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# Iran-Vietnam cooperation to increase: *Ambassador Huy*

During a meeting that explored the future prospects of Iran-Vietnam relations, a book titled '50 Years of Iran-Vietnam Relations' was officially unveiled. The event was attended by Ambassador of Vietnam in Tehran Luong Quoc Huy and Abed Akbari, the author of the book.

The occasion took place yesterday at the Iran Cultural & Press Institute, commemorating the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between Iran and Vietnam. The event was organized under the patronage of Iran Daily, in collaboration with the Tehran International Studies and Research Institute, known as Abrar.

The ceremony began with the national anthems of both countries, followed by greetings offered by Ali Kaka-Dezfuli the managing director of Iran Daily. Afterwards, the Vietnam envoy expressed gratitude toward the organizers of the event and highlighted the historical trajectory of the political relations between the two nations.

Huy said that official relations between Tehran and Hanoi began in 1973, when the US war against Vietnam came to an end. Initially, the relationship did not witness significant progress due to various reasons, but over time, it gradually developed.

Furthermore, the envoy pointed out that over the course of five decades of political ties between Iran and Vietnam, officials from both countries had engaged in meetings at various levels. Notably, between 1995 and 2018, the presidents of the Republic of Iran, namely Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, Hassan Rouhani, as well as the speakers of the Iranian Parliament, Ali Akbar Nateq-Nouri and Ali Larijani, had all visited Vietnam.

In this context, Huy announced that Vietnam's National Assembly (Parliament) Chairman Vuong Dinh Hue would visit Tehran within the next three weeks, in response to an invitation extended by his Iranian counterpart.



Highlighting Vietnam's strategic foreign policy of enhancing cooperation with all nations, the ambassador emphasized the president of Vietnam's commitment to strengthening relations between the peoples, governments, and intellectual communities of both countries.

He regarded the newly-unveiled book as a comprehensive portrayal of the ties between the two nations and expressed his optimism that the book, with its extensive use of documents and sources, would serve as a valuable resource for Iranian researchers.

According to the ambassador, the book aims to provide a "realistic" perspective on the issues

concerning both countries. He expressed his hope that the book would be made accessible to the public, allowing for an accurate understanding of Vietnam's realities and its relationship with Iran. Highlighting the significant positions of Iran in West Asia and Vietnam in South Asia, the ambassador emphasized the potential for significant advancements in economic cooperation between the two countries. He expressed satisfaction with the current level of bilateral relations and added, "I believe there are boundless opportunities remaining in the relations between our nations, especially in the realm of people-to-people connections. I hope the publica-

tion of this book will serve as an excellent catalyst for enhancing our countries' ties."

Furthermore, the ambassador pointed to Iran's status as a great country in the Middle East, possessing substantial potential for further economic development. He expressed hope for the lifting of Western sanctions against Iran and drew attention to Vietnam's history of enduring sanctions imposed by major powers, including China, the US, and other Western nations.

"Nevertheless, we managed to overcome these sanctions. The Vietnamese ambassador acknowledged the economic challenges experienced this year, attributing them to global factors

such as the conflict in Ukraine and the trade tensions between China and the US. Despite these obstacles, the ambassador expressed a positive outlook on the advancement of bilateral cooperation between Hanoi and Tehran. Furthermore, Huy expanded on the upcoming three-day visit by Vietnam's National Assembly chief to Iran, scheduled for August 8. He said the primary objective of this trip is to engage in discussions regarding the enhancement of bilateral relations, particularly in the economic domain. The agenda for the visit includes a business meeting, where the two sides will explore potential opportunities, and the Vietnamese top lawmaker will

elaborate on Hanoi's policy toward Tehran.

## Trade capacity of \$2b

Also addressing the unveiling ceremony, Mehrdad Fakhraei Lahiji, a consultant to the CEO of Abrar Institute, said that the profound historical and civilization ties between the two nations were resilient against transient political events.

Lahiji emphasized that the contemporary history of both nations has offered abundant opportunities, and all endeavors aimed at fostering and strengthening these longstanding connections are firmly grounded in their shared historical legacy and deep public affection.

He drew attention to the trade volume between the two nations, referencing the statistics provided by Iranian customs that revealed it surpassed \$120 million two years ago. Notably, Vietnam's imports to Iran amounted to \$41 million, while Iran's exports to Vietnam amounted to approximately \$82 million.

However, Lahiji noted that these statistics fell short of the existing potential. Taking into account Vietnam's membership in the ASEAN, as well as Iran's membership in ECO and the Eurasian Economic Union, he asserted that the bilateral exchange level could increase to \$2 billion.

In order to achieve this, Lahiji stressed that the governments of Iran and Vietnam need to establish certain infrastructures and tools to facilitate trade development. "These measures include implementing the 2020 trade deal for sea-air transportation, establishing a monetary and financial mechanism, creating a system of regular shipping lines, initiating direct flights between the two countries, and paying attention to enhancing joint investments," he concluded.

## Iran's energy can stoke Vietnam's economic growth



Iran's Ambassador to Vietnam, Ali-Akbar Nazari, first expressed his gratitude to the organizers of the specialized meeting focusing on the Iran-Vietnam relationship. In a video message to the event, he hailed the occasion as a "valuable opportunity" to delve into the extensive history shared by the two nations over the past five decades.

According to Nazari, historical records indicate that the earliest interactions between Iranians and Vietnamese can be traced back to the ancient Parthian Empire in Iran. However, it was in the

15th century that Iranian merchants began venturing into South Asia, engaging in trade with various nations in the region including Thailand and Vietnam. The ambassador also mentioned Alexandre de Rhodes, a figure renowned for designing Vietnam's modern alphabet, who passed away in Isfahan while on a trip to Iran. Nazari pointed to the annual visits made by Vietnamese people to De Rhodes' tomb in Isfahan, underscoring the cultural ties between the two nations. Moreover, the ambassador said that throughout history,

the relations between Iran and Vietnam have been consistently characterized by friendship, development of cooperation, and mutual interests.

"In the present era, these ties have been further reinforced in alignment with the principles of multilateralism and opposition to unilateralism," he added. Nazari attributed the strength of the bilateral relationship to their shared values such as "the pursuit of freedom, independence, and support for multilateralism". Furthermore, the ambassador pointed out Vietnam's impressive economic growth of 7% over the past decade, highlighting the country's increasing need for energy to sustain this development.

"Iran as one of the world's largest energy suppliers has the potential for economic collaboration with Vietnam," he said. Nazari expressed hope that in the next 50 years, Iran and Vietnam would foster even deeper and more robust relations through enhanced synergy between the two countries.

## Culture, a secure anchor for relationships



In a welcoming address, the Managing Director of Iran Daily Ali Kaka-Dezfuli expressed his satisfaction with organizing the ceremony to mark the 50th anniversary of the diplomatic relations between Iran and Vietnam, titled "The Perspective of Iran-Vietnam relation," in collaboration with Tehran International Studies and Research Institute.

Emphasizing the cultural commonalities between the two nations, Kaka-Dezfuli highlighted how these cultural ties contribute to

fostering closer relations between nations, more so than political and economic factors.

"Especially in today's world, where the role of nations as actors in the international arena has become more prominent, it is culture that can determine the path that communication between two countries follows, and everything else is formed around it," Kaka-Dezfuli remarked.

"I am happy that we here in Iran Daily can play a larger role than being a mere media; Iran Daily tries to

take an in-depth look at issues, not a passing one, and maybe that's why we decided to hold this series of meetings in collaboration with a research institute."

The chief of Iran Daily said the newspaper seeks to lay the groundwork for the development of diplomatic relations and demonstrate that diplomacy can benefit from initiatives and creativity.

Kaka-Dezfuli stated that the primary objective of these meetings is to underscore the role of culture and identity in foreign relations.

"Iran and Vietnam both have a long and old historical background, and perhaps this has maintained the relationship between the two countries through time. Political and economic factors may play a stronger or weaker role at different times due to the unstable nature of the international [arena]; But what is lasting is culture, which can always play the role of a secure anchor in relationships."