Vietnam in the renewal and open integration period.

Independence in the field of foreign affairs of Vietnam means that foreign affairs must successfully implement the objective of protecting the nation's national interests in the international arena. The Resolution of the XIIth National Party Congress convened clearly that the objective of the foreign policy was to "ensure the supreme interests of the nation and the people, on the basis of fundamental principles of international law, equality and mutual profit".

## **2.2. PRACTICAL BASIS**

### **2.2.1. Overview of the process of protecting national independence of Vietnam in the field of foreign relations before 1986**

#### **2.2.1.1. The period 1945 - 1954**

After the August Revolution in 1945, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam was born, but at the same time faced with many enemies, encountered many difficulties and challenges, the Vietnamese revolution was in the situation "thousands of pounds being hung on a hair". Newly obtained national independence was facing the risk of being violated. Facing this situation, the Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam headed by President Ho Chi Minh set out the right and flexible foreign policy and direction, determined the right time and had the right policy with each specific object. Thus, Vietnam step by step eliminated the situation of having to confront with many enemies at the same time, launched a resistance war against the French colonialists invaded and won the victory, ended the colonial French colonialists, won international recognition for the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, protection of national independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

#### **2.2.1.2. The period 1954 - 1975**

During this period, Vietnam's foreign policy directed its efforts to enforce the Geneva Agreements on Indochina (1954), including the strict implementation of the military provisions contained in the treaties suspension of hostilities; Subsequently, it struggled to hold talks between the South and North Vietnam in order to prepare for the general election of freedom of reunification.

In addition, Vietnam has also built a solid and comprehensive co-operation relationship with China, the Soviet Union and other countries in the socialist bloc; building friendly relations with the two Governments of the Kingdom of Cambodia, strengthening solidarity and cooperation in the Non-aligned Movement; participating in the movement of progressive forces in the world to fight for world peace, against imperialists, aggressive colonialists, and for the rights of people, democracy and social progress; Showing willingness to "establish relationships" on the basis of equality, mutual benefit. As a result, Vietnam has made use of its external resources for the war against the US, to protect national independence and to unify the country.

### **2.2.1.3. The period 1975 - 1985**

Foreign relations of Vietnam in the period 1975-1985 has many advantages: the atmosphere of a nation has just won a great victory; the strength of a unified Vietnam on territory, people completely trust the Party, the State; The prestige and position of Vietnam is enhanced in the international arena. Taking advantage of this favorable time, the Fourth Congress of the Party (1976) set out the tasks of the foreign policy of Vietnam, namely: Strengthening and enhancing the solidarity of fighting and cooperative relations with all socialist countries; protect and develop the special relationship between Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia; be ready to establish and develop friendly and cooperative relations with countries in the region on the basis of respect for each other's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, not interfering in each other's internal affairs; equality and mutual benefit, coexistence in peace; To establish and expand normal relations between Vietnam and all countries on the basis of respect for independence, sovereignty, equality and mutual benefit".

Implementing the foreign policy, Vietnam has fully taken advantages of favorable international opportunities and factors, strongly deploying foreign affairs, attracting capital and technical equipment for the cause of healing the wounds of war, creating new forces and resources for the national economic development, firmly defending national independence.

## **2.2.2. The international and regional situation influences the formulation of foreign policy aimed at protecting national independence of Vietnam**

### **2.2.2.1. World situation**

From the end of the twentieth century until now, the world has witnessed unpredictable changes in all aspects of international life; There are many characteristics and great tendencies that are an objective factor influencing

foreign policy making aimed at protecting the national independence of developing countries, including Vietnam.

Firstly, after the collapse of the socialist regime in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union in the late twentieth century, the socialist system no longer existed in the whole world. Socialism temporarily fell into recession, the communist movement and international workers went into crisis, encountered many difficulties, the national liberation and national independence movement of developing countries lost a solid base on both material and spiritual aspects, encountered great challenges.

Secondly, after the Cold War, the world order of the two poles disintegrated, the world order and the international structure of power changed, correlated world forces in favor of capitalism and imperialism, disadvantage for socialism, world revolution and other progressive forces.

Thirdly, the modern science and technology revolution (now the industrial revolution 4.0) has leapfrogged, achieved great feats, affecting all areas of life of every nation and contemporary international relations. But besides that, the imperialist forces with their advantages are applying the revolutionary achievements of science and technology for military purposes, creating a new arms race in the world with the arsenal of weapons with high accuracy, great destruction and so on, thus increasing the threat to national independence and sovereignty of countries in the world, including Vietnam.

Fourthly, the process of globalization has been strongly developed, affecting all aspects of the social life of nations, especially the protection of national independence and sovereignty with both opportunities and risks, is requiring Vietnam to adjust its foreign policy accordingly.

Fifthly, the trend of peace, cooperation and development, the trend of realizing independent foreign policy, multilateralization, diversification and the trend of democratization of world political life become the mainstream trend in international relations. The peoples raise their sense of independence, self-determine, self-reliance, fighting against the imposition and intervention of foreign countries, protecting the national sovereignty and culture.

#### **2.2.2.2. Regional situation**

Firstly, the situation in Southeast Asia and the Asia-Pacific region has changed, the ideological relationship is no longer dominant, replaced by the atmosphere of peace and cooperation among the countries in the region. This is

an opportunity for Vietnam to accelerate the implementation of open foreign policy, multilateralization, diversification and deep integration into the region, thereby maximizing resources for development purposes and firmly defend the independence of the nation.

Secondly, from the end of the twentieth century, major countries such as the United States, China, Russia, Japan and India have gradually adjusted their policies towards Southeast Asia in order to consolidate and enhance their influences in this area. This is both an opportunity for regional countries to take advantage of their relationship with major countries, and at the same time a challenge to the defense of national sovereignty and national independence of countries in the area.

Thirdly, with the favorable changes, the region still has some unpredictable factors that threaten the security, national independence and sustainable development of the countries. In facing these threats, Viet Nam understands that it is pursuing a peaceful, friendly, cooperative foreign policy relationship with regional countries to prevent threats that threaten the security and stability of the whole as well as threatening national sovereignty and national independence of Vietnam is an urgent requirement in the present context.

### **2.2.3. Situation and mission of the Vietnamese revolution**

After the victory in the spring of 1975, the country was united, the country was overrun on socialism. In the process of going to socialism, our country has many advantages such as having the Communist Party of Vietnam - a trained, challenged and matured party in the process of revolutionary struggle, with the people's state and mass organizations. agroforestry ... Vietnam has a favorable geographic position for international cooperation, favorable for the socio-economic development.

However, the revolution of our country is facing many difficulties and challenges. The consequences of the devastation of war to the country were extremely serious, the economy is still in a state of underdevelopment, ... Since 1979, the situation becomes more serious when occurred problem that Cambodia, The United States, Western countries and some other countries implement the policy of encirclement, embargo against Vietnam. China's war on the northwest borders, making the relation between Vietnam and China become tense. The ASEAN countries were involved in the encirclement and embargo of Vietnam initiated by the US, causing many difficulties for Vietnam in relations with other countries in the

region. International aid is declining and is at risk of disappearing. Vietnam's international relations have been narrowed, diplomacy has been besieged, the economy was strangled, and the social situation became increasingly unstable.

Facing this situation, the Sixth National Congress (1986) of the Communist Party of Vietnam has initiated a comprehensive reform of the country, including foreign affairs. As a result, Vietnam has achieved many important achievements: the country has been out of poor and underdeveloped status, becoming a middle-income developing country, achieving relatively high growth rates with stable society, social security is guaranteed. This is a favorable condition for us to implement open foreign policy, multilateralization, diversification, positive and active international integration, adding strength to firmly defend the national independence and sovereignty.

### **Chapter 3**

## **CONTENTS AND PROCESS OF IMPLEMENTING THE PROTECTION OF NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE OF VIETNAM IN THE FIELD OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS FROM 1986 TO 2015**

### **3.1. CONTENT OF PROTECTION OF NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE IN THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS POLICY OF THE PARTY AND THE STATE OF VIETNAM**

#### **3.1.1. Renew ideology on foreign relations**

In the renewal period, through the congresses from the Sixth Congress to the 12th Congress, the Communist Party of Vietnam always renewed its thinking and developed its foreign policy to suit each period of history. In that process, the Party and State of Vietnam always determined the direction of foreign activities for independence, unification and socialism, and must be very creative, dynamic, flexible, suitable for the position, conditions and specific circumstances of Vietnam, as well as the evolution of the world and regional situation, suitable to the object that Vietnam has relations. At the same time, firmly upholding the covering principle of foreign relations being for peace, independence, unification and socialism, ensuring the supreme interests of the nation, putting the nation's interests first.

#### **3.1.2. Foreign affairs objectives and tasks**

##### **3.1.2.1. Foreign affairs objectives**

The foreign affair objectives are determined by the Party to be for national interests. Accordingly, the Party wants to emphasize: Firstly, national interests

and interests of the people are homogeneous; Secondly, the national interests of Vietnam are determined on the basis of fundamental principles of international law, equality and mutual benefit, not selfish, narrow interests. Thirdly, ensuring national interests - the nation must be the supreme principle of all foreign affair activities.

### **3.1.2.2. Foreign affairs tasks**

In the renovation period, the foreign affairs mission has always been stressed by the Party, first of all to protect the national interests, create a peaceful environment for the cause of socio-economic development and protection of the country. Therefore, the congresses from the VIth Congress to the 12th Congress of the Party have identified the task of foreign affairs more clearly, more specifically; The process of international integration has also gradually developed in keeping with the changes of the era, directly serving the cause of socialist construction and national defense.

### **3.1.3. Motto of foreign affairs activities**

At the Third Plenum of the Party Central Committee, Session VII (June 1992), the Party set out four guiding principles for dealing with foreign affairs that have remained so far untouched: Firstly, assuring true national interests, combining patriotism with internationalism of the working class. Secondly, maintaining independence, self-determination, self-reliance, multilateralisation and diversification in external relations. Thirdly, mastering two aspects of cooperation and struggle in international relations. Fourthly, participating in regional cooperation, and expanding relations with all countries. These guiding principles of external activities are very clear that the objective is to expand the foreign relations and develop the country in order to firmly defend the independence of the Vietnamese people.

## **3.2. THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROTECTION OF NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE OF VIETNAM IN THE FIELD OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (1986 - 2015)**

### **3.2.1. Period 1986 - 1995: Deploying foreign policy to overcome the encirclement, embargo, protecting national independence**

This phase protects the independence of the Party and the State of Vietnam in the field of foreign affairs, focusing on resolving differences and opening relations with other countries. Expressed in some key points:

### **3.2.1.1. Actively participate in the dialogue to find political solutions to solve the Cambodian problem**

Vietnam, together with other concerned countries, sought political solution to the Cambodian question. On October 23, 1991, the Treaty of Paris on Cambodia was signed, triggering a resolution of the Cambodian situation. Cambodia goes into a period of peace, building and developing the country. Southeast Asia's situation has gradually stabilized. For the first time after so many years of war, conflict, confrontation, all nations and people in the region have had real opportunities to cooperate and grow. From the perspective of Vietnam, it is the successful implementation of the foreign policy of the Party and State of Vietnam in order to open relations with neighboring countries and regions, the embargo, the expansion of regional and international relations, and, more importantly, Vietnam has firmly defended its sovereignty and national sovereignty.

### **3.2.1.2. Develop friendly relations with Southeast Asian countries and join ASEAN**

In October 1991, when the Paris Agreement on Cambodia was signed, marking the end of the "Cambodian period" in the Vietnam-ASEAN relationship, opening a new era - "the period of bilateral cooperation and promote Vietnam's accession to ASEAN. " The relationship between Vietnam and individual ASEAN countries as well as with the ASEAN has been growing rapidly. On July 28, 1995, Vietnam was admitted as the 7th member of ASEAN. This event marked a new phase in the history of international relations in Southeast Asia.

Vietnam's official accession to ASEAN is the event marking the success of foreign affairs in order to relieve the deadlock in relations with regional countries. It is also the closing point of the distance, suspicion, even confrontation between the two socialist bloc and capitalism that lasted throughout the Cold War. Close cooperation with ASEAN will help Vietnam to access resources from these countries to accelerate industrialization and modernization, contribute to the cause of construction and defense of the country.

### **3.2.1.3. Negotiations for normalizing relations with China and the United States, escaping encirclement, embargo, signing the Framework Agreement with the European Union (EU)**

- With China, Vietnam always wants to tighten the friendship between the two sides and soon to normalize the relation between Vietnam and China. With the goodwill of Vietnam, through many rounds of negotiations, on 5-11-1991, during the official friendship visit to China by General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam Do Muoi and Chairman of the Council of Ministers Vo Van Kiet, leaders of the two countries signed the Declaration on the normalization of relations between Vietnam and China. This is a very important step to re-establish and develop normal relations between the two countries.

- With the United States, Vietnam has actively negotiated to promote normalization of relations with the United States on the principle of respect for independence, sovereignty, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit; Resolutely resolved to fight the US government to completely lift the embargo against Vietnam, to negotiate settlement of disputes, disagreements and problems in the relationship between the two countries through peaceful negotiations. With the goodwill from Vietnam and the good change of relations between the two countries, on February 3, 1994, US President Bill Clinton announced the abolition of the embargo and established the US liaison office in Hanoi, and on July 11, 1995, officially announced the normalization of relations with Vietnam. Help Vietnam overcome the blockade, embargo, create conditions for Vietnam to access to developed economy, increasing resources to defend national independence and sovereignty.

- With the European Union. Vietnam always wants to improve and develop its relations with the EU, especially after Vietnam withdrew all its troops from Cambodia. Many North West European countries have improved relations with Vietnam. Heads of state and heads of some official visiting countries of Vietnam. On October 22, 1990, Vietnam and the European Union signed an agreement on the establishment of diplomatic relations and exchange of ambassadors. On July 17, 1995, the two sides signed a Framework Agreement on the principles and fields of cooperation between Vietnam and the EU, creating a legal basis for the economic, trade and investment relations between the two

sides. The EU has also provided a lot of aid to Vietnam, helping us to have more resources to develop the country and protect national independence.

#### **3.2.1.4. Expanding international cooperation**

- On bilateral relations, Vietnam has established and expanded its relations with some countries and territories such as Japan, Korea, Australia, Russia, etc., and thus promote economic, trade, investment and aiding relations with partners, making full use of resources to serve the country's development and protect the independence of the nation.

- On multilateral diplomacy, Vietnam has normalized relations with international financial and monetary organizations such as the World Bank - WB (1993), International Monetary Fund - IMF (1993), Asian Development Bank - ADB (1993). At the same time, Vietnam has participated in regional organizations, forums and agreements such as the Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (PECC) (1-1995), joining ASEAN and joining the Free Trade Area ASEAN / AFTA (7-1995). In addition, Vietnam is also fully involved in the United Nations conventions in addressing non-traditional security issues and many conventions on the environment; Participating in the International Police Organization (Interpol-1991), ASEAN Police (Aseanapol-1995), etc., Vietnam has taken advantage of international conditions conducive to the construction and protect the country.

### **3.2.2. Period 1995 - 2015: promoting external activities and international integration to protect national independence and development**

Vietnam's foreign policy to protect national independence in this period focuses on the following main contents:

#### **3.2.2.1. External activities create a peaceful and friendly environment for economic development, enhancing national capabilities**

Firstly, strengthening the relations with neighboring countries

Strengthening long-term, comprehensive and sustainable relations of friendship and cooperation with neighboring countries such as China, Laos and Cambodia has always been a top priority in the foreign policy of the Party and State of Vietnam. This not only brings economic efficiency, but more importantly, it is also an important factor in the success of the struggle to defend national independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Vietnam.

For countries in Southeast Asia, Vietnam has normalized and fully cooperated with all countries in the region. At the same time, through ASEAN, Vietnam has embraced the trust, enhanced mutual understanding, and created a solid multilateral presence in the backing of Southeast Asian countries. Since then, the strength of Vietnam's national construction and defense has been constantly strengthened and developed, contributing to peace and prosperity in the region.

Secondly, promoting relations with major countries

As a developing country, Vietnam is keenly aware of the role that big countries play in shaping the new world in a globalized world. Therefore, in addition to expanding international relations with national stakeholders and major international organizations, Viet Nam always attaches great importance to establishing and strengthening relations with major countries such as: The United States, the Russian Federation, Japan, India, the European Union (EU) to create interdependence between the major countries, on the one hand to facilitate the maximum attraction of external resources because this is the group of countries It holds the dominant position in capital, technology and human resources of the world. On the other hand, it is also the most flexible way to limit the possibility of being dependent on any large country while gaining support from the international community for the fight against corruption, protecting national independence and national sovereignty in the new situation.

#### **3.2.2.2. Foreign affairs to protect national sovereignty**

The task of the foreign affairs is to first and foremost address the issue of border, territory and sea with concerned countries in order to create a truly peaceful and stable environment and create conditions to develop and to firmly defend national independence and national sovereignty. Thus, during the Renewal period, Vietnam's foreign affairs always promoted the settlement of disputes with its regional neighbors on the basis of negotiation, peace and respect for the fundamental principles of international relations.

- On the land border, Vietnam has a common border with the three countries China, Laos and Cambodia. Vietnam has negotiated with these countries to delist, mark the borders of Vietnam with other countries and complete the demarcation with China and Laos. As for Cambodia, the two

countries are stepping up the demarcation and demarcation process to complete the border line between Vietnam and Cambodia.

- On the maritime border, Vietnam negotiated and signed the Agreement on the delimitation of the Northern Gulf with China; Negotiations on delimitation of the exclusive economic zone with Indonesia; cooperate with Malaysia in facilitating the review of the joint statement identifying the outer continental shelf; along with the Philippines continue to implement the program Sea and Ocean Cooperation. Viet Nam, together with other concerned countries, agreed on the following: disputes involving two countries, bilateral settlement, and disputes involving other parties shall be discussed with those countries.

### **3.2.2.3. Multilateral diplomacy to promote international integration, enhance the position of Vietnam**

Promoting multilateral diplomacy, actively participating in regional and international organizations, help Vietnam take advantage of assistance for economic, social and cultural development, improve the institutions of the socialist-oriented market economy, judicial reform. On the other hand, Vietnam joins international organizations and actively participates in addressing international issues, global issues that will enhance Vietnam's position in the international arena, contributing to firmly defending independence, national sovereignty in the new context.

Vietnam participates in regional and international organizations such as ASEAN, United Nations, Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), ... with a sense of responsibility and a positive contribution to these organizations. In particular, relations with major economic organizations and institutions such as WTO, IMF, WB, ADB and NGO are also established very early in Vietnam and are increasingly promoted more closely and effectively. These organizations have gradually played a central role in the reform process in Vietnam, providing key lending and advisory services to the structure of the socialist-oriented market economy in Vietnam. However, in addition to cooperating for development purposes, Vietnam has always been vigilant against many NGOs taking advantage of investment promotion to engage in religious activities or intervene in their internal affairs, to fight the cause of socialist-oriented innovation that our Party and State are conducting.

## **Chapter 4**

### **COMMENTS ON THE PROCESS OF PROTECTING NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE OF VIETNAM IN THE FIELD OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS FROM 1986 TO 2015 AND EXPERIENCES**

#### **4.1. COMMENTS ON THE PROCESS OF PROTECTING NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE OF VIETNAM IN THE FIELD OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

##### **4.1.1. Achievements**

In the 30 years of renewal (1986 - 2015), the Party and State of Vietnam have put forward various policies, guidelines and measures, both flexibly and firm, in line with the principle of eliminating the threat to the national sovereignty and building the basic directions for the country's development. As a result, Vietnam's foreign affairs have gained important achievements, contributing greatly to the fight for the protection of the independence of the nation.

Firstly, the Party and State of Vietnam have developed awareness, formed new foreign guidelines and policies, and limited negative impacts from outside to national independence. The Party and State of Vietnam are aware of the content and nature of the time as well as the situation, the world and the region. On that basis, the Party has renewed its mindset, set out appropriate foreign policy and strategies, strengthened Vietnam's relations with the world, made good use of international relations and resources of the world to grow; It also removes the negative external influences on the country, firmly defending national independence and national sovereignty.

Secondly, Vietnam has overcome the encirclement, embargo, expanded foreign relations in the direction of multilateralization and diversification, thus limiting threats to national independence and sovereignty of the nation. With its foreign policy being independent, proactive, active and flexible, Vietnam has grown from being surrounded with the embargo, to has expanded its relations with most countries, opened up relations with all countries, encompasses the diverse help of foreign and international organizations, especially in the United Nations system, non-governmental organizations. This is a factor that brings great strength to the process of development and firmly defending the independence of the Vietnamese people.

Thirdly, external activities have contributed to maintaining a peaceful environment, stabilizing socio-political conditions and creating favorable conditions for Vietnam's renovation, construction and defense. Vietnam has prevented and smashed all the plots and tricks of foreign intervention into various forms of reactionary forces to undermine the new regime, firmly defend the independence and sovereignty over territorial integrity of the country, maintaining internal political security and social order and safety. At the same time contributing to the cause of peace, national independence, democracy and progress in the world.

Fourthly, the external activities facilitate the settlement of border, territorial, sea and island issues with concerned countries, thus contributing to the protection of national independence and sovereignty. Through external activities, Vietnam has basically resolved the issue of border territory with neighboring countries. Facing the challenges of protecting territorial integrity, external activities have made the world understand the historical and legal basis of Vietnam's territorial sovereignty, sea and islands so that the international community strongly support the struggle to defend Vietnam's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, especially in the struggle with China in the East Sea.

Fifthly, the external activities for economic development have been expanded, helping Vietnam win more external resources, enhancing national capabilities, and contributing to the solid protection of national independence. The achievements of foreign affairs, first of all, the foreign economic activities brought to Vietnam, are very great. The most important result is that Vietnam has expanded its export markets and attracted international resources to serve the development and economic restructuring. The areas of social life such as education, health care, social security are also gradually developing, ... Positive changes in economic growth and structure together with the socio-political stability have created an important foundation, affirming the solidity of the national independence protection that the Vietnamese people are carrying out.

#### **4.1.2. Limitations**

Apart from the remarkable achievements, the external activities aimed at protecting the national independence of Vietnam still have some shortcomings

and weaknesses that need to be overcome in order to meet the new requirements and tasks in the later revolutionary period.

Firstly, the awareness and practical guidance have not kept up with the quick and complicated changes of the situation and the weak strategic research and forecasts have affected the protection of national independence.

Secondly, it has not established a solid, stable and long-lasting basis in relations with other countries, especially big ones, thus affecting the mobilization of the power to protect national independence.

Thirdly, the coordination in foreign affairs is sometimes not effective, external information is sometimes slow, lack of sensitivity to reduce the synergy to protect national independence from international integration.

#### **4.2. SOME MAJOR EXPERIENCES**

First, always identify and put the top priority of the foreign policy is for the people and national interest; for a powerful socialist Vietnam. The nation's interest is paramount, being the prime factor to be ensured in the renewal process of foreign affairs in general and practical implementation of external activities of the Party and the State of Vietnam in particular. All the issues of renovation and changes in thinking and external activities are based on the interests of the whole nation. Along with national interests, the Party and State of Vietnam also set a foreign policy goal of "a strong socialist Vietnam". These two goals are consistent. Ensuring the people's and national interests is fundamental to building a strong socialist Vietnam. Building a strong socialist Vietnam is in line with national and people's interests and is a necessary condition for the realization of these benefits.

Secondly, the principle of independence and self-reliance in the process of implementing the multilateral and diversified foreign policy, active and positive international integration. Independence, self-reliance and ensuring the legitimate interests of the nation are the leading principles and tasks of foreign affairs. It is only possible to maintain independence and self-reliance by expanding external relations and only expanding external relations in the direction of multilateralization and diversification is the best way to maintain independence and the autonomy of the nation.

Thirdly, to grasp the tendency of the movement of the times, to flexibly handle the international relations in order to make use of favorable conditions and

opportunities and repel the dangers to the task of protecting the national independence. In the new context, foreign affairs not only stem from the situation and requirements of the country, but also closely related to the development of the world situation as well as the movement of the times. To grasp the trend and laws of the world, combined with practical and dialectical thinking, is the prerequisite for identifying the right objectives and external tasks of the Party and the State of Vietnam in the coming time in the cause of protection of national independence.

Fourthly, to combine creatively all forms and fields of foreign affairs to adapt to new international conditions in order to best protect national independence. Incorporating innovative forms and fields of foreign policy is essential and important in order to create a strategic balance in relations with other countries, and to capitalize on external resources to develop the economy and raise the capacity of national defense in order to protect national independence.

Fifthly, to promote the strength of the whole nation, to closely coordinate with foreign countries in defense, security, economy and politics to create "national synergy" for the task of protecting the independence of the people. In practice, the struggle for national independence of Vietnam, in order to win, must always rely on the strength of the entire nation. It is the strength of the combination of external relations with the political, economic, defense and security forces in the country to create the "national strength" to fight for national and people's interests.

## **CONCLUSION**

From the process of planning and implementing the foreign policy of the Party and the State of Vietnam aimed at protecting national independence from 1986 to 2015, the thesis draws some conclusions as follows:

Firstly, the protection of independence in the field of foreign affairs of Vietnam is an integral part of the task of defending the socialist fatherland of the Vietnamese people in the new situation. Defending national independence is also an indispensable requirement of integration, which is a factor ensuring the success of international integration. The struggle for national independence in the foreign policy of Vietnam in the renewal period was strongly influenced by new international characteristics and trends, and revolutionary tasks set out from the country.

Secondly, in the renovation period, the foreign affairs sector has met the increasing demands of the cause of national independence and international

integration. On the basis of upholding the principle of foreign affairs policy, Vietnam has carried out policy reform and made fundamental adjustments in its external activities to meet the new demands of the revolution as well as changes of international relations in the context of globalization. To well settle the relationship between active and positive in-depth integration and intensifying measures to preserve national identity as well as the autonomy of the country's development roadmap, including the self-determination in foreign affairs policy.

Thirdly, in the fight for the protection and consolidation of Vietnam's national independence, it is well aware of the relationship between the inside and outside, between the national independence and the expansion of international cooperation, between the national strengths and the strength of the era in the strategy of political stability and socio-economic development for national construction and defense, it is necessary and important that Vietnam has implemented a flexible and suitable foreign policy. Promoting national interests, but not implementing extreme national policies, but puts it in a unified relationship between national interests and international interests, between internal factors and external factors. Vietnam's foreign policy has conveyed most clearly the message of peace and friendship of the Vietnamese people and is internationally recognized.

Fourthly, the achievements gained from the process of protecting Vietnam's independence in the field of foreign affairs are enormous. This is a confirmation of the correctness in strategic thinking, direction and policies of the Party and State of Vietnam concerning the foreign affairs as facing the changes of the time. This is an important basis for furthering Vietnam's foreign affairs, aiming towards its determined objectives, serving the cause of protecting the national independence.

Fifthly, the experiences gained from the process of defending Vietnam's independence in the foreign policy area from 1986 to 2015 is a lesson that is important for Viet Nam in the next phase of this progress. Implementing those contents can help the Party and the State continue to bring into play the success and timely adaptation to the changes of the world political situation, and at the same time to quickly overcome the shortcomings and weaknesses, well fulfilling the objectives and tasks of protecting Vietnam's socialist country in the new period.