



## Research Article

# POLITICAL AND SECURITY COOPERATION BETWEEN VIETNAM AND ASEAN (2007-2021): ACHIEVEMENTS AND PROSPECTS

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## ABSTRACT

*This article examines prominent events of political and security cooperation between Vietnam and ASEAN after the year of the ASEAN Charter (2007). The study employed the historical method of Historical science in combination with the logical method and theories of Regionalism. The study shows that Vietnam plays a key role in maintaining a strong network of partnerships with ASEAN in regional politics and security to both gain regional and national interests. In order to deepen this relation, the study relied on occurring events and the latest foreign policies of Vietnam and ASEAN to make a prophecy for prospects of Vietnam-ASEAN political-security ties in the future.*

**Keywords:** ASEAN; political and security cooperation; Southeast Asia; Vietnam

## 1. Introduction

After the Cold War, the rise of globalization is very beneficial to develop countries to shorten their development process in the modern world. In the new context of international relations, the tendency of peace and economic development pushed Vietnam to widely normalize and improve its international relations through international integration in Southeast Asia and other partners in the world. The born of ASEAN in 1967 is a prominent characteristic of the tendency of regionalization in Southeast Asia, and the involvement of Vietnam in ASEAN in 1995 is an important turning point in the diplomatic history of Vietnam because it marked a continued endeavor in improving international relations of Vietnam. The judicious open-door policy of Vietnam helped this country become the seventh member of ASEAN and put this organization ahead to become a very effective multilateral mechanism in Southeast Asia. Since the 2007 Charter, Vietnam has continually grown its influence in the region and become a bridge to tie ASEAN with other prominent external factors in the world. Vietnam overcame barriers of difference and economic gap to heighten

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its attention to build a strong organization, mostly in the field of political and security affairs.

Currently, Vietnam-ASEAN political and security cooperation in academic topics is experiencing modest scholarly attention. The majority of researchers only asserted their centrality in ASEAN's viewpoint to examine its activities and contributions. Resultantly, this article is on the side of Vietnam and Vietnam's viewpoint to generalize Vietnam's contribution in ASEAN from the year of Charter (2007) by systematizing all of its political and security cooperation activities. Also, the author attempted to forecast Vietnam-ASEAN political and security ties in the future.

## **2. Methodology and Research Methods**

### **2.1. Methodology**

This research fundamentally depends on the theory of Regionalism in International Relations. Edward and Etel argue that regions are frequently defined as groups of countries located in the same geographic space (Edward & Etel, 2010, p. 146). Southeast Asia should be deemed to be a consolidated region because all countries of these regions share identical values. Historically, this region originated from agriculture-based civilization and natural constants sharing. Then, all nations were colonized by Western colonists and experienced national movements to reclaim independence. As a result, all countries of Southeast Asia easily make a strong network of alliance. Regarding the political security perspective, these countries must work closely together for internal development and benefit from external factors to gain their national interests. Wilfred J. Ethier proposed The New Regionalism to anticipate a new tendency in international relations in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Ethier opined that the new regionalism is, in good part, a direct result of the success of multilateral liberalization. It is also how new countries trying to enter the multilateral system compete among themselves for the direct investment necessary for their successful participation in that system. Therefore, regionalism, by internalizing an important externality, which plays a significant role in making the liberal trade order (Wilfred, 1998, p. 1160). While ASEAN had only five members until the first ASEAN Summit, the number of members increased, and now there are all ten members in this organization. It indicates that cooperation is a mutual objective of all countries in the era of globalization. They have an intention of establishing a multilateral mechanism to forge a linkage for regional economic well-being and benefiting from key external factors to strengthen their internal force in both economic and political aims. The involvement of great powers lies at the heart of most documents of ASEAN, and they imply the importance of political and security cooperation in international relations in Southeast Asia.

### **2.2. Research methods**

The author employed historical methods in this article because this paper is based on the perspective of Historical sciences. This technique makes room for Vietnam-ASEAN political and security cooperation events in order and provided potential readers an overall

picture of this relation. Then, the author also applied the logical method to understand concerning prospects of this tie through previous events and Vietnam's foreign policy.

### **3. Results and Discussion**

#### **3.1. Achievements**

The starting point of continuous diplomatic attainments is 2007. Leaders of ASEAN partners reached a consensus in the ASEAN Charter in the 13<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit in Singapore. The initial article of this charter stresses the importance of maintaining and enhancing peace, security, and stability and further strengthening peace-oriented values in the region (ASEAN, 2008, p. 3). It is undeniable that ASEAN partners have appreciated a peaceful sphere for cooperation and development in the new context of the region through keeping robust bilateral and multilateral relationships among ASEAN members. While there were no official political ties before this year, political activities of ASEAN might not be effective, this charter was timely issued thanks to the role of Vietnam and ASEAN partners. This contributes to assisting ASEAN members to make a legal basis to tighten multilateral and bilateral between Vietnam and ASEAN politically. In 2008, President Nguyen Minh Triet sanctioned this charter and officially conformed to articles of this agreement on 14 March 2008. This event is crucial for Vietnam to reclaim its responsibility of implementing activities legally and committed to deeply strengthening this alliance in the following years. Since this event, ASEAN became a political entity and has taken liability of three pillars: economic, political-security, cultural, and social community. Then, the 14<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit in March 2009 in Thailand stayed focused on building a greater community. The ASEAN APSC Blue Print released in the 14<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit in 2009 typified three key areas which the APCS intended to implement, including (i) a rules-based community with shared values and norms; (ii) a cohesive, peaceful, and resilient region with shared responsibility for comprehensive security; (iii) a dynamic and outward-looking region (ASEAN, 2009, p. 3). It indicates that Vietnam was aware of its role in engaging ASEAN countries to deter potential risks for both regional and national security. Vietnam leaders continued to accelerate the establishment of the ASEAN Community in a conference of ASEAN Political-Security Community Council and ASEAN Coordinating Council on 21 July 2009. Representatives of countries agreed to focus on security mechanisms in Southeast Asia via the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) and Treaty of Southeast Asia Free of Nuclear Weapons (SEANWFZ) (Vietnam Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2009). These treaties played a significant role in tackling the potential confrontations of non-traditional security in this region.

One of the most remarkable achievements of Vietnam is efforts to raise its voice in ASEAN. The chairmanship of Vietnam in ASEAN with the theme of "Towards the ASEAN Community: From Vision to Action" in 2010. This mission of Vietnam occurred in a special international context on account of the rising aggressive actions of China in the East Sea.

The involvement of the US in Southeast Asia as a counterbalancing force in the Pacific Ocean was a concern for the regional security of ASEAN countries. Also, Vietnam and other countries of ASEAN underwent a negative outcome of the global economic crisis, and this issue led to an urgent demand for Vietnam to economically cooperate with its ASEAN partners to recover the national economy. In 2010, Vietnam positively contributed to building a mutual understanding and belief, maintaining a peaceful environment and security stability, and effectively dealing with traditional and non-traditional security issues. The 16<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit on 8-9 April 2010 in Hanoi stressed discussion around the ASEAN Charter and Roadmap for building the ASEAN Community, the role of ASEAN in regional infrastructure development and connectivity, economic recovery, and sustainable development in the fight toward climate changes. On Chairman's Statement of the 16<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit, Vietnam emphasized that ASEAN relied on the validation of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC), the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (SEANWFZ), the Declaration of Conduct of Parties in the East Sea (DOC), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM), ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC) and the ASEAN Convention on Counter-Terrorism to ensure regional peace and security (ASEAN, 2010). The conformity of Vietnam in these treaties shows that Vietnam always rigorously respects all articles and positively enhances mutual awareness of peaceful cooperation and political security in Southeast Asia. Vietnam created a synergy with ASEAN members to defend Southeast Asia in the absence of nuclear power and terrorism and to alleviate potential encroachments of external factors in the East Sea's dispute.

Meanwhile, Vietnam also shouldered the responsibility of boosting bilateral relations between ASEAN and external partners under its presidency of 2010 ASEAN. Vietnam closely collaborated with the US to organize the 2<sup>nd</sup> Leaders' Meeting with the US and restated that this meeting had paramount importance to the US-ASEAN bilateral for peace and prosperity. The formal participation of Hillary Clinton and Robert Gate to Hanoi attended the East Asia Summit (EAS), and the first meeting of the ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting +8 (ADMM+8) (Ernest, 2010, p. 15) implies that the US heightened its attention to tie defense cooperation with ASEAN members and stress the role of the US in Southeast Asia security affairs. This event demonstrates that Vietnam successfully maintained an organic relationship between ASEAN and the US. Likewise, the presence of the US in Southeast Asia was essential for Vietnam to tie its relation with the US, hampering potential disputes caused by China in the East Sea. It indicates that Vietnam smartly benefited from this event to strengthen its power in addressing national and regional concerns about unexpected conflicts in territorial problems. Besides, Vietnam continued to implement the annual ASEAN+1 Summit, the 2<sup>nd</sup> ASEAN-Russia Summit, the ASEAN-Australia Summit, the ASEAN-New Zealand Commemorative Summit, the third ASEAN-

UN Summit, the ASEAN+3 Summit, the 5<sup>th</sup> East Asia Summit, the second summit meeting between Japan and the Mekong region countries and the ASEAN Business and Investment Summit. (ASEAN, 2010). The expansion of multilateral talks helped Vietnam maintain its voice and opinions in the international forum with the role of coordinator. These events built a sense of peaceful sphere and mutual understanding between external partners and ASEAN. Also, Vietnam has engaged in international talks and improved its prestige in ASEAN.

In addition, ASEAN continued to concretize overall plans to officially build ASEAN Political-Security Community in the 44<sup>th</sup> Foreign Ministers Meeting in Bali, Indonesia, in 2011. This conference was organized by ASEAN in the context of China's disputes respectively in October 2010, military rehearsal in November 2010, and May 2011 in the East Sea. Vietnam closely cooperated with other ASEAN members, and resultantly, the Joint Communique was released after this forum. The objective of Vietnam and ASEAN is an acceleration of finalizing the Guidelines on the Implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the East Sea (DOC) and start the discussion of identifying elements of a regional code of conduct (COC) (ASEAN, 2011, p. 3). In this forum, Vietnam and ASEAN established ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC). This event supposed that Vietnam and ASEAN attempted to amicably deal with unexpected disputes in the East Sea through tightening the solidarity of the ASEAN Community. Then, Vietnam participated in the ASEAN Defence Ministers in October 2011. In this conference, Vietnam and ASEAN partners aimed at strengthening regional defense and security cooperation through widely sharing information by exchanges in national defense, security policies, and developments. Vietnam and ASEAN also reached a consensus in building a greater community for regional defense and a deeper understanding of security perceptions (ASEAN, 2011). Vietnam and ASEAN members emphasized on the importance of dialogue partners to enhance further cooperation and boost the benefits of peace talks in the case of conflicts in Southeast Asia. It is undeniable that this endeavor was followed by judicious foreign policies of Vietnam to create a healthy security sphere in Southeast Asia via deepening partnership with ASEAN members to build a sense of mutual interests for protecting South East Asia from China's domination in the East Sea.

Vietnam officially fulfilled its mission as a monitor in the ASEAN-China relation (Nhan Dan Newspaper, 2012). This event results in strengthening strategic relations between ASEAN and China. Vietnam also helped finalize documents, which denotes the ASEAN's viewpoints and elements of a regional code of conduct (COC), and formally used this document to reach the doorstep of the ASEAN-China talk. This important paper contributed to legalizing articles for bilateral partners to rigorously adapt to regulations and ensure both Vietnam and ASEAN's interests in regional affairs. Also, Vietnam implemented multilateral cooperation with ASEAN in issues of the East Sea and quickly translated articles of COC into reality. This action helped Vietnam satisfy contradicting interests in the East Sea and

appealed to the support of ASEAN members to protect its entire sovereignty. In 2013, Vietnam strived to enhance regional solidarity through persistently maintaining fundamental principles of ASEAN and tackling disputes and conflicts in the region via the ASEAN Charter. Vietnam directly helped issue key decisions of ASEAN and its future direction, particularly in building Statement of the Chairman of the 22<sup>nd</sup> Summit, the 23<sup>rd</sup> ASEAN Summit, Statements in the specialized fields of social security, women and children, epidemic prevention and control, and disaster management on the occasion of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Summit, and Declaration on Vision of the ASEAN Community for the post-2015 period (Vietnam Communist Party, 2013). This year, Vietnam still considered cooperative mechanisms: TAC, SEANWFZ, and SOC as diplomatic leverage to ensure peace, freedom of navigation, and international law conformity. The positive contribution of Vietnam led to a strong network of partnerships and raised the voice of Vietnam in the international forum as well as its duty of appeasing potential security vulnerability in the region.

Significantly, ASEAN released the ASEAN Community Vision 2025: Forging Ahead Together in ASEAN Summit in Kuala Lumpur 2015. This paper consistently shaped eight principles to build an ASEAN Political-Security Community. The supreme regulation focuses on principles of international law governing the peaceful conduct of relations among states (ASEAN, 2015). It indicates that ASEAN put issues of peace and stability in the prioritized position in this community. At the individual level, ASEAN intends to promote human rights and fundamental freedoms and thrive in a just, democratic, harmonious, and gender-sensitive environment according to the regulations of democracy, healthy governance, and the rule of law. This comprehensive vision is a result of Vietnam and other ASEAN members standardizing and building a mutual understanding in tightening the solidarity of ASEAN in a complex situation of international relations.

Consequently, the establishment of the ASEAN Political-Security Community on 31 December 2015 is deemed a momentous event. The ASEAN Political-Security Community (APSC) gathers ten sovereign member countries with common interests for a self-sustaining, rules-respecting, and open region to external cooperation, and co-exist in peace, security, and long-term stability. It is an attempt of Vietnam and ASEAN from the idea of Indonesia in 2003 to the establishment of ASEAN Security Community and became ASEAN Political-Security Community (ASPC) to elevate the role of Vietnam and other ASEAN members to build a mutual political and security defense and step up its engagement in keeping a peaceful security sphere in Southeast Asia. This event is a milestone in the 48-year development of this community, and Vietnam plays a pivotal role in keeping a liaison with ASEAN members in all international forums to promote the process of ASPC establishment rapidly since its participation in 1995, mostly after the year of charter release (2007).

After a year of establishment, Vietnam was committed to bolstering the APSC more and more solidly. This country plays a key role in the results of the implementation of the

ASEAN Vision 2015. Political and security is one of three main pillars and encouraged its adherence to the regulations' community and peaceful and security insurance, and assert ASEAN's centrality in international relations. In the year 2016, Vietnam, along with ASEAN members, signed extended documents with Chile, Egypt, Morocco and helped them to take part in TAC and took its responsibility of other international organizations, such as the Alliance of Pacific Ocean (AP) and Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) (Chinh Phu Online Newspaper, 2017). To simulate the effect of APSC, 11<sup>th</sup> Coordinating Conference for the ASEAN Political-Security Community (11<sup>th</sup> ASCCO) was convened in Jakarta on 5 March 2019 to elevate the role of APSC in the legal system, legal state improvement, and people-based development. ASEAN members shared agreements in non-traditional security in human trafficking, illegal drug buy-and-sell, nuclear safety, maritime security, and humanitarian support in this conference. Likewise, members of ASEAN focused on addressing their concerns in the importance of UNCLOS and relational flexibility of ASEAN- China relation. ASEAN intended to maintain a robust relationship and expand its relations with other external factors with Middle East countries and led the ASEAN Summit, EAS, ASEAN+1, ASEAN+3, ASEAN (ARF), and ADMM+ (ASEAN, 2019). Thanks to these forums, Vietnam engaged in realizing its wishes and stating its central role in tackling the mutual concern of ASEAN for peace, stability, and regional security. Also, Vietnam kept contact with other countries through ASEAN agreements to bolster its strategic presence in international affairs and boost its bilateral relations through this multilateral mechanism.

Vietnam granted the chairmanship of ASEAN in 2020. This event shows that ASEAN Community gave full credence to the role of Vietnam in managing growing concerns in the region and appreciated the voice of Vietnam in maintaining a healthy political and security milieu in Southeast Asia. Nguyen Xuan Phuc, who is former Prime Minister of Vietnam, was officially ASEAN chairman in Thailand in 2019. He reiterated Vietnam's quest for keeping stability; sustaining solidarity and unity; increasing economic links and connectivity and deepening values and identities of ASEAN members; improving the efficiency of the ASEAN apparatus; and promoting ASEAN's partnerships in the global community (Prashanth, 2019). It demonstrates that Vietnam set a solid determination to strengthen the position of ASEAN and the liability of Vietnam to grow its influence in Southeast Asia, modify and appease potential disputes to promote a peaceful and stability for ASEAN. In the ASEAN year of Vietnam, this country and other members of ASEAN had to confront a full place of difficulties due to global infectious disease COVID-19. This virus has caused a series of vulnerabilities to the national economy and regional supply chain. Amid such a challenge, Vietnam still smoothly organized online forums of ASEAN throughout its chairmanship. In the Chairman's Statement of the 37<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit: Cohesive and Responsive, Vietnam stated that it always maintained a commitment to deal with terrorism,

radicalization, violent extremism, and transnational crimes in a complex situation of COVID-19 (ASEAN, 2020, p. 11). It indicates that challenges of non-traditional security of ASEAN have been underscored in Vietnam's mission in its chairmanship. Besides, Vietnam kept its continued effort to organize the annual ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) Three-Year Work Programme 2020-22 and shared constructive dialogues on common interests in ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), ADMM and ADMM-Plus, AMMTC, East Asia Summit (EAS), the ASEAN Maritime Forum (AMF), and the Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF) (ASEAN, 2020, p. 13). There is no doubt that Vietnam saw its wide range of developments in multilateral cooperation to foster an awareness of freedom of navigation and protect national sovereignty from sustaining a peaceful and secured environment in Southeast Asia. In this conference, Vietnam also aimed at the collective effort to raise awareness of new security affairs, and it stressed on the Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crimes (SOMTC) and held the Chairman's Statement of the 5<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Ministerial Conference on Cybersecurity (AMCC) on 7 October 2020 that underlined the importance of protecting regional cybersecurity capacity. This event implies that Vietnam was fully cognizant of cyberspace in regional security in the context of COVID-19, and all events mainly occurred on the Internet. Vietnam took a pointed question to update the new tendency of regional security to closely work with the ASEAN Member States to hamper any negative influence on ASEAN's security and safety. In 2021, Vietnam continuously paid much attention to a series of forums organized by Brunei's chairmanship, and the 38<sup>th</sup> and 39<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit witnessed the appearance of Vietnam in the ASEAN-India and ASEAN-Russia Forum (Cong San Online Newspaper, 2021). This event reveals that Vietnam is benefiting from multilateral forums to foster bilateral cooperation with Great and Middle power in Asia to embrace the values of cooperation in sharing Vietnam's experiences and reaching a consensus in protecting Southeast Asia from unexpected disputes through international law and peace talks. It is indicated that Vietnam strived to implicate external factors to tighten multilateral relations in building a stable and effective APSC.

### **3.2. Prospects**

In the upcoming year, it is anticipated that ASEAN continuously plays a critical role in Vietnam's diplomacy. Vietnam supposed that a new period of Vietnam diplomacy focuses on diversifying relations with new partners in the world regardless of geographic distinct. Vietnam would like to tie its bilateral relations to become a reliable partner and a resourceful member of the international community and contribute to peace, national independence, democracy, and international advancements (Vietnam Communist Party, 2011, p. 84). Also, this country underscored that Vietnam would strengthen both bilateral and multilateral diplomacy and promote the role of Vietnam in multilateral mechanisms in ASEAN, the United Nations, APEC, and subregional cooperation of Mekong Delta in important strategic plans and satisfies Vietnam's condition and ability. Vietnam intends to shoulder its

responsibility for traditional bilateral relations and assert its centrality in ASEAN (Vietnam Communist Party, 2021, p. 163). It indicates that this country has an intention of catching all imminent events of ASEAN and showing its strong concern about regional affairs.

First and foremost, the internality of APSC is crucial to its long-term development. In ASEAN-APSC Blueprint, this organization is targeted to promote ASEAN fundamental principles, shared values and norms, and principles of international law governing peaceful conduct among States, thereby enhancing regional peace and security (ASEAN, 2016, p. 2). Factually, APSC is an embryonic organization, and its activities have not been sufficient to modify all political and security affairs of ASEAN effectively. It is expected to be based on the enthusiasm of ASEAN members to make APSC more fruitful in its looming events. Vietnam will rigorously conform to the ASEAN Charter 2007 and ASEAN-APSC Blueprint 2025 to become a resourceful member of the ASEAN Political and Security Community. This country fulfills its mission in ASEAN and is also anticipated to tie bilateral relations with ASEAN countries to make furtherance in both political and economic affairs. For example, Vietnam will tighten its special relations with Laos and cooperate with the Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia in common conflicts in the East Sea. Simultaneously, Vietnam is likely to play a regulator in alleviating tensions in Thailand-Cambodia territorial disputes and the political turbulence of Myanmar. These bilateral relations will help grow Vietnam's influence in regional issues and state the viewpoint of Vietnam in political and security in Southeast Asia. Moreover, the affairs of non-traditional security such as a territorial dispute, freedom of navigation, terrorism, human trafficking, illicit drugs, and climate changes are requiring all ASEAN countries to foster their cooperation to ensure a healthy regional environment and generate leverage for economic thriving. In the upcoming year, Vietnam will stress on strengthening ASEAN centrality in being cognizant of pressing regional security issues and promoting the effectiveness of ASEAN-led mechanisms in monitoring regional safety effectively.

In the field of traditional security, ASEAN is facing Chinese domination in the East Sea, and this action is raising a very strong concern of ASEAN to defend its security. As a result, this affair needs addressing effectively, and Vietnam is likely to take advantage of ARF, ASEAN+3, EAS, and ADMM+ to propose ideas and plans for political ties among ASEAN members. As Acharya (2015) points out, the current ASEAN order shall not be described according to the Eurocentric term of multipolarity but must be characterized by the idea of multiplexity (Amitav, 2015). Amitav also argues that though these forums were not complete, ASEAN Way was considered as more practical cooperation to operate (Amitav A. , 1997, p. 325). Hence, Vietnam is expected to continuously adapt to the notion of the ASEAN Way while closely working with ASEAN members to optimize the role of these forums in the future to share ASEAN members' opinions and seek an optimal solution for the political security affairs of ASEAN. Nonetheless, Vietnam also confronts a variety

of political attitudes toward the Chinese's actions, because only some countries undergoing existing territorial conflicts with China have a transparent opposition. On the contrary, a few members either neglect or unclearly condemn the aggressive actions of China in the East Sea. But obviously, China is likely to get obstacles to encroach ASEAN's territory because this country ties its rights with ASEAN. In a meeting with General Secretary of ASEAN Lim Jock Hoi, China Minister of Foreign Affairs, supposed that the ASEAN-China relation brought it to achievements, and this relationship became a key pillar in peace, stability, development, and prosperity (Vietnam Plus, 2021). The start of the ASEAN-China Strategic Partnership and ASEAN-China Action Plans (2021-2025) are key factors to ensure that China maintains an organic security sphere in the East Sea. Vietnam and ASEAN members are expected to foster the implementation of the DOC and accelerate the completion of the Code of Conduct in the East Sea (COC). These legal bases will result in a better solution for ASEAN's East Sea dispute and elevate the role of the ASEAN multilateral mechanism in buttressing a sense of mutual interests in regional defense and sovereign protection of each member in the ASEAN.

Likewise, Vietnam will bolster engagements with close external factors, including the US and Russia, in the ASEAN mechanism. In August 2021, Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin undertook a regional tour that included stops in Vietnam, Singapore, and the Philippines. In these meetings, Austin stated that the US remained committed to the nations contesting China's expansive claims in the East Sea and stressed the role of the U.S.-Philippine alliance (Sebastian, 2021). Meanwhile, President Joe Biden formally emphasized the paramount importance of ASEAN-the US ties in the future and stated that the US would be far more involved in this region to help ASEAN countries to struggle with the COVID-19 pandemic and aid them complimentary vaccines and financial support package (Joshua , 2021). These proclamations reveal that the US will pay much attention to ASEAN and bolster its strategic presence in this region. As a result, Vietnam will always keep in contact with the US to encourage this country to share experiences and support ASEAN countries in the fight of COVID-19 prevention via ASEAN- the US Summit and appeal to the support of the US to build the central role of ASEAN in regional structure, rules-based regional order and the values and principles outlined in the ASEAN Outlook in the Indo-Pacific (AOIP). Vietnam will tackle political hotspots and propose a constructive approach to concord potential conflicts and maintain freedom of navigation relied on UNCLOS 1982 and DOC 2002. Similarly, Vietnam will promote the role of Russia, which is a strategic partner of ASEAN. The CPA (2016-2020) will be an important document to push ASEAN-Russia political and security cooperation. It is aimed at promoting and enhancing ASEAN-Russia Dialogue Relations through assisting ASEAN in its efforts in regional economic integration and Community building. S. Lavrov supposed that ASEAN is deemed to be a reliable partner and like-minded in shaping an open, balanced, equal, and indivisible security architecture in

the Asia-Pacific region (ASEAN, 2018). In addition, the ASEAN-Russia Joint Cooperation Committee (ARJCC) also affirmed that ASEAN was one of the top priorities in Russia's foreign policy, pledging to support ASEAN's central role in contributing to Russia's foreign policy. This relation would maintain regional peace and stability in ASEAN-led regional mechanisms. Russia had an intention of focusing on areas of mutual interest, especially is Russia's strengths (ASEAN Secretariat News, 2020). Thereby, Vietnam will take advantage of the Russia support to assert ASEAN centrality in regional affairs through ASEAN-Russia Summit, ASEAN (PMC) + 1, ASEAN (CPR) to attract Russia's support with regional peace through the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) 1982 and the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the East Sea (DOC). Meanwhile, Vietnam will encourage ASEAN members to consent with the involvement of emerging factors outside ASEAN, consisting of the Netherlands, Greece, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, and Denmark, to join the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC). This will insist them on adapting to the principles and values of the Treaty in maintaining peace and security in the region, such as the East Sea and Myanmar, even other pressing tensions in the Korean Peninsula and the Middle East.

Last but not least, it seems reasonable to say that Vietnam will continuously build a stronger political and security community of the ASEAN in the future. Historically, Vietnam supported ASEAN Member States signed the Treaty of Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ Treaty) in December 1995 to protect the region from a nuclear weapon. In 2002, Vietnam contributed to complying with the DOC between China and ASEAN to form a mutual legal framework for dealing with territorial disputes in the East Sea. Significantly, Vietnam signed Bali Proclamation in 2003 to aim at building a political and security community for ASEAN as well as made a joint effort to sign the ASEAN Charter 2007. In the future, the actions of Vietnam will deepen political and security cooperation in Southeast Asia. However, there is a full plate of difficulties to consolidate different values of politics of ASEAN while this organization has not gained a political unification yet. As a result, Vietnam is expected to remain relatively independent in its foreign policies. Particularly, Vietnam released the White Book of National Defense in 2019. This document reveals that Vietnam fundamentally relies on principles of four-no regulations in this White Book, including non-military alliance, non-intergovernmental alliance for war, non-international military base, non-violence in international relations (Vietnam Ministry of National Defense, 2019, p. 25). Vietnam also stated that Vietnam would strengthen its multilateral defense cooperation to protect its national sovereignty and build a strong ASEAN and benefit from a multilateral mechanism under the centrality of ASEAN consisting of ADMM, ADMM+, and ARF (Vietnam Ministry of National Defense, 2019, p. 30). This viewpoint points out that Vietnam would support the expansion of cooperation between ASEAN-centered multilateral security mechanisms and alien partners

in the region based on respecting ASEAN's elementary principles and standards. Therefore, Vietnam will not only concentrate on constructing a solid ASEAN political-security community but also self-build its internal potential to satisfy national interests and regional interests and aims at a great stride of APSC in the future.

#### 4. Conclusion

To sum up, Vietnam - ASEAN political and security cooperation is an important academic issue to be deeply researched to clarify the prominent contributions of Vietnam toward the multilateral mechanism of ASEAN. Thanks to the historical and logical method of History sciences, the history of Vietnam-ASEAN cooperation in politics and security demonstrates that Vietnam is an eager partner to embrace mutual values of ASEAN politics and security to pave the way to peace and stability prosperity in Southeast Asia. Vietnam, along with ASEAN members, compiled the ASEAN Charter 2007 and followed this document to create a synergy with ASEAN in protecting the region from potential conflicts and appeasing political and security tensions in some areas of Southeast Asia. The establishment of APSC in 2015 is a momentous event to mark a tightened relation between Vietnam and ASEAN to solve political and security affairs more effectively. Besides, the involvement of external factors and forming strategic partnerships are a joint effort of Vietnam and ASEAN to grow ASEAN's influence in international relations. Simultaneously, the position of Vietnam has been significantly improved through its participation in those international forums. In the future, Vietnam is expected to closely link ASEAN members to foster a united awareness of regional politics and security, boost the strength of APSC, and translate communiqué and general code of conduct into reality to address regional affairs. Similarly, Vietnam will help ASEAN expand its international relations with the connectivity of new emerging factors and maintain robust relations with China, the US, Russia, Japan, and India for persistence in Southeast Asia's political and security affairs.

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**HỢP TÁC CHÍNH TRỊ-AN NINH VIỆT NAM – ASEAN (2007-2021):  
THÀNH TỰU VÀ TRIỂN VỌNG**

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**TÓM TẮT**

*Bài viết này xem xét các sự kiện nổi bật của hợp tác chính trị và an ninh giữa Việt Nam và ASEAN sau năm Hiến chương ASEAN (2007). Bằng phương pháp lịch sử kết hợp với phương pháp logic và lý thuyết của Chủ nghĩa khu vực, bài viết chỉ ra rằng Việt Nam đóng vai trò then chốt trong việc duy trì quan hệ đối tác mạnh mẽ với ASEAN trong chính trị và an ninh của khu vực nhằm đạt được lợi ích của khu vực và quốc gia. Để làm sâu sắc thêm mối quan hệ này, dựa vào những sự kiện diễn ra và những chính sách đối ngoại hiện nay của Việt Nam và ASEAN, bài viết đưa ra những dự đoán về triển vọng của mối quan hệ Việt Nam – ASEAN đối với hợp tác chính trị và an ninh trong tương lai.*

**Từ khóa:** ASEAN; hợp tác chính trị và an ninh; Đông Nam Á; Việt Nam