

Ambassador's Speech (The 64th Japanese Self Defense Forces' Day)

- I would like to extend a warm welcome to all of you, including Senior Lieutenant General Pham Hong Huong, Deputy Chief of the General Staff.
- It is my great pleasure and fortune to work in Vietnam during this period, a sympathizer for Japan, filled with energy. I would like to explain why.
- Firstly, the mutual trust between our leaders has been further boosted through numerous high level visits since last year. Included among these is the first visit of Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress of Japan to Vietnam, the reciprocal visits of Prime Minister Abe and Prime Minister Phuc, the attendance of Prime Minister Abe to the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting, and the Japan-Vietnam co-chairs at the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) Ministerial Meeting.
- This year commemorates the 45th anniversary of the Japan-Vietnam diplomatic relations, and various memorial events have been held in both Japan and Vietnam. The other day, President Tran Dai Quang and Ms. Nguyen Thi Hien paid a State Visit to Japan. During the first half of this year, 12 Cabinet members including Deputy Prime Minister Truong Hoa Binh and General Ngo Xuan Lich, Minister of National Defence, officially visited Japan.
- In addition to exchanges at the leadership level, grassroots level exchanges have also increased a great deal over the last five years. For example, the number of Japanese nationals living in Vietnam has doubled and the number of Vietnamese nationals living in Japan has increased by nearly six times over the last six years.
- Under the “Extensive Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity in Asia”, the Japan-Vietnam relationship has been expanded and deepened in various areas such as politics, security, economics, and culture. Japan recognizes that the sustainable development of Vietnam is vitally important for the stability and prosperity of the region, and Japan is working to strengthen the partnership.
- The visit of General Ngo Xuan Lich, Minister of National Defence to Japan this April was the first time in seven years that a Minister of National Defence of Vietnam visited Japan. In the defence ministerial meeting with Defense Minister Onodera, the Joint Vision Statement on the Japan-Vietnam Relationship was signed, which outlines strengthening cooperation and defense exchanges for the next ten years. In the summit meeting between Prime Minister Abe and President Tran Dai Quang at the end of May,

both Japan and Vietnam, as partners sharing various strategic interests, affirmed to promote cooperation in the fields of defense and security.

- Under the policies of “Proactive Contribution to Peace based on the principle of international cooperation” and the “Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy,” Japan will make an effort to promote peace and stability of the world.
- Both Japan and Vietnam have strengthened cooperation, especially in the fields of maritime security, health and medicine, defense equipment, United Nations peacekeeping operations, and IT/cyber security. From a humanitarian perspective, Japan has been making an effort in removing landmines and unexploded ordinances as well as supporting the victims of dioxin. In addition, Japan will continue to consider the possibilities of cooperation in removing dioxin.
- The Deployment Air Force Counter Piracy Enforcement team (Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force P-3C) visited Danang Airport this past May on their way back to Japan. The Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force Landing Ship “Osumi” docked at Cam Ranh International Port under the “Pacific Partnership 2018”. From the late September to the early October, the Vietnam People’s Navy Vessel is supposed to dock at the port of Yokosuka and Sakai in Japan. Japan would like to enhance good will visits and exchanges through mutual visits of aircrafts and vessels to Vietnam.
- Japan has invited a number of promising Vietnamese military officers to educational institutions such as the National Defense Academy of Japan every year. Tonight, we have the company of those who studied in Japan. I offer my sincerest wishes for your contributions to the future of Vietnam by making the most of your experiences in Japan.
- In this reception, we gain support from defense companies such as NEC, Fujitsu, Mitsubishi Electronics, Kawasaki Heavy Industries, and IHI, which are offering exhibitions. I hope you will enjoy seeing them. We also offer fine Japanese Sake. Please enjoy their tastes and flavors.
- Lastly, I would like to extend my best wishes for the peace and prosperity of the Indo-Asian Pacific region, and ask you to raise your glasses for a toast. Please repeat after me. “Kanpai”!