

From Deadly Enemies to Comprehensive Strategic Partners

The Twenty Year Transformation of US-Viet Nam Relations

Potential Implications for US-Cuba Relations

Programa del evento XXI Edición de la Serie de Conversaciones

“Cuba en la Política Exterior de Estados Unidos de América”.

El Centro de Investigaciones de Política Internacional (CIPI)

con el coauspicio del Instituto Superior de Relaciones Internacionales (ISRI)

Hotel Nacional, Havana, December 17-19, 2024

Our two countries' partnership is guided by very simple but powerful principles. The United States supports a strong independent prosperous and resilient Viet Nam and we respect each other's sovereignty, territorial integrity and political systems. Together we are achieving ambitious goals. that will bring prosperity to both of our peoples now and long into the future.

--Ambassador to Viet Nam Marc Knapper at the US Institute of Peace, October 10, 2024¹



Major Alison Thomas and the OSS Deer Team. Ho Chi Minh to his left. Võ Nguyên Giáp to his right.

¹ <https://youtu.be/yDsd1axbg2o?t=3476> Full USIP annual review of US-Viet Nam relations in Appendix II

Relations between the US and revolutionary Viet Nam began on a positive note in the closing days of World War II. The Deer Team of the Office of Strategic Services led by Major Alison Thomas parachuted in to the base in Tan Trao to collaborate with Ho Chi Minh and Võ Nguyên Giáp. Their initial mission was the rescue of US pilots whose planes were damaged while on anti-Japanese bombing runs in China. The strategic purpose was to provide supplies and equipment to enable the Viet Minh to interfere militarily with transfer of Japanese troops from occupation duties in Viet Nam to China and ultimately to the defense of Japan. In effect the US provided the first foreign military training and assistance to Ho Chi Minh and an OSS medic may have saved Ho's life from malaria.² (The Vietnamese credit his recovery to traditional medicine/herbs provided by an ethnic minority person.³)

Japan's surrender led to the OSS following Ho into Ha Noi where Archimedes Patti, another OSS operative, also connected with him. Reflecting the comradely relationship, Viet Nam's Declaration of Independence of September 2, 1945, incorporates famous language from the US Declaration.

Ho wrote several letters to President Truman, and sent messages through Deer Team members, as recounted during their return to Viet Nam that my organization hosted in 1995 with support from the Ford Foundation. Ho sought a relationship with the US that would preclude the return of French colonialism. Unfortunately President Franklin Roosevelt who opposed the restoration of colonialism had died. President Truman gave priority to strengthening Charles de Gaulle against the French Communist Party. This led the US to side with France, eventually funding 80% of its failed war.

France's defeat was ratified in the Geneva Agreement of July 1954. The US refused to sign and sought to make the temporary division of the country permanent by supporting an anti-communist South Vietnam led by Ngô Đình Diệm. He and the US rejected the treaty mandated reunification election of 1956. Diệm's effort to eliminate southern supporters of the Viet Minh created an escalating conflict with the north and growing US intervention with advisors and military aid under Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy and large scale ground battles and air war under Presidents Johnson and Nixon.

The consequence of thirty years of US political, economic, intelligence and military intervention was the death of 58,000 US soldiers, an estimated two to three million south and north Vietnamese civilians and military, and as many Lao and Cambodians if one includes the

² <https://vnpeacecomm.blogspot.com/2024/12/the-oss-and-viet-minh.html>

³ <https://www.sggp.org.vn/lan-bac-om-o-tan-trao-post222467.html>

devastation of the Khmer Rouge whose victory can be attributed to the Nixon-Kissinger expansion of the war. The civil and economic infrastructure and rural life were devastated with still enduring environmental and health consequences from land mines, unexploded ordnance and defoliants such as Agent Orange. Centuries old rural communities were destroyed to dry up the sea in which the guerilla fish swam, a methodology the US learned from Spanish strategy in Cuba.

US intervention came to a disastrous end on April 30, 1975. The collapse of the US client state began a mass outpouring of refugees, eventually totaling 1.3 million. By chance, I witnessed the other side of history, arriving in Ha Noi for the first time on that day as a representative of the American Friends Service Committee, the Quaker peace and humanitarian organization.

The failure of the US must be attributed primarily to historical righteousness, political determination and military capability of the Vietnamese as well as the weapons and propaganda support they received from Russia and China. An important factor was the restraining influence of US public opinion, the disillusion of elites in universities and the media. and the collapse of military morale. The mobilization of opposition by a broad and diverse antiwar movement was both a reflection and motivation of social change, including a decisive grass roots campaign to press Congress to restrict US bombing and military aid to Cambodia and South Viet Nam

Refusal to recognize the weakness of its Saigon allies led to an infamous emergency withdrawal by the US. The government was traumatized by the first US loss of a war and the damage to its international prestige. A generation of American military and political leaders and diplomats had invested years of their lives and formed friendships with people who died, became refugees or were imprisoned in reeducation camps. The US evacuated 125,000 Vietnamese in the first year, but that population grew substantially as transit camps in Asia were emptied and special arrangements were made for American fathered children and for families of men released from reeducation camps. ⁴“roughly doubling in both the 1980s and 1990s, to 988,000 by 2000.” The continuing flow of boat people and repression of Saigon military and government officials moved US public opinion from being antiwar and pro humanitarian assistance to indifferent if not hostile. The negative personal experiences of the losing side were widely diffused to the churches and civic organizations that sponsored refugees, many previously involved in the peace movement.

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⁴ <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/vietnamese-immigrants-united-states>

While a fringe group of US military, and presumably US intelligence, harbored fantasies of reversing the loss, there was broader sentiment to punish the Vietnamese for winning. The Ford Administration immediately extended a rigorous embargo from the north to the whole country. It opposed Viet Nam's membership in the United Nations but it was achieved in September 1977 under the Carter Administration. (Since then Viet Nam has been elected twice to a seat on the Security Council.)

The Carter Administration initially moved to open the door with Viet Nam but then backed away. A commission led by former UAW President Leonard Woodcock visited Vietnam and Laos in March 1977. Their goal was to obtain information on US Missing in Action (MIAs) and to explore normalization of relations. Vietnamese insistence that normalization required \$3.3 billion of US reconstruction aid as promised in the Peace Agreement was unacceptable to the US., characterizing it falsely as war reparations. The Vietnamese came to regret their position and were looking for a way out of this box but that was frozen when my friend David Truong was arrested on inflated espionage charges. Viet Nam's first ambassador to the UN, Đinh Bá Thi, was labeled as an unindicted co-conspirator and expelled. Then Foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach removed the aid linkage in successful normalization discussions with Richard Holbrooke in New York in September 1978. However the Carter Administration backed away from the deal because of the influence of National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski. He saw Viet Nam through the lens of normalization with China as part of his strategy against the Soviet Union.

We witnessed renewed but indirect US-Vietnamese military confrontation in the Third Indochina War. Viet Nam suffered horrific border attacks by Cambodia's ultra left Khmer Rouge (KR), a close ideological and military ally with Viet Nam's age-old nemesis China. After Viet Nam invaded, the KR quickly retreated toward the Thai border. China punished Viet Nam by a month long failed but very destructive cross border invasion in February-March 1979. The US and its allies in Southeast Asia in effect supported the KR against Viet Nam, enabling it to hold on to Cambodia's seat in the UN and providing military aid, ostensibly to Royalists and Republicans (the non-communist opposition) during the Reagan and Bush Administrations.

The traditional peace churches (Quakers, Mennonites, National Council of Churches) and a network of former activists that had provided humanitarian aid during the war renewed assistance with contributions of food and medical supplies by 1977, including in larger scale to post-KR Cambodia, and pressed for normalization of relations. The still interested remnants of the antiwar movement waged a fruitless campaign despite some support in Congress to unseat the Khmer Rouge from the UN.

I reported in substantial detail the ground-breaking atmosphere-creating role of US non-governmental organizations (NGOs), Viet Nam veterans, foundations, universities and businesses in a 2022 paper for the US Institute of Peace “Reconciliation Between Peace and Normalization, 1975-1995”.⁵ In addition to the substantive value of aid and educational exchanges, the growing presence created trust and understanding that Americans were more than invaders and destroyers and Vietnamese were more than revolutionary terrorists. From 1986 to 1992 there were 70 to 100 NGOs operating in Vietnam providing \$20 to \$30 million annual assistance. In 1990 the first US NGO, the Mennonite Central Committee, was able to open an office with staff in Ha Noi. By 1994, the year before normalization, 210 international NGOs, largely American, had authorized programs in Vietnam, sometimes with in-country staff. We held ten international NGO conferences beginning in 1989 with the last two in the region, 1999 in Cambodia and 2001 in Laos. They increased the benefit of the NGO contribution and opened doors for new organizations to work in Indochina. They also provided the first opportunities for people from Indochina to talk about dangerous war legacy problems of land mines, unexploded ordnance and Agent Orange. Indispensable pioneering support was provided by the Christopher Reynolds and Ford Foundations, both of which later funded programs for US-Cuba normalization.

We brought many of the practitioners from both countries together in 2020 for a two part binational zoom described in the appendix “Normalization of Viet Nam - US Relations, Reflections from the Ground Up: The Contribution of NGOs and Peoples Organizations from 1975 to 1995” available on our youtube channel.⁶

At the official level cooperative gestures were also undertaken. Ha Noi authorized the joint excavation of a B-52 crash site in 1985, and returned some remains between 1985 and 1987.

In 1987 President Reagan appointed retired chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General John Vessey as a special emissary to Vietnam on the question of American service personnel missing from the Vietnam War.

There were three preconditions for normalization of US Viet Nam relations.

⁵ It can be read on line at <https://vnpeacecomm.blogspot.com/2022/10/mcauliff-paper-for-usip-on.html>

⁶ <https://vnpeacecomm.blogspot.com/2020/07/webinars-on-normalization-of-us-viet.html>

The US required the end of Viet Nam's occupation of Cambodia and the fullest possible accounting of remains of 2,646 Missing in Action (MIAs). The right wing in the US had fostered the myth that Viet Nam still held living US prisoners of war. However for most US leaders, the real issue was locating and retrieving military remains, largely of airmen who died in combat.

The Vietnamese had again linked provision of reconstruction aid to cooperation on MIA remains.

Notable is that the US made no demands about Viet Nam's governance or sovereignty despite ideological disagreement about democracy and human rights and lingering hostility toward the victors.

The moral dimension of Vietnam's precondition was resolved symbolically during discussions between General Vessey and Foreign Minister Nguyen Co Thach in 1987. The linkage was acknowledged between two humanitarian issues, MIAs and aid. The method of addressing the latter was US government support for symbolic private assistance through more mainstream US NGOs that had no previous post war role.

The living POW story was effectively discredited by hearings in 1991 and 1992 of the Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs led by two pro-engagement US veterans John Kerry and John McCain who overcame the objections of Senator Bob Smith, an anti-normalization veteran.

The Third Indochina War ended with the Paris Conference on Cambodia and a Peace Agreement in October 1991. Viet Nam had withdrawn the last of its forces by September 1989 and the US ended its support for the KR in July 1990.

In effect Viet Nam was prepared to take the risk of giving up the special relationship achieved with Cambodia at a heavy cost in military casualties and national expenditures in order to obtain economic and diplomatic normalization with the US. (There was a later cost as Cambodia, despite China's long support for the Khmer Rouge, accepted substantial Chinese investment and opposed cooperation by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, ASEAN, against Beijing's aggression in the South China Sea.)

An important factor in Viet Nam's reconciliation with the US was the Sixth Party Congress in 1986 that approved the policy of *Đổi Mới* (renovation), to "transition Vietnam from a command economy to a socialist-oriented market economy" ... "eliminating the centralized bureaucratic subsidy mechanism, shifting to a multi-sector economy, operating according to the market mechanism with State management."⁷ Facing pockets of famine and seeking to guarantee regime survival, under the leadership of veterans of the war in the south, General Secretary Nguyen Van Linh (1986-1991)⁸ and Prime Minister Võ Văn Kiệt (1991-1997)⁹, Viet Nam broke the stranglehold of Soviet tutelage and ideology. The country overcame 700% inflation with "the average GDP growth rate accelerating to approximately 6.5 percent per year from 1990 until the Asian Financial Crisis of 1997". Viet Nam quickly moved from rice shortages to substantial exports.

An intrinsic part of *Đổi Mới* was the decision that Viet Nam's national interests were best served by avoiding economic and political dependence on a single powerful friend. Normal relations with China were reestablished and were initiated with Western Europe, Japan, Australia and the U.S. President Bush was moving in that direction, but former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger threw a fit, appropriately enough for a Chinese audience, in Hong Kong.

A year after taking office, in February 1994, President Clinton (who had opposed the war as a student) ended the embargo and the next year normalized diplomatic relations. He was politically enabled/pressured by Senators Kerry and McCain. Among their actions was a sixty-two to thirty-eight bipartisan Senate vote urging the end of the embargo adopted in January 1994. 1995 witnessed not only the establishment of significant bilateral relations with the US but potentially as impactful multilateral regional relations when Viet Nam joined its previous antagonist, the Association of South East Asian Nations, ASEAN. Normalization also reduced diplomatic opposition by the US to Viet Nam and changed the tone of Vietnamese statements about the US.

For full normalization, further steps were necessary that required adjustment in Vietnam's economic and legal system

March 11, 1997 Agreed to repay Saigon's \$140 million war debt (with the understanding that most of the money would provide for advanced study in the US by Vietnamese and with visiting professors from the US)

⁷ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C4%90%E1%BB%95i_M%E1%BB%9Bi

⁸ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nguy%E1%BB%85n_V%C4%83n_Linh

⁹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/V%C3%B5_V%C4%83n_Ki%E1%BB%87t

July 13, 2000 Bilateral trade agreement (BTA) signed, effective December 10, 2001

November 7, 2006 Joined the World Trade Organization

December 29, 2006 Permanent Normal Trade Relations established (a.k.a. Most Favored Nation)

As a result today the US is Viet Nam's largest export market totaling \$93.43 billion in 2023. For years Vietnamese manufactured clothing and shoes have been omnipresent in US stores, including all Samsung cell phones. In January 2024 Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung reported US investment ranked 6th but in two years could be 1st.¹⁰ Direct US investment is \$7 billion and it reaches around \$9 billion if investment via a third country is added. In 2023 Viet Nam had 21,900 students in the US, its largest destination, ranking them as the 5th biggest contingent worldwide.¹¹ Most are family or self funded. The US is the fourth largest source of tourists, the biggest from outside of the region despite the distance, 717,000 in 2023.¹²

The 2020 census shows 2.3 million Vietnamese immigrants and descendants living in the US, by far the largest destination. Seven hundred thousand to one million Overseas Vietnamese worldwide return every year.¹³ Some have found employment and spouses. Others are enjoying retirement back home. In the first years after the end of the war, the Vietnamese American community was violently anti-engagement. Several Vietnamese Americans and a US professor were killed for political reasons. Protests took place every time we sponsored delegations to the US and at shows of Vietnamese art organized by a veteran who was part of one of our twenty group trips. While Vietnamese American leaders objected to Clinton's normalization, they had no power to stop it. Pop culture has seamlessly flowed between Viet Nam and Vietnamese Americans for decades. A first Vietnamese American member of Congress has just been elected, a liberal Democrat.

Although the US rejects totally any legal obligation to address the legacies of war, it has moved steadily to provide assistance to a growing number of the war's victims. That began with people who are still being injured by land mines and unexploded ordnance. After years of denial, the US finally recognized the long term impact of defoliants like Agent Orange. The initial step was remediation of locations where it has been shown Agent Orange was dumped and is still

¹⁰ <https://vietnamembassy-usa.org/relation/us-be-top-investor-vietnam-two-years>

¹¹ <https://vietnamnews.vn/society/1636623/vietnamese-students-at-us-colleges-universities-rise-by-5-7-in-2022-23.html>

¹² <https://vietnamtourism.gov.vn/en/post/19434#top>

¹³ <https://en.vietnamplus.vn/workshop-discusses-attraction-of-ov-resources-for-tourism-development-post265863.vnp>

contaminating the soil. The first location was the air base in Da Nang in central Viet Nam. The second location is the former air base in Bien Hoa, near Ho Chi Minh City / Saigon. USAID support for remediation accomplished by superheating the soil is estimated to be \$100 million for Da Nang and \$183 million for Bien Hoa. It has been much harder to get the US to acknowledge responsibility for the probable human victims of the spraying. Both US veterans and Vietnamese civilians have an array of medical problems associated with dioxin, an unintended and unnecessary component of Agent Orange. The US accepts legal and medical responsibility for American veterans but not for the Vietnamese. Dioxin is also the cause of a variety of multigenerational serious birth defects. Aside from remediation work, assistance from USAID is provided through American and Vietnamese NGOs and medical institutions.

The number of US MIAs has been reduced substantially to 1,584. The Vietnamese estimate their number of MIAs is around 250,000—100 times the original US total. While acknowledging that inequity for years, the US has only begun to assist the Vietnamese by providing related data (e.g. identifying sites of mass graves after combat) in the past two years.

What is responsible for the US and Viet Nam achieving in 20 years what the US and Cuba have not been able to accomplish in more than 60?

Veterans 3,403,000 U.S. military personnel were deployed to Southeast Asia 1964-1975. Some turned against the war - in country or after returning to the US. Even those who didn't had the country imprinted in their identity. Multiple more Americans were involved in the antiwar movement, often reshaping lives and careers. For both parts of the generation, normalization resonated positively. Advocacy by pro-engagement veterans had a special impact on public opinion.

Business After the embargo was lifted and relations normalized, US entrepreneurs and investors entered Vietnam. The first decade was difficult for cultural and legal reasons. Some gave up but others, as individuals or as corporations, are still there. They sponsored an active lobbying group in Washington, the US-Vietnam Trade Council, that worked closely with US government agencies and Congress and they created robust US Chambers of Commerce in Ha Noi and Ho Chi Min City.

Geographic location of immigrants The rapid outpouring of refugees required transit camps in the region and in the US. Resettlement was structured through local church and social service sponsors dispersed around the country that had frequently been centers of peace activism.

Voluntary resettlement led to partial concentration in California, but the size of the state and its dominant liberal politics minimized political impact. In addition, most immigrants were completely unfamiliar with how US politics worked, nor did they have financial resources already here. Importantly, the US had no desire to fund them to organize and arm against their home country. A negotiated bilateral Orderly Departure Program (ODP) assisted nearly 500,000 Vietnamese refugees to resettle in the US between 1980 and 1994.¹⁴ A total of “More than 1.3 million Vietnamese immigrants resided in the United States in 2022.”¹⁵

Legal sequence The US embargo of Vietnam followed the legal tradition of being entirely created by executive authority. As a result President Clinton could eliminate it as the first step to normalize relations. Cuba’s embargo began in the same way but it became law when Congress adopted the Helms-Butler legislation after the illegal flights by Brothers to the Rescue were shot down. As a result, Presidents Obama and Castro were in the anomalous position of normalizing relations while still locked in an economic war.

China Tragically millions of lives, environmental degradation and the loss of decades of economic development took place because the US failed to understand the fundamental reality of Viet Nam’s three thousand year struggle to be independent from China. A primary reason for the US war was to stop the spread of Chinese dominance to Southeast Asia and no country was a bigger obstacle to that than Viet Nam. For different reasons, Viet Nam and the US have a shared concern with China’s emerging hegemonism over the South China Sea, known as the East Sea by Vietnamese. China’s internationally judged illegal assertion of a nine-dash line is the Monroe Doctrine on steroids. From Viet Nam’s perspective. China is an existential threat to territorial integrity and economic development that must be both appeased and resisted. Vietnamese contracted oil exploration is blocked by China and fishing boats have been attacked and seized. From the US perspective, China is a strategic threat to the regional balance of power and freedom of navigation.¹⁶ The US and Viet Nam have elevated their relationship to Comprehensive Strategic Partners. However Viet Nam has negotiated the same status with China, Russia, India, Japan and South Korea.

Need for radical reform There is an interaction of change between two countries seeking reconciliation. Nguyen Van Linh and Vo Van Kiet chose change not continuity, despite their

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https://vi.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ch%C6%B0%C6%A1ng_tr%C3%ACnh_Ra_%C4%91i_C%C3%B3_tr%E1%BA%ADt_t%E1%BB%B1

¹⁵ <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/vietnamese-immigrants-united-states>

¹⁶ December 15, 2024 published by the United States Indo-Pacific Command

<https://ipdefenseforum.com/2024/12/beijing-extends-its-coercive-campaign-against-neighbors/>

Party's historic achievement of freeing and unifying the country. As leaders of generational transformation, they reflected and led a movement for substantial reform. It was driven by internal needs and the collapse of a centrally planned economy, leading to runaway inflation, the failure of agricultural markets and inefficient state enterprise production. Moreover, they understood that solving internal problems required less ideologically encumbered international relations to overcome encirclement and the cut-off of supplies from the Soviet Union. They welcomed advice, investment and financial assistance from Japan, Singapore, Australia, Western Europe and the US, as well as from UN agencies and International Financial Institutions like the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank.

A final personal note, I am not Cuba's only American friend with deep ties to Viet Nam. Senator Patrick Leahy and his former professional staff associate Tim Rieser, long standing supporters of full normalization with Cuba, played a central role in enabling US assistance for the victims of Agent Orange in Viet Nam.¹⁷

For further information, jmcauliff@gmail.com Phone or whatsapp 1-917-859-9025

Appendix I

Normalization of Viet Nam - US Relations

Reflections from the Ground Up

The Contribution of NGOs and Peoples Organizations from 1975 to 1995

July 11, 2025 is the 30th anniversary of normalization of relations between the US and Viet Nam in 1995. Although after the war ended there was never a Cuba style strategy for regime change, the US maintained a punishing unilateral embargo until 1994 and took twenty years to diplomatically recognize the unified country.

In the first months after the war ended, polls showed majority public support for humanitarian aid to heal the wounds of war. The Carter Administration appeared ready to normalize relations without conditions, but the Vietnamese linked it to assistance for reconstruction, a provision of the Paris Peace Agreement. The flow of boat people refugees and internment of South Vietnamese military and government officials changed the atmosphere in the US.

¹⁷ <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/16/magazine/laos-agent-orange-vietnam-war.html>

After Viet Nam responded to Khmer Rouge attacks across its border by forcing them out of power in Phnom Penh, the US provided military supplies and diplomatic support to their military campaign against Vietnamese troops. Washington also did nothing to oppose China's destructive invasion across Viet Nam's northern border. Scholars describe this as the Third Indochina War, a proxy battle between superpowers with China and the US on one side and the Soviet Union on the other.

The unique aspect of this history is that although Viet Nam won the war, the US was not defeated in a larger sense, being still the pre-eminent world power. Normally the victor is more powerful than the vanquished and sets the terms for post-war normalization. In this case each side had to find its own reasons to overcome bitter memories of loss of friends and family.

Faced with these challenges non-governmental organizations in the US and mass organizations in Viet Nam found ways to work together, begin to address humanitarian problems and create a better climate for their governments to change policy. This started with traditional peace oriented religious NGOs and evolved through people to people dialog and exchanges to larger scale government supported university and aid programs. The foundation and business sectors assumed greater roles as the bilateral atmosphere improved.

Vietnam needed to rebuild from massive numbers of deaths and widespread destruction of its economy and infrastructure as well as find ways to neutralize and integrate people who had fought and governed for the other side. The US faced the problem of massive refugee resettlement and the trauma of veterans. Rational policy-making was hampered by resentment fueled myths of living POWs and renewed suffering and anger caused by land-mines, unexploded ordnance and Agent Orange.

Our webinars will enable practitioners from both countries to speak personally about a unique twenty year process in which two countries that suffered a long destructive war overcame painful political and emotional conflict. They will identify from their own experience how non-governmental and people-to-people organizations on both sides helped to establish the human and institutional groundwork for official relations.

Speaker bios <https://vnpeacecomm.blogspot.com/2020/07/webinars-on-normalization-of-us-viet.html>

The American perspective

When: July 6, 2020 11:00 AM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

See (and share) it on line here <https://youtu.be/KLPGtx3oJ84>

Moderator: John McAuliff (with Amb. Nguyen Tam Chien)

Overview of the history of normalization: Murray Hiebert, Far Eastern Economic Review

NGOs (humanitarian aid): David Elder, American Friends Service Committee

NGOs (normalization movement): Susan Hammond, U.S.-Indochina Reconciliation Project

Washington dialog: Bill Nell, Aspen Institute

Veterans: John Terzano, Vietnam Veterans of America / Foundation

Minh Kauffman, Center for Educational Exchange with Viet Nam, Mennonite Central Comm

intermission (music videos)

Foundations: Mark Sidel, Ford Foundation

Business: Virginia Foote, US-Vietnam Trade Council

Universities: Allan Goodman, Institute of International Education

Culture: David Thomas, Indochina Arts Partnership

Vietnamese Americans: Hong-phong Pho

State Department: Kenneth Quinn

The Vietnamese perspective

When: July 8, 2020 9:30 AM Viet Nam Time

See (and share) it on line here https://youtu.be/H1DgEy91A_c

Presented by

The Vietnam Peace Commemoration Committee (VPCC) director@ffrd.org
<https://vnpeacecomm.blogspot.com/2021/10/history-and-future-of-vpcc.html>

The Vietnam-USA Society (VUS)

Appendix II

Annual review of US-Viet Nam relations by the US Institute of Peace

First Plenary October 10, 2024

<https://youtu.be/yDsd1axbg2o?t=1754>

9:00am - 10:15am ET: The U.S. Comprehensive Strategic Partnership with Vietnam after One Year

Ambassador George E. Moose, opening remarks Acting President and CEO, U.S. Institute of Peace

Ambassador Nguyen Quoc Dung, keynote remarks Vietnamese Ambassador to the U.S.

Ambassador Marc Knapper, keynote remarks (virtual) U.S. Ambassador to Vietnam

Senator Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), keynote remarks (pre-recorded) U.S. Senator from Maryland

Representative Young Kim (R-CA), keynote remarks (pre-recorded) U.S. Representative from California

Kit Norland, moderator Diplomat, U.S Department of State (ret.)

Jed Royal Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Indo-Pacific Security Affairs, U.S. Department of Defense

Phan Anh Son President, Vietnam Union of Friendship Organizations

Michael Schiffer Assistant Administrator of the Bureau for Asia, U.S. Agency for International Development

Second Plenary October 11, 2024

<https://youtu.be/Haol8H0o89A?t=378>

9:00am - 10:15am ET: Launch of USIP Peaceworks Report on Reconciliation

Ambassador David Scheffer, moderator Professor of Practice, Arizona State University

Andrew Wells-Dang Senior Expert, Southeast Asia, U.S. Institute of Peace

Carl Stauffer Senior Expert, Reconciliation, U.S. Institute of Peace

Ambassador Pham Lan Dung, discussant Acting President, Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam (like ISRI)

John McAuliff, discussant Executive Director & Founder, Fund for Reconciliation and Development

Pathways to Reconciliation: How Americans and Vietnamese Have Transformed Their Relationship

By: Andrew Wells-Dang, Ph.D.; Carl Stauffer, Ph.D.

https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/2024-10/pw-197_pathways-reconciliation-americans-vietnamese.pdf

Appendix III

Introduction to verbal summary

Thanks to CIPI and to Ambassador Cabanas.

You may remember my remarks last year about the connection between Cuban and Irish Nationalism in 19th Century New York. My daughter gave me this t shirt from Sinn Fein in Belfast, Northern Ireland honoring Che Guevara and Bobby Sands

As I said from the floor on the first day, we face a critical situation in both countries

President Trump could create deep social and political problems for both the people of the US and of Cuba. Or maybe he will want to become a contemporary Nixon in China or his friend President Putin will suggest the benefits of reconciliation with Cuba. We will begin to know in a month

On this trip I came first to Holguin and Santiago and then took the 16 hour bus trip to Havana.

I joined with Cuban friends in rotating six hour apagones every day in both cities. I heard deep unhappiness with the situation of daily life, including the concerning and unexpected words "Hay Hambre". I did not see a country on the verge of collapse, but I did hear many calls for major reforms.

Hopefully this summary and excerpts from my paper will be useful to finding a positive way forward for both our countries.

Appendix IV



Cora Weiss, Kevin Bowen (in absentia) and John McAuliff receive Viet Nam's national Medal of Friendship from General Secretary and then President To Lam in New York two days before his visit to Cuba.¹⁸

This paper was shared with and corrected by Vietnamese friends. However, the contents and conclusions are entirely my own. -- John McAuliff

¹⁸ <https://vnpeacecomm.blogspot.com/2024/12/medal-of-friendship-for-bowen-weiss-and.html>