

## **Vietnam a priority in China's policy of neighborhood diplomacy: Premier**

China consistently considers its relationship with Vietnam a priority in its policy of neighborhood diplomacy, said Chinese Premier Li Qiang at a meeting with visiting Vietnamese Party General Secretary and President To Lam in Beijing on August 19.

Welcoming Lam on his first state visit to China, which is also his first overseas trip in his new role as General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam Central Committee, Li said that the visit reflects the high importance and top priority that the Vietnamese Party and State place on the bilateral relationship.

He believed it will provide a strong impetus for the comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership and the Vietnam-China community with a shared future to enter a new phase with more substantive outcomes.

The Chinese Party and Government remain steadfast in supporting Vietnam to comprehensively promote its reform, accelerate industrialisation and modernisation, and successfully build socialism suited to Vietnam's conditions, he said.

Lam, for his part, stressed that his visit aims to build upon the high regard that the Party and State, and generations of leaders of Vietnam, including late Party General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong, have given to the Vietnam-China relationship.

Vietnam always considers the development of friendly neighbourliness and comprehensive cooperation with China a consistent policy, a strategic choice, and a top priority in its foreign policy of independence, self-reliance, multilateralisation and diversification of external relations, he said.

The country will continue upholding the significant achievements and common perceptions reached by high-ranking leaders of both sides to elevate the comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership and build the Vietnam-China community with a shared future that carries strategic significance.

Lam congratulated China on its great achievements in reform and opening-up, the successful realisation of the first centenary goal and the completion of over 300 comprehensive reform measures adopted at the third plenary session of the 18th Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, and the successful organisation of the third plenum of the 20th CPC Central Committee.

Both sides expressed pleasure that the relationship between the two Parties and countries has reached a historic development to the most intensive, comprehensive and substantive level ever seen, with significant results such as reinforced political trust, elevated relationship, regularly maintained exchanges and contact at all levels, thriving trade collaboration, strongly growing Chinese investments in Vietnam, strong tourism recovery, and enhanced locality-to-locality cooperation and people-to-people exchange.

Holding that the two countries boast huge potential for cooperation, the two leaders agreed to make joint efforts to bolster political and economic confidence, effectively build the Vietnam-China community with a shared future that carries strategic significance, taking the bilateral ties to a new development

period in the direction of the "six major orientations", maintain regular contact at all levels, and promote exchanges and cooperation via Party, Government, National Assembly/National People's Congress, and Fatherland Front/People's Political Consultative Conference channels.

They concurred to expand cooperation in such key areas as foreign affairs, defence and security, enhance substantive collaboration to carve out further achievements, step up locality-to-locality connection and people-to-people exchange, well arrange activities to mark the 75th anniversary of the diplomatic relations, consolidate a solid social foundation, create new motives for the development of the bilateral ties, and maintain close coordination and cooperation as well as support each other at multilateral forums and mechanisms.

Party General Secretary and President Lam welcomed China's engagement in developing three standard-gauge railway projects that connect the two nations, the Vientiane – Vung Ang railway, and the metro system in Hanoi. He went on to ask China to continue opening up its market for high-quality farm produce from Vietnam, and create favourable conditions for the country to set up its Consulate General in Chongqing, and trade promotion offices in China.

He also suggested China accelerate its large-scale and high-quality investment projects with modern technologies in Vietnam, soon pilot smart border gates, consider cooperation in payment in local currencies, and step up collaboration across the areas of science-technology, innovation, green transition, digital transformation and high-tech agriculture.

Lam also said that he hopes the two sides will boost cooperation in education, culture, tourism, and natural disaster prevention and mitigation, rescue and urgent response.

Agreeing with Lam, Li held that the two countries need to stay consistent with their cooperation structure and win-win development, expressed his readiness to maintain exchanges at all levels, promote the role of the China – Vietnam Steering Committee for Bilateral Cooperation in enhancing the bilateral relations following the "six major orientations", improve rail connection between Vietnam and Europe via China, accelerate the feasibility study of the Lao Cai – Hanoi - Hai Phong railway, make planning for the Dong Dang – Hanoi, and Mong Cai – Ha Long – Hai Phong railways, and facilitate Vietnamese high-quality agro-fishery products' entry into China.

He suggested both sides continue enhancing their neighbourliness and friendship, bolstering people-to-people exchange, implementing people's livelihood projects, working together in the fields of vocational training, and promoting the role of the Vietnam – China Friendship Palace. He laid stress on the persistence of the genuine multilateralism, and open regionalism, adding China stands ready for enhanced cooperation at multilateral forums.

The two sides also discussed regional and international issues of mutual concern. They agreed to jointly control and satisfactorily settle disagreements, maintain peace and stability at sea, and consolidate a favourable environment for the development of each nation.

Lam suggested the two countries seriously carry out the high-level common perceptions, and the

Vietnam-China agreement on basic principles guiding the settlement of sea-related issues, respect international law, particularly the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (1982 UNCLOS), respect each other's legitimate rights and interests, promote the efficacy of the negotiation mechanisms on the sea-related issues, satisfactorily handle issues relating to fishing vessels and fishermen, well control the situation at sea, and maintain the stable, positive development momentum of the bilateral ties, as well as peace and stability in the region.

### **Top leaders of Vietnam, China hold talks in Beijing**

Vietnam's Communist Party General Secretary and President To Lam held talks with China's Communist Party General Secretary and President Xi Jinping in Beijing on Monday.

Welcoming Lam, his spouse, and a high-ranking delegation of the Vietnamese Party and State on a state visit to China, Xi congratulated his guest on being elected as General Secretary of the Communist Party Central Committee and President of Vietnam.

He once again offered deep condolences over the passing of Party General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong, appreciating the deceased's enormous and significant contributions to the revolutionary cause of Vietnam, the China-Vietnam relations, as well as the development of socialism around the world.

Xi expressed his belief that the Vietnamese Party and State will continue upholding Party General Secretary Trong's legacy to obtain even greater achievements on the path of *Doi moi* (Renewal) and socialism building.

The Chinese leader emphasized that the first state visit to China and also the first overseas trip by Lam as the top leader of the Vietnamese Party and State holds extreme significance as it reflects the great importance and top priority that both Parties and countries give to the Vietnam - China ties.

It is now an important point of time for the two countries to elevate the bilateral relations to a new height that is more intensive and practical in all aspects, he remarked, stressing that Vietnam is a priority in China's foreign policy and that China supports Vietnam's perseverance in the Party's leadership and promotion of the socialism building.

On behalf of the Vietnamese Party, State, and people, Party General Secretary and President Lam thanked the China's Party Central Committee for sending condolences and holding many special acts over the passing of General Secretary Trong. He considered the moves a strong demonstration of the height of the two Parties and two countries' relations, along with Xi's special sentiments towards the late leader.

Party General Secretary and President Lam noted that he hopes to join hands with General Secretary and President Xi along with other high-ranking leaders of the Chinese Party and State to continue nurturing the traditional friendship and promoting the Vietnam - China comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership and a community of shared future that carries strategic significance.

He underlined that Vietnam always attaches importance to and give the top priority to the friendly neighborliness, the comprehensive strategic cooperative partnership, and the community of shared future that carries strategic significance with China.

The Vietnamese leader also affirmed the wish to work with his counterpart and other high-ranking leaders of China to inherit and well bring into play the long-standing friendship between the two Parties and the two countries, and bring the bilateral ties to a new stage of increasingly stable, sustainable, and long-term development. At the talks, the two leaders discussed the situation of each Party, each country, as well as the ties between the two Parties and the two countries.

They noted with satisfaction that the relations between the two Parties and the two countries, especially since the historic mutual visits by their top Party leaders in 2022 and 2023, have sustained the development trend with many bright spots recorded as in line with the six major orientations, namely higher political trust, more practical and deeper defense - security cooperation, more solid social foundation, closer multilateral coordination, and better control and settlement of differences.

Lam stated that amidst complicated and unpredictable developments in the world and the region, Vietnam stays steadfast in its foreign policy of independence, self-reliance, peace, friendship, cooperation and development, and diversification and multilateralisation of external relations, and persists with the "four no's" defense policy.

Xi strongly affirmed that China persists with its policy of friendship with Vietnam and always considers Vietnam a priority direction and strategic choice in its neighborhood diplomacy policy.

The leaders had an in-depth discussion on major orientations to strengthen trust, reinforce friendship and enhance substantive cooperation between the two sides across all fields, maintain peace and stability at sea, and ensure the healthy, stable and sustainable development of the Vietnam-China relations following the "16-word" motto and the "four-good" spirit.

They reached high consensus on promoting political trust, maintaining regular exchanges and meetings among high-level leaders of the two Parties and countries, attaching importance to the strategically guiding role of the Party channel for the overall bilateral relations, and continuing to deepen theory cooperation through mechanisms such as theory conference between the two Parties, sharing with each other the latest theoretical and practical achievements recorded by each Party and country in a timely manner, contributing to the cause of each Party and country.

The leaders underlined the significance of strengthening and promoting practical cooperation areas. Accordingly, they concurred to continue bolstering collaboration in security and defense, boosting economic, trade and investment cooperation, including the promotion of connectivity under the "two corridors, one belt," "belt and road" initiatives, fostering railway and road infrastructure connections, strengthening cooperation in supply chain as well as economic cooperation among border localities, and increasing exchanges in the reform of state-owned enterprises.

Lam suggested that the two sides strengthen cooperation in constructing major and symbolic works to match their political trust, demonstrating the advanced science-technology development of China. He asked for China's support in soft loans, technology transfer, human resources training, and high-quality investment in key transport infrastructure projects of Vietnam, as well as China's increase of investment cooperation in areas where China has many advantages such as green economy and digital economy.

Xi pledged that China is ready to increase imports of Vietnamese agricultural products, expand Vietnamese trade promotion offices in China, and provide favorable conditions for high-quality farm produce of Vietnam to reach its market.

Underlining that the two sides are heading to the celebration of the 75th anniversary of bilateral diplomatic relations in 2025, the top Vietnamese and Chinese leaders agreed on the necessity of further enhancing people-to-people exchanges, promoting mutual understanding and friendship sentiments between the two countries' people, especially the youth. They agreed to designate 2025 as the "Year for Vietnam-China Humanistic Exchange".

The leaders also discussed international and regional issues of shared concern, stressing the coordination and mutual support at multilateral forums and international mechanisms on the foundation of the legitimate interest of the two countries, making positive contributions to the common interests of the international community.

Regarding issues at sea, the two sides had a sincere and straightforward discussion and agreed to effectively implement reached high-level perceptions, working hard to better control and settle differences.

Lam proposed that the two sides respect each other's legitimate interests, settling disagreements through peaceful measures in line with the UN Charter and international law, including the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), seriously and fully realizing the Declaration on Code of Conducts of Parties in the East Sea (DOC) and working for a substantive and effective Code of Conduct of Parties in the East Sea (COC) in accordance with international law and the 1982 UNCLOS.

Lam took the occasion to invite Xi to soon visit Vietnam. The latter accepted the invitation with pleasure.

Concluding the talks, Lam and Xi witnessed the signing of cooperation documents between ministries, agencies and localities of the two sides across areas of Party school affairs, import-export of agricultural products, radio and television, press and communications, health care, infrastructure, economy, trade, industry, and banking.

Following the talks, the Chinese leader treated his Vietnamese counterpart to a tea party, a special form of contact maintained during many high-level visits in recent years between the top leaders of the two Parties and countries, demonstrating the respect and spirit of "comradeship and brotherhood" between them.

In a fancy, cozy and friendly atmosphere, the two leaders reviewed the tradition of friendship between the two Parties and countries, talked about tea culture in the customs and practices of each country, re-evaluated the common perceptions just reached at their talks, and emphasized the importance of lifting bilateral relations to a new height.

### **Party General Secretary, President To Lam to pay state visit to China**

Vietnam's Communist Party General Secretary and State President To Lam and his spouse will pay a state visit to China from Aug. 18 – 20, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has announced.

The visit will be made at the invitation of China's Party General Secretary and President Xi Jinping.

Xi sent congratulations to To Lam on his election as Vietnam's Party General Secretary on Aug. 3, saying that under the steadfast leadership of the Vietnam's Party Central Committee, the Party and people of Vietnam will successfully realize the objectives and tasks set forth by the 13th National Congress.

"I am ready to join Comrade General Secretary To Lam in leading the building of an increasingly substantial and in-depth China-Vietnam Community with a shared future, jointly promoting the traditional friendship, consolidating political trust, deepening strategic exchanges, boosting substantive cooperation, bringing more happiness to the peoples of the two countries, and actively contributing to the cause of peace and progress of the mankind," Xi said in his letter.

During Xi's visit to Vietnam last December, the two countries named six focused directions for developing the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, including enhanced strategic exchanges and exchanges at different levels, utilizing the important role of the security-defense cooperation pillar, and strategic infrastructure connectivity.

China is Vietnam's largest trade partner and second largest export market for many years, while Vietnam is China's largest partner in ASEAN and fifth largest partner in the world after the U.S., Japan, South Korea and Russia. Bilateral trade between Vietnam and China reached US\$171.9 billion last year, and rose 24.1% year on year in the first half.

### **Foreign leaders congratulate Party General Secretary To Lam**

Leaders of Laos, China, Cambodia and Russia on Saturday congratulated Vietnamese President To Lam on his election as Party General Secretary.

The Lao leader's congratulatory letter said: "On behalf of the Central Committee of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party and myself, I am honored and delighted to extend the warmest congratulations to Comrade on your election as General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam."

He said he believes that under the Vietnamese Party leadership, headed by General Secretary To Lam, Vietnamese people will achieve greater accomplishments in the cause of renewal and fulfill the goal of building Vietnam into a modernity-oriented industrialized country that is strong, just, democratic, and civilized and ultimately becoming a socialist-orientated developed country.

He affirmed his commitment to stand with Vietnamese Party and State leaders to continue strengthening and nurturing the Laos and Vietnam's friendship, special solidarity, and comprehensive cooperation in a more intensive and effective way in all areas to bring practical benefits to the people of both countries as well as contributing to peace, stability, cooperation, and development in the region and the world.

China's Party General Secretary and President Xi Jinping also sent congratulations, saying that under the steadfast leadership of the Vietnam's Party Central Committee, the Party and people of Vietnam will successfully realize the objectives and tasks set forth by the 13th National Congress.

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Cambodian King Norodom Sihamoni sent a congratulation message, expressing his firm belief that under To Lam's leadership, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam will reap many great achievements, develop rapidly in all fields, and maintain the country's important role in the region and the world.

"I believe that the relations between the peoples of Vietnam and Cambodia will continue to become closer and maintain peace, stability, bilateral friendly cooperation, solidarity and development," the Cambodian King stated.

President of the Cambodian People's Party Hun Sen said in his message of congratulations that "Comrade To Lam's election as General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam demonstrates the trust of the Communist Party of Vietnam and the entire Vietnamese people in his capabilities and sound leadership."

He said he believes that under To Lam's leadership, the Communist Party of Vietnam will continue to achieve its goals, ensure political stability and socio-economic development, and maintain peace, stability and prosperity of Vietnam and the region.

He also believes that the traditional friendship, solidarity, and close cooperation between the two Parties will be further deepened for the benefit of the two nations and people, the Cambodian leader said.

Russian President Vladimir Putin held that the results of the Vietnamese Party Central Committee's meeting fully affirms To Lam's high political prestige, proving his contributions in ensuring socio-economic development and raising the country's position in the international arena.

"We highly value your efforts in consolidating the comprehensive strategic partnership between our two countries. I hope that there will be more constructive dialogues and coordination on pressing issues on the bilateral and international agenda. This will certainly meet the core interests of the friendly peoples of Russia and Vietnam, contributing to firmly strengthening security and stability in the Asia-Pacific," the Russian president wrote.

Vietnam's President To Lam, 67, won 100% votes to be elected the Party General Secretary for the 2021-2026 term by the 13th Party Central Committee at a meeting on Saturday.

He is a member of the Party Central Committee for the 11th, 12th, and 13th terms (from January 2011 until now); a member of the Politburo for the 12th and 13th terms (from January 2016 until now); and a National Assembly delegate for the 14th and 15th tenures.

In early 2019, he was promoted by General Secretary and President Nguyen Phu Trong to the rank of general, becoming the fourth person in the history of Vietnamese People's Public Security to hold the highest military rank.

On May 22, when he was Minister of Public Security, To Lam was elected state president for the 2021-2026 term by the National Assembly.

#### **President To Lam to pay state visits to Laos, Cambodia**

Vietnamese President To Lam will pay state visits to Laos and Cambodia from July 11-13, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has announced.

The visits will be made at the invitations of General Secretary of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party Central Committee and President of Laos Thongloun Sisoulith, and Cambodian King Preah Bat Samdech Preah Boromneath Norodom Sihamoni.

This is the first foreign trip of President To Lam in his new position since May 2024.

Vietnam and Laos established diplomatic relations in 1962.

Bilateral trade in the first quarter of 2024 reached US\$476.8 million, an increase of 12% over the same period in 2023.

Vietnam currently has 245 investment projects in Laos with a total registered capital of \$5.5 billion.

Vietnam and Cambodia established diplomatic relations in 1967. Trade cooperation is a bright spot in the two countries' relationship with trade turnover in the first three months of 2024 reaching nearly \$3 billion, up 14% over the same period last year.

Vietnam currently has 205 valid investment projects in Cambodia with a total registered capital of \$2.94 billion, ranking first in ASEAN and in the group of five countries with the largest direct investment in Cambodia.

Cambodia ranks second among 79 countries and territories in which Vietnam has invested abroad.

### **Foreign leaders send congratulations to new Vietnamese president**

Leaders of Laos, China and Cambodia have sent their congratulations to To Lam on his fresh election as president of Vietnam.

Lao Party General Secretary and President Thongloun Sisoulith expressed great excitement and warm congratulations to Lam, with a belief that the election reflects the trust and esteem that the Party, State, and people of Vietnam give to him.

The Lao leader expressed his delight in working with the Vietnamese president to nurture the great friendship, special solidarity, and comprehensive cooperation between the two countries' Parties, States, and people. He also expressed his confidence that with the level of competence and rich experience accumulated over many years in various important positions, Lam, along with other Vietnamese leaders, will lead the country and its people to achieve even greater accomplishments in the cause of national construction and protection.

Chinese President Xi Jinping expressed his joy at the news and emphasized that Vietnam and China are friendly socialist neighbors sharing mountains and rivers.

He recalled his state visit to Vietnam, during which, he and Party General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong declared the establishment of a Vietnam-China community with a shared future that carries strategic significance, opening a new chapter in the bilateral relations. He said he is pleased to see the positive progress made by the countries' various sectors and localities in promoting this partnership.

Affirming the utmost importance attached to the Vietnam-China relationship, the Chinese leader said he is ready to work with the Vietnamese president to maintain strategic exchanges and lead the building of the Vietnam-China community with a shared future in a deeper and more practical manner, bringing



greater benefits to their people. He wished Vietnam prosperity and happiness, and Lam greater achievements in his new position.

King of Cambodia Norodom Sihamoni expressed his belief that under the leadership of President Lam, Vietnam will achieve great success and rapid developments in all fields, and maintain its important role in the region and the world.

The monarch said he hopes the bonds between the people of the two countries will grow stronger for peace, stability, cooperation and development.

### **President To Lam becomes Vietnam's Party General Secretary**

President To Lam won 100% votes to be elected the Communist Party's General Secretary for the 2021-2026 term by the 13th Party Central Committee at a meeting on Saturday.

A press statement released by the Central Party Committee Office after the conference said that based on the Party's regulations and the Politburo's personnel nomination orientation, the Party Central Committee had a democratic discussion and reached a very high consensus with 100% votes to elect To Lam, a Politburo member and State President, to the position of General Secretary of the 13th Party Central Committee.

Speaking after taking office, General Secretary, President To Lam affirmed to inherit and promote the revolutionary achievements that late General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong and previous generations of leaders had built.

He vowed to maintain solidarity, unity and together with the Party Central Committee, the Politburo, and the Secretariat, "to resolutely lead and direct the entire Party, the people, and the army to accomplish the goals and tasks set by the 13th National Party Congress, successfully organize the 14th Congress, and advance the country's development in the new period."

Earlier, the Politburo had assigned President To Lam to manage the workload of the Party Central Committee, the Politburo and the Secretariat.

General To Lam, then Minister of Public Security, was elected state president for the 2021-2026 term by the National Assembly on May 22.

As president, he made his first foreign trip to Laos and Cambodia last month, emphasizing the "highest priority" in relations with the two neighbors.

He also presided over the state-level welcoming ceremony for Russian President Vladimir Putin at the Presidential Palace in June, with 21 gun salutes. The two presidents held talks and witnessed the signing of 11 documents, including a plan to implement a project to build a nuclear science and technology research center in Vietnam.

To Lam, 67, is from Van Giang District of the northern Hung Yen Province. He is a law professor with a PhD degree.

He is a member of the Party Central Committee for the 11th, 12th, and 13th terms (from January 2011 until now); a member of the Politburo for the 12th and 13th terms (from January 2016 until now); and a National Assembly delegate for the 14th and 15th tenures.

He began his career in 1979 at the Directorate for Political Protection I of the General Department of Security under the Ministry of Public Security, then serving as its deputy director and director.

In 2010, he was appointed to be the General Director of the General Department of Security 1.

He became Deputy Minister of Public Security in August 2010, and Minister of Public Security in April 2016.

In early 2019, To Lam was promoted by General Secretary and President Nguyen Phu Trong to the rank of general, becoming the fourth person in the history of Vietnamese People's Public Security to hold the highest military rank.

He left the minister post to become president on May 22.

The General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam is the highest position in the Party. The Party Central Committee is authorized to elect the Politburo and the General Secretary from among the Politburo members.

According to the Politburo's regulation 214, the General Secretary must fully ensure the general standards of members of the Politburo and the Secretariat, and need to have the following qualities and abilities: Having high reputation in the Central Committee and the Politburo, throughout the Party and the people; is the center of solidarity to gather and promote the combined strength of the entire political system, the Party, the people and the strength of the era to successfully carry out the two strategic tasks of building and protecting the Fatherland, with the goal of building a strong, democratic, fair and civilized country and making its people rich.

The General Secretary must have experienced and successfully completed tasks as secretary of the provincial or city party committee or head of a central department, ministry or branch; having joined the Politburo for a full term or more. Special cases are decided by the Party Central Committee.