

# Hanoi is planning for a 2nd American invasion

US policy heightening tensions and fueling repression

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# INTRODUCTION

As Vietnam celebrated the 50th anniversary of national unification, its military planners were busy preparing for a second invasion by the United States and its allies. A Secret Vietnamese navy plan (the 2nd US Invasion Plan) obtained by Project88 reveals that, far from seeing the US as a partner on par with China and Russia, Hanoi views Washington as a 'belligerent' superpower that invades countries which 'deviate from its orbit' (p.1).<sup>1</sup> The plan states:

While there is currently little risk of a war against Vietnam, due to the US's belligerent nature, we need to be vigilant to prevent the US and its allies from "creating a pretext" to launch a war of aggression against our country. The US and its allies could fully exploit the geographic and natural features of Vietnam's vast seas and long coastlines, with the superior strength of its navy, to conduct military operations against our country (p.6).

Issued in August 2024, the Second US Invasion Plan offers the most privileged view yet into Hanoi's perspective on the US–China rivalry. Hanoi wants no part of any China containment strategy, and it views Washington's promotion of "freedom and democracy" as a cynical ploy to maintain US hegemony in the region. Instead of being emboldened by US strategy, Hanoi's military brass are alarmed that Washington is encircling China with a network of bases and alliances that might be used to strike Vietnam. Neither is President Trump seen as a reliable partner. Rather, the plan singles him out for 'deploying military power, inciting an arms race, and expanding the export market for US military equipment and technology' (p.3).

The plan envisages a scenario where the US and its allies 'invade or militarily intervene in Vietnam', when Hanoi fails to join their 'plan to encircle and contain China' (p.6). It even speculates that, if this intervention fails, 'the US may use biochemical and tactical nuclear weapons' against Vietnam (p.13). The document concludes by calling for Vietnam's military to revise its combat plans to prepare for such contingencies.

The 2nd US Invasion Plan reveals that Vietnam lends no credence to official US proclamations about respecting Vietnam's political system. Instead, Vietnam's military planners believe that the US is actively seeking regime change under the cloak of promoting human rights and democracy. According to the plan:

The US sees Vietnam as a partner and an important link in its Indo-Pacific strategy, as well as an ally in its plan to encircle and contain China from the East Sea. At the same time, the US wants to use increased cooperation with Vietnam to spread and impose its values regarding freedom, democracy, human rights, ethnicity, and religion, thereby gradually changing the socialist regime of our country. Thus, when the US fails to accomplish its aims, it may take advantage of these issues, alongside the use diplomatic and economic tricks, and above all invade or militarily intervene in Vietnam. (p.6)

Accordingly, Hanoi sees Washington as an existential threat and has no intention of joining its anti-China alliance. In this respect the plan upends over a decade of US policy, which has sought to court Vietnam into such an alliance, while turning a blind eye to human rights abuses in service of this goal.

Project88 obtained the plan from a source that has provided reliable information in the past. Although we were unable to verify the text of the plan, we did independently verify that the plan exists. Previous leaks published by Project88, such as the classified Political Bureau Directive 24, have been widely reported on by leading media organizations, such as the BBC, NPR, and the Washington Post, and have informed assessments by the US Department of Commerce and the United Nations Human Rights Committee.<sup>2</sup>

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# HANOI'S ANALYSIS OF US STRATEGY

The 2nd US Invasion Plan (357/KH-BTL), was issued on Aug. 1, 2024 by Vietnam's Navy under the Ministry of Defense. It was signed Vice Admiral Tran Thanh Nghiem and certified by Rear Admiral Vu Van Nam.

The plan is divided into two sections. The first section provides a detailed overview of the Asia-Pacific's strategic importance and the US response to China's rise, while the second describes US militarization of the Asia-Pacific region and outlines various scenarios involving US-led amphibious assaults on Vietnam.

Discussing US strategy for the region, the plan details how 'the US has shifted from a "pivot to Asia" (2011) policy characterized by "unilateral action", to an "Indo-Pacific" strategy (2017, 2022), which emphasizes "collective action" based on coordination and shared interests with allies and partners in and outside the region' (p.2). The plan depicts the Obama administration as pursuing a more restrained policy of seeking to limit China's influence.

Biden's version of the same policy is then described as resting on four pillars: security; economics and trade; politics and diplomacy; and the involvement of the EU and NATO. The security pillar took the US-Japan alliance as its core, while also forming new security arrangements (such as the SQUAD) and increasing the US military presence in the Western Pacific (p.3). Other aspects of this pillar include strengthening Taiwan's defense, securing access to additional bases in the Philippines, and building security ties between Asian allies and NATO with a view to establishing a shared military command for multinational operations (pp.3-4).

The economic dimension of Biden's strategy is described as an effort to turn the 'Asia-Pacific region into a Western-style liberalized economic bloc [that] serves as a market for US and Allies' vehicles, high-tech equipment, and weapons' (p. 4). The plan states

that, 'by guaranteeing the security of economic corridors and international shipping routes, they [the US and its allies] plan to gradually sever China's supply chains and narrow its market access' (p.4). As such, the plan clarifies that Hanoi does not view the US's economic agenda as a partnership among equals, but rather as an attempt by the US to render the region economically dependent on it.

With regards to politics and diplomacy, the plan asserts that the US has moved from a Cold War mentality of containing countries 'with different ambitions', to building relationships whose chief objective is to 'form a front against China'. This strategy involves using political, diplomatic, and media pressure as 'instruments of influence', and exploiting disputes between Taiwan, ASEAN, and China (p.4).

The plan envisions the United States convening regional and international allies to support these countries and forging blocs in preparation for a possible multipolar confrontation. In sum, the plan depicts the US as exploiting tensions between Southeast Asian countries and China to increase its own power in the region.

Finally, regarding European and NATO allies, the plan states that 'the US has rallied key members, including the UK, France, Germany, the Netherlands, and Canada, to join a "common action policy"' (p.4). This initiative is described as strengthening economic, trade, and defense ties with the Asia-Pacific by maintaining a naval presence in areas like the Taiwan Strait and the East Sea. The dividend for "'former Western colonial countries'", is that by follow[ing] the US [...]they [...]are able] to regain the influence they lost centuries ago' (p.4).

In contrast to the policies of Obama and Biden, the plan considers the first Trump administration to have taken a more combative stance, whose 'chief objective' was: 'to deploy military power, incite an arms race, and expand the export market for US military equipment and technology' (p.3).

Overall, Hanoi sees the Indo-Pacific Strategy as an attempt by the US empire to limit China's influence by increasing its military presence and expanding its alliance system in the region. The plan does not express any interest in expanding Vietnam's military cooperation with the United States. Instead, US anti-China military alliances are portrayed as a threat to Vietnam as well. Consequently, the plan is evidence that Vietnam is taking seriously its stated support for China's vision of a 'community of shared future'. This vision, as articulated by Xi Jinping in an article published by the Communist Party of Vietnam's (CPV) mouthpiece, involves 'Asia's future [...being] in the hands of no one but Asians'.<sup>3</sup>

## THE VIEW FROM HANOI: ENCIRCLEMENT AND INVASION

After laying out the Asia-Pacific's strategic importance and the US response to China's rise, the 2nd Invasion Plan details how the US has militarized the Asia-Pacific region since 2011. Drawing on assessments from the General Department of Defense Intelligence [Tổng Cục 2], the plan describes how the US has encircled both China and Vietnam with a network of hostile bases. It meticulously details US military assets in the region, including bombers, spy planes, missiles, and aircraft carrier groups. Specifically, it states:

Regarding the presence of forces: The Air Force rotates B-2 and B-52 bombers to bases like Diego Garcia and Guam, deploys MQ-4C reconnaissance UAVs to Okinawa, and field tested surveillance radars and SM-6 missiles (500-2,700 km range) in the Philippines during the 2024 Balikatan exercises. The Navy has 65% of its forces under Pacific Fleet Command, with an additional aircraft carrier group (sometimes two) rotated since 2017, deploying F-35B/C and F/A-18E/F jets on carriers and landing craft for enhanced training. Additionally, a steady deterrent against the Chinese navy is maintained by deploying five nuclear submarines, three cruisers, 8-10 destroyers, and 3-5 littoral combat ships in coordination with allied forces (p.5).

The next section of the plan imagines scenarios for the use of these assets in an amphibious assault on Vietnam. This section is divided into three parts: (1) general approach to carry out and legitimize an invasion and US military capabilities, (2) combat forces that would likely be used in an invasion, and (3) the potential deployment of US and allied forces in a naval invasion of Vietnam. Each of these sections are summarized below.

The first part explains how the US has ginned up support for invasions in the past and the tactics Vietnam expects the US to use in the event of a naval invasion. Discussing US military capabilities (pp.6-7), the plan provides an overview of the weapons the US would likely deploy, which include satellites, robots, drones, and anti-drone systems.

The second part anticipates 'force employment for a seaborne invasion' (pp.10-12). Here, it provides a count of US troops in nearby countries, including Japan, South Korea, Australia, and elsewhere in Southeast Asia, as well as a count of all recent training exercises by the US in the region, indicating that Vietnam is keeping a watchful eye on the military's movements. The plan also provides an overview of military bases that could be used by the US to support combat operations and logistics during a maritime invasion of Vietnam, as well as an assessment of how quickly the US could deploy forces and how long it could support those troops logistically.

Under the heading 'amphibious landing phase' (p.12) we are told that the US is likely to attack before launching a full-scale invasion. The plan anticipates that in this attack the US would use tomahawk missiles, JDAM smart bombs, ship artillery, and armed helicopters. It also provides an overview of US maritime invasion tactics, including maritime reconnaissance and combat strategy, and even speculates that, if the invasion fails, the US might use biochemical or nuclear weapons against Vietnam.

The third part of this section envisions the deployment by the US of 2-3 Expeditionary Combat Force Groups for a naval invasion of Vietnam, primarily using Navy and Marine Corps assets, supported by infantry, mechanized infantry, strategic bombers, and allied navies. The plan anticipates that key components of such an invasion would include:

- 2-3 aircraft carrier groups for landing assaults.
- 2-3 strike groups (submarines, cruisers, destroyers).
- 3-4 division-level landing units (centered on 3-4 Marine brigades).
- Allied navies participating in secondary attacks, escorting transport ships, logistics, and troop transfers.

The detailed character of the plan underscores the gravity with which Vietnam's military strategists regard the US threat. The 2nd US Invasion Plan reveals that Vietnam is closely monitoring US military deployments in the region and preparing specific plans to counter an actual invasion.

## SIGNIFICANCE

The Second US Invasion Plan offers the most authoritative insight yet into Hanoi's perspective on the US-China rivalry. It shows that beyond Hanoi's rhetoric about a "multi-directional foreign policy", Vietnam has developed foreign policy positions that it has not made public. Such positions include:

- The US is the enemy.
- The Indo-Pacific Strategy represents an attempt to maintain US hegemony.
- Washington is using human rights and democracy promotion to weaken the CPV regime.
- China is a rival, not an existential threat, to Vietnam.

In the following section, each of these positions are summarized in turn.

## **THE US IS THE ENEMY**

Hanoi continues to view the United States as a hostile threat. Far from considering the US to be a strategic partner on par with China, Hanoi considers it a rogue state that is preoccupied with regime change and which might invade Vietnam if the country refuses to join its anti-China coalition. The source of this threat, we are told, is US intolerance of countries that 'deviate from its orbit'. In other words, Hanoi anticipates that the US may respond militarily to any country pursuing a foreign policy that does not conform to its expectations. As stated in the plan:

While there is currently little risk of a war against Vietnam, due to the US's belligerent nature, we need to be vigilant to prevent the US and its allies from "creating a pretext" to launch an invasion of our country at different scales. The US and its allies could fully exploit the geographic and natural features of Vietnam's vast seas and long coastlines, with the superior strength of its Navy, to conduct military operations against our country (p.6).

Another military intelligence assessment acquired by Project88 corroborates this view. That document, issued in 2023, provides an evaluation of the activities of foreign intelligence agencies in Vietnam.<sup>4</sup> US agencies are described as working to overthrow the CPV. Specifically, the document states:

To carry out the plot to eliminate the leadership role of the Communist Party of Vietnam and overthrow the socialist regime of Vietnam, US intelligence agencies will use any means to achieve a political transformation (p.1).

The assessment goes on to describe how US intelligence agencies are trying to enlist Vietnam to join US military activities in the region:

In the field of national defense and security, US intelligence agencies have increased military intelligence gathering through such public activities as: diplomatic contacts with individuals and units in the military; pushing Vietnam to expand the scope and

fields of bilateral and multilateral defense cooperation to enlist Vietnam to participate in US military institutions in the region; increase the US military presence through military ship repair activities; and humanitarian assistance programs, which aim to improve the Vietnamese people's perception of the US military (pp.1-2).

Other classified military assessments viewed by Project88 warn that '[r]ecently on cyberspace, the US has stepped up its psychological warfare activities to destabilize our country's political system' while carrying out 'campaigns to spread malware and spyware, to build and strengthen systems of ghost computer networks to scan, exploit, surveil, and infiltrate our cyber infrastructure in key provinces' (p.1).<sup>5</sup> Such assessments demonstrate that Vietnam's military believes that the US government and its intelligence agencies are working to overthrow the CPV, while attempting to expand its military presence in the country.

Vietnam's suspicion of the US extends beyond the military, a fact made evident by recent official government policies designed to prevent "color revolutions" and "peaceful evolution". Color Revolution refers to Western-backed, anti-government protests, and is based on interpretations of Georgia's 'Rose' (2003), Ukraine's 'Orange' (2004) and Kyrgyzstan's 'Tulip' (2005) revolutions. 'Peaceful Evolution' is an older security framework first articulated by Mao Zedong in the 1960s. A reaction to US Secretary of State John Foster Dulles' statements about defeating communism through non-military means, Mao conceptualized 'Peaceful Evolution' as a strategy of exploiting internal contradictions within socialist societies to turn party members against the Revolutionary cause.

In 2020, just three years before Vietnam upgraded diplomatic relations with the US, Prime Minister Nguyễn Xuân Phúc approved the Project to Prevent and Deter Color Revolutions. The aim of the project is to stop efforts by the US and the West to overthrow the CPV.<sup>6</sup> An implementation report from the Internal Security Division of the Ministry of Public Security, which oversees the project, states that:

"Peaceful evolution" and promoting "color revolutions" are the basic, long-term strategies of hostile forces, led by the US and the West, to overthrow Vietnam's socialist regime and eliminate the leadership role of the Communist Party of Vietnam (p.1).<sup>7</sup>

Importantly, the project is not a hobby horse of the security services, but rather a government-wide initiative. In other words, every ministry of Vietnam's government is actively working to prevent the US and its allies from fomenting a color revolution in the country. The existence of the Project to Prevent Color Revolutions, as with the 2nd US Invasion Plan, highlights how, despite the recent upgrade in formal diplomatic relations, Hanoi continues to view the United States as the primary threat to Vietnam's national security.

### **US STRATEGY IS ABOUT MAINTAINING HEGEMONY**

Hanoi does not welcome the US presence in the region or view it as an equal partnership between countries. It views it as a provocation that increases tensions and risks war. The 2nd US Invasion Plan describes how the US is engaging in a military buildup, while expanding its alliance system and turning it against China.

The goals of the US's Indo-Pacific Strategy, according to the plan, are to limit China's regional dominance, create a Western-aligned economic bloc, secure critical trade routes, and increase NATO and EU involvement in the region. This threatening posture, it goes on to note, intensified under President Trump's first term when his administration increased military deployments to the region and incited an arms race.

Nowhere does the plan describe Vietnam as being a partner of the US or as being aligned with its foreign policy. Rather, these efforts are presented as a dangerous push to militarize the region and drive it towards a new Cold War. Far from accepting Washington's rhetoric about promoting freedom and deterrence, the plan describes the Indo-Pacific Strategy as a threat to regional peace and stability. It also clarifies that from Hanoi's perspective, Washington's interest in Vietnam is purely instrumental: it sees the country as a tool that can be used to confront China.

While the 2nd US Invasion Plan contradicts the US Indo-Pacific strategy, it does bear a striking resemblance to China's foreign policy stance towards the US. Beijing's latest defense white paper —China's National Security in the New Era— warns of 'severe' security challenges amid an escalating arms race.<sup>8</sup> In a thinly-veiled reference to the US, the paper states that 'some countries' strengthened military alliances in the region, wooed regional partners, built 'small groups', and deployed military capabilities such as the 'intermediate-range missile system'. This language is mirrored by Vietnam in the 2nd US Invasion Plan.

On the economic front, the plan frames the United States' economic agenda as a cynical attempt to bring the region into its sphere of influence. In contrast to official US proclamations about promoting regional economic prosperity, the plan states that the US is seeking to turn the 'Asia-Pacific region into a Western-style liberalized economic bloc [that] serves as a market for US and Allies' vehicles, high-tech equipment, and weapons' (p.4).

Importantly, the plan does not describe Vietnam as an economic partner of the US or the West. Nor does it anticipate that the country will derive any benefit from the US economic agenda. Rather, the agenda is described as a neo-colonial economic project devoid of significant benefits for Vietnam and the region.

### **WASHINGTON USES HUMAN RIGHTS TO WEAKEN THE REGIME**

Hanoi believes Washington is instrumentalizing human rights and democracy in pursuit of regime change. Specifically, the plan states that: 'the US wants to use increased cooperation with Vietnam to spread and impose its values regarding freedom, democracy, human rights, ethnicity, and religion, thereby gradually changing the socialist regime of our country' (p.6).

The same military intelligence document cited above makes similar claims about France, accusing French intelligence agencies of working to overthrow the CPV. Specifically, the document states:

Although they do not oppose us fiercely, France's political plot against Vietnam has not changed. Like some countries in the EU, France considers human rights a priority in its foreign policy towards Vietnam. It continues to carry out the "peaceful evolution" plot to carry out regime change, eliminate the leadership role of the Communist Party of Vietnam, and gradually steer Vietnam toward the orbit of capitalist countries (p.4).

The document goes on to claim that:

French intelligence agencies, through cultural, scientific, technical, education, training, technology transfer activities, etc., take advantage of official activities to send special agents to infiltrate into our country to conduct intelligence collection, recruit spy networks, sabotage ideology, support and build political opposition organizations in the country (p.4).

France, which on Oct. 7, 2024 upgraded diplomatic relations with Vietnam, is viewed as pursuing a similar policy of regime change to that of the United States and, for this reason, is also identified as a threat to regime security.

As Project88 will document in a forthcoming report, such statements arise from changes in the CPV's regime security doctrine over the past four decades.<sup>9</sup> In the early 1980s, Hanoi identified China as a primary threat alongside the United States, but since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Vietnam has adopted Chinese analytical frameworks which identify peaceful evolution and color revolution as the key security threat, thereby positioning the two communist parties as natural allies against Western subversion and incursion.

The transformation of Vietnam's regime security policy transcends mere conceptual borrowing. Instead, it represents a fundamental realignment of Hanoi's strategic worldview to approximate Beijing's. This realignment was consummated during Xi Jinping's visit to Hanoi in 2023, when a formal intelligence sharing partnership to maintain regime security and prevent color revolutions in the two countries was announced, highlighting how the CCP (Communist Party of China) and CPV see their fates as intertwined.<sup>10</sup> Far from being a passive recipient of Chinese overtures,

Vietnam has actively sought Chinese protection. A classified military briefing document about Xi's visit viewed by Project88 reveals that the intelligence sharing partnership was proposed by Vietnam, not China.<sup>11</sup>

### **CHINA IS A RIVAL, NOT AN EXISTENTIAL THREAT**

In contrast with the alarming picture that the plan paints about the United States, China is not viewed as a regime security threat, but rather a rival. While the plan does state that the Asia-Pacific's 'risks more or less originate from China's influence' (p.2), at no point does it portray China as an existential threat to the CPV or as a potential invading force. Instead, it blames the US for regional instability due to the way it has exploited 'disagreements between China and the countries of India, South Korea, Japan, Australia, Taiwan, as well as others concerning disputes in the East Sea' (p.2).

Other classified military documents viewed by Project88 describe China as seeking to dominate the South China Sea and annex the Spratly Islands. These documents further support the idea that Vietnam views China as a rival in terms of maritime disputes, but not as a threat to regime security.

Vietnam's foreign policy positions toward China and the United States are clarified in the CPV's grand strategy. The CPV's 'Strategy to Protect the Fatherland in the New Situation', distinguishes between 'partners' [đối tác], which it defines as those who 'respect Vietnam's independence and sovereignty', and 'adversaries' [đối tượng] who 'scheme or act to undermine Vietnam's objectives of building and defending the Fatherland' (p.7).<sup>12</sup>

A guidance note on the resolution clarifies that the party sees a 'dialectical relationship between partners and adversaries', in which 'there may be aspects to leverage or cooperate with; within each partner, there may be contradictions with our interests that require struggle' (p.6).<sup>13</sup> This conceptual distinction between 'partners' and 'adversaries' has been misinterpreted by some commentators as evidence of CPV

'balancing' between Washington and Beijing.<sup>14</sup> Such an interpretation ignores how the framework establishes a hierarchy of adversaries, comprising three categories:<sup>15</sup>

- Category 1: 'any force that conspires or acts to wage a war of aggression against our country in any form'.
- Category 2: any force that conspires or acts to carry out 'peaceful evolution to incite subversive riots or armed unrest in our country'.
- Category 3: 'Any force that conspires and acts to infringe upon Vietnam's independence, sovereignty, unity, and territorial integrity, or to infringe on our national interests through armed or non-armed methods, whether from within or outside the country.' (pp.4-5).

When the plan is viewed in light of this hierarchy, it is evident that the United States belongs in a threat class all of its own. The 2nd US Invasion Plan demonstrates that Vietnam sees the US as occupying both categories 1 (conspiring to wage a war of aggression) and 2 (conspiring to carry out regime change), and therefore a more serious adversary than China, which is only 'encroaching on our borders, seas, and islands' (Category 3).

Hanoi employs ambiguous distinctions between 'adversaries' and 'partners' to encourage the misperception of formal neutrality in the Sino-US rivalry while privately identifying the US as its greatest enemy and national security threat.

## **US POLICY BASED ON FALSE ASSUMPTIONS**

In addition to revealing Hanoi's true positions on the US-China rivalry, the 2nd US Invasion Plan is also significant for the way it exposes the false premises of America's Vietnam policy. The view from Washington is that Vietnam can be courted to join an anti-China coalition. As former Deputy Secretary of State Kurt Campbell, architect of the Pivot to Asia, put it in 2021:

[Vietnam represents] a critical swing state [...] Even though we have different kinds of government, different overall values, I believe, fundamentally, the ability to work closely with Vietnam will be decisive for us going forward.<sup>16</sup>

The 2nd US Invasion Plan puts this idea to rest, making it clear that Vietnam does not consider itself a “battleground” state in the US-China rivalry. Neither, as a recent New York Times article suggested, is the US ‘losing’ Vietnam.<sup>17</sup> Hanoi has already made its bed with Beijing.

## **US MEDIA NARRATIVES**

While US officials have proclaimed that trust between the US and Vietnam is 'at an all-time high', the 2nd US Invasion Plan demonstrates that Hanoi remains deeply suspicious of Washington.<sup>18</sup> Although more nuanced media analyses acknowledge Vietnam's skepticism about US intentions, they dismiss it as either a fringe concern within the CPV or as less serious than its current tensions with China. From this perspective, the main roadblock to Hanoi achieving closer cooperation with Washington is its fear of upsetting its northern neighbor. By contrast, the 2nd US Invasion Plan demonstrates that Vietnam regards the US and its allies to be Vietnam's most serious national security threat, contradicting the widespread view that the country's relationship with the US is stronger than its relationship with China.

The plan also serves as a corrective for the steady stream of media reporting and upbeat assessments from leading security think tanks. This reporting has largely mirrored the official US position and adopted its guiding assumptions, such as the notion that Vietnam is open to joining an anti-China alliance, as established fact. The following examples, taken from leading media publications, illustrate how closely this reporting adheres to US policy:

- 'Vietnam's government, pressed by an ever more powerful China, knows it cannot stand up to Beijing alone and is cautiously moving toward increased ties with the United States' (New York Times, 2016).<sup>19</sup>

- 'The relationship [between Vietnam and China] has turned so bad that Vietnam's Communist Party is tilting more and more toward an old enemy, the United States' (Washington Post, 2015).<sup>20</sup>
- 'The country wants to reduce its dependence on China and forge closer ties with the United States' (Washington Post, 2015).<sup>21</sup>
- 'Vietnam's fierce rivalry with China often exceeds any lingering resentment against the United States, which is now seen as a crucial counterweight to Beijing's ambitions.' (Washington Post, 2017).<sup>22</sup>
- 'There was a call for an emergency meeting of the Communist Party's Central Committee to discuss forming an alliance with the United States — a radical strategic change for a country whose disdain for military partnerships is a central foreign policy tenet' (Washington Post, 2015).<sup>23</sup>
- 'A senior U.S. diplomat held talks in Vietnam on Saturday and said that the trust between the two countries was at an "all-time high"' (AP News, 2024).<sup>24</sup>

Respected security think tanks, which are often quoted by news outlets, including those above, have been even more optimistic in their assessment of the strength of the diplomatic ties between Vietnam and the US. The following are a few select examples:

- 'Vietnam, though it would not state so publicly to avoid unnecessarily antagonizing China, was an avid supporter of the Trump administration's Indo-Pacific strategy' (RAND, 2021).<sup>25</sup>
- 'Hanoi has emerged as one of Washington's closest partners in Southeast Asia and serves as a bulwark against Chinese expansion in the disputed South China Sea' (CSIS, 2024).<sup>26</sup>
- 'it remains indisputable that U.S.-Vietnamese ties are in their best shape since the end of the Vietnam war' (RAND, 2024).<sup>27</sup>
- 'But the real driver of the political relationship between Hanoi and Washington has been their shared vision of regional security. Vietnam shares U.S. anxieties about China's long-term revisionist intentions in Asia. Vietnam's public and its elites consistently rank China as an external threat and evince considerable support for the role of the United States and other partners, including the Quad, in the region' (CSIS, 2022).<sup>28</sup>

- 'Several conducive factors support the advancement of Vietnam-U.S. security cooperation in the upcoming years. These include growing strategic convergence, a deepening network of shared defence partners, and Vietnam's military modernization efforts' (ISEAS, 2024).<sup>29</sup>
- 'However, mutual trust has been improving in recent years, helping to ease the old thinkers' suspicion towards the U.S. intentions in strengthening defense and security ties with Vietnam' (ISEAS, 2022).<sup>30</sup>

The narrative that emerges from this reporting and commentary is that, while the US and Vietnam do not always see eye to eye, the two countries have nevertheless found common ground. They each benefit from an economic partnership and are keen to work together to counter Chinese expansionism, particularly in the South China Sea. Escalating tensions between China and Vietnam on the one hand, and China and the US on the other, will encourage Hanoi and Washington to set aside their differences to face a common enemy, or so the argument goes.

This narrative serves a particular political agenda. It lends credence to former Deputy Secretary of State Campbell's misjudgment of Vietnam as a critical 'swing state' which, with the right set of policies, can be persuaded to side with the US in its rivalry with China. It also serves to rationalize a series of measures—from moving supply chains, to selling weapons to Vietnam—that are being promoted to realize this goal. Rather than assessing the evidence, leading newspapers and think tanks have uncritically echoed the flawed assumptions driving US policy in the Asia-Pacific region.

## **HANOI'S DISTRUST OF US INTENTIONS WELL-FOUNDED**

It bears pointing out that Hanoi has good reason to distrust US intentions. Historically, Washington propped up France's colonial administration in its war against the Indochinese Communist movement. When the French failed, the US responded with savage area bombing and counterinsurgency campaigns. As revenge for the CPV

victory in the “Vietnam War”, the US then punished the entire population with a devastating economic blockade, beginning at the end of the war in 1975 and continuing right up until 1994 when it was ended by then-President Clinton.<sup>31</sup>

The memory of that war, including its massacres and widespread chemical contamination, still figure prominently in the national consciousness. Meanwhile, Vietnamese leaders have noted the numerous instances of US military aggression against countries which 'deviate from its orbit'. These concerns are well founded.

Hanoi is also right to see the US policy of competition with China as a threat to peace. Since the “Pivot to Asia” was announced over a decade ago, the United States has sought to contain China and maintain its dominance over the region. Under the first Trump administration, this objective became explicit policy in the 2017 National Security Strategy, which states: ‘China seeks to displace the United States in the Indo-Pacific region, expand the reaches of its state-driven economic model, and reorder the region in its favor’ (p.25).<sup>32</sup> In other words, the “problem” to be solved by US foreign policy is that China is seeking to expel the US from a region where it is not located. The implication being that while the US is entitled to dominate the region, China is not.<sup>33</sup>

This policy has produced a series of outcomes that have ratcheted up tensions. To start, the US has created new military blocs with allies hostile to China, while deploying more military assets to the region. Key developments include the US deployment of so-called “freedom of navigation operations” in the South China Sea (2016-2023), the US entering into a deal with Australia to provide it with nuclear submarines under the AUKUS pact (2021), and the US placing long-range missiles in Japan and the Philippines that are capable of striking the Chinese mainland (2025).<sup>34</sup> The United States has also effectively abandoned the One-China Policy by dispatching government officials to engage in high-level visits to Taiwan, by expressing support for Taiwan’s independence, and by declassifying the *Six Assurances* to Taiwan. These

moves have signaled a decisive shift toward open strategic competition and escalated military competition in the region.<sup>35</sup>

Such actions have little to do with promoting freedom or protecting the United States. Instead, by expanding its forward military footprint, and especially by abandoning the Sino-US détente which has been foundational for peace in Asia, Washington has chosen confrontation over engagement and cooperation. This approach—involving the expansion of its bases and military exercises, tighter security ties, and engaging in acts of economic warfare—has further escalated tensions and made armed clashes more likely across the Western Pacific and the Indian Ocean.<sup>36</sup>

## **US FOREIGN POLICY INVOKED TO JUSTIFY HARSHER REPRESSION**

Nothing could be worse for human rights than a war between the US and China. Even short of all-out war, policies that increase tensions between the two nuclear-armed superpowers will drive securitization, nationalism, and competition over resources (such as rare earth minerals), which are likely to undermine human rights.<sup>37</sup> Indeed, such a process already appears to be underway.

In China, a perception that the US is seeking to overthrow the CCP has fueled increased securitization. In 2010, the CCP learned that the CIA had recruited a network of spies deep within the party, a discovery that reportedly led to the execution of up to 30 people.<sup>38</sup> The source of this threat to regime security was identified as corruption in the political system.<sup>39</sup> Xi Jinping came to power on the heels of this scandal and embarked on a crackdown on foreign influence that resulted in a series of repressive policies, including a national security law (2015), a foreign NGO law (2017), and a cyber security law (2017), as well as the establishment of the powerful National Security Commission (2013).<sup>40</sup>

Learning from China's example, Vietnam has also restricted human rights in the name of fighting color revolution and peaceful evolution. Recently uncovered evidence demonstrates how Hanoi has weaponized its history of colonial subjugation and the US record of foreign meddling to justify increased repression. An implementation report that Project88 obtained about the above-discussed Project to Prevent Color Revolutions describes the achievements one year after the initiative's launch in 2020.<sup>41</sup> "Accomplishments" include: having 'criminally prosecuted 75 individuals', 'neutralized 809 individuals', 'dealt with 3,272 domestic bases of exiled reactionaries', and 'disbanded 19 illegal associations and groups' (p.2). In other words, the Vietnamese government has arbitrarily prosecuted people and disbanded associations under the guise of preventing a western-backed color revolution in the country.

While the implementation report does not provide names, those prosecuted likely include journalists, human rights activists, NGO directors, and government reformers the usual targets of such repression in Vietnam. Since the start of the project, the historian Truong Huy San, climate activist Dang Dinh Bach, energy policy thinktank director Ngo Thi To Nhien, and government labor reformers Nguyen Van Binh and Vu Minh Tien have all been prosecuted and imprisoned. The Project to Prevent Color Revolutions highlights how the Vietnamese government has justified criminal prosecutions of dissidents and reformers as a legitimate response to regime-change operations posed by the US.

To be sure, no concrete evidence has thus far emerged to suggest that US democracy promotion in Vietnam is motivated by a desire to effect regime change. However, US claims about promoting human rights globally are undermined by Washington's history of actual covert regime change efforts, which according to the leading scholar on the issue, totaled 64 such efforts during the Cold War (1947–89).<sup>42</sup>

## DOUBLE STANDARDS: VIETNAM AND VENEZUELA IN US POLICY

The Venezuelan experience provides a cautionary tale for Vietnam about what happens when a nominally socialist country deviates from the orbit of the United States. Many of the regime change efforts that the US has directed at Venezuela have been rationalized in the name of promoting human rights and democracy, and as such, this history merits recounting at length.

At the turn of the century, left-wing governments came to power in Latin America on the back of popular resentment toward the US imposition of neoliberal economic policies. Venezuela led the charge, rallying Bolivia, Ecuador, and to a lesser degree Brazil and Argentina, as part of the so-called “pink tide”.

Before long, however, the movement ran into serious resistance. On April 11, 2002, Venezuela's democratically-elected government, headed by Hugo Chávez, was ousted in a military coup d'etat. Senior Bush Administration officials met with some of the coup plotters before the putsch, the State Department referred to the coup as a ‘change of government’, and the White House blamed Chávez for what had taken place, stating that it was ‘the message of the Venezuelan people’.<sup>43</sup> Two days later, however, Chávez was returned to power on the back of a mass popular mobilization—a strong rebuke to the coup’s claim of a popular mandate.<sup>44</sup>

Undeterred, a network of US government and quasi-government institutions, under the guise of an ostensibly non-partisan democracy promotion program, partnered with Venezuelan opposition parties and politicians to undermine and oust Chávez.<sup>45</sup> That failed, and on March 8, 2015, President Obama increased US hostility against the country by imposing Executive Order 13692. In the order, Obama claimed that human rights violations in Venezuela presented an ‘extraordinary national security threat’ to

the United States and, on this basis, declared a national emergency that required sanctions be imposed on the country.<sup>46</sup> These specious claims were used as justification for Washington to destabilize the country.<sup>47</sup>

When Chavéz's successor, Nicholas Maduro, prevailed in the disputed 2019 elections, the US government recognized opposition politician Juan Guaidó as the country's president, despite the fact he had not received a single vote.<sup>48</sup> Washington then expanded unilateral sanctions against the country that have fueled a migration crisis and, according to one estimate, are responsible for forcing four million people —of the total of eight million who have left the country— to flee.<sup>49</sup>

At the start of Trump's second term, on July 27, 2025, Secretary of State Marco Rubio claimed that 'those who steal elections and use force to grasp power undermine America's national security interests'.<sup>50</sup> He went on to accuse Maduro of being the head of the mythical Soles drug cartel and on July 25, the Treasury Department designated the cartel as a terrorist organization.<sup>51</sup> President Donald Trump then doubled the bounty for Maduro's arrest to \$50m, the largest bounty ever offered by the US government for the capture of an individual.<sup>52</sup>

In an ominous development, on Aug. 8, Trump secretly directed the Pentagon to prepare to use military force against drug cartels designated as terrorist organizations.<sup>53</sup> In issuing this secret directive, Trump authorized a potential military intervention in Venezuela under the guise of targeting drug cartels. On Aug. 19, the US military confirmed that it had deployed three destroyer ships to waters off Venezuela. Since then, the military has killed at least 115 people without due process in attacks on boats in the Caribbean and the Pacific.<sup>54</sup> The Trump administration then ordered an aircraft carrier group to deploy to the Caribbean (Oct. 3), authorized the CIA to conduct covert lethal operations inside Venezuela (Oct. 15), and then ordered Venezuelan airspace to be closed (Nov. 29).<sup>55</sup> In flagrant violation of the UN Charter, on Jan. 3, 2026, the US military attacked Caracas and kidnapped President Maduro before bringing him to the United States where he was arraigned on federal drug charges.<sup>56</sup>

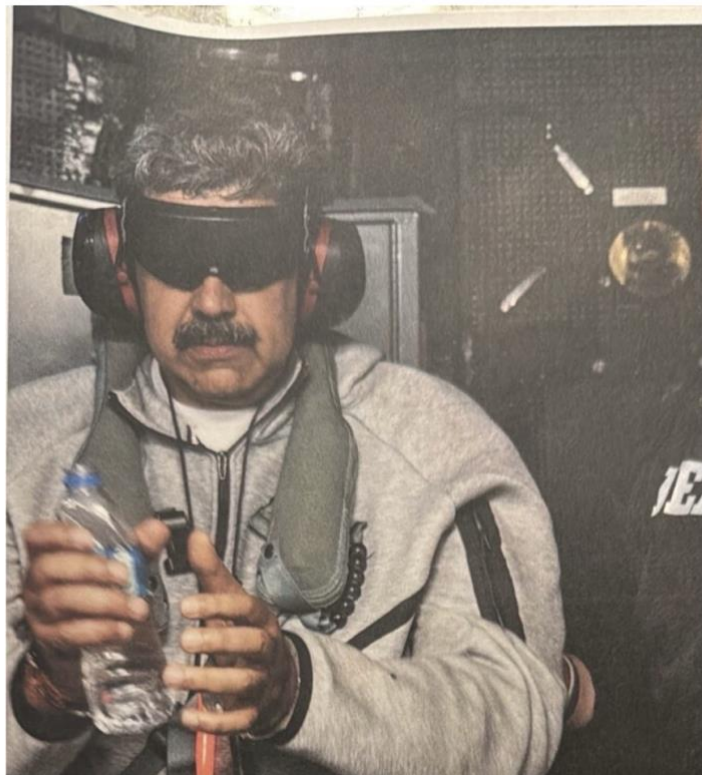
In the days that followed, President Trump claimed that the US was going to run Venezuela and take its oil.

### Photo of the kidnapping of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro shared by President Trump



Donald J. Trump    
@realDonaldTrump

Nicolas Maduro on board the USS Iwo Jima.



Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro being kidnapped by US Forces  
*Source: President Trump's X account*

As the US increased its pressure on Venezuela, on Nov. 28, 2025 Trump pardoned former Honduran president Juan Orlando Hernández, thereby freeing him from prison, where he was serving a 45-year sentence for his role in a drug trafficking operation that moved hundreds of tons of cocaine to the United States.<sup>57</sup> Hernández came to power following a US-backed coup in 2009 and was widely condemned for electoral fraud when, in 2017, he secured a second presidential term, in violation of the

country's constitution.<sup>58</sup> Thus, at the same time as the Trump administration justified its aggression against Venezuela in terms of promoting democracy and fighting drug trafficking, it pardoned a convicted drug trafficker who has a record of stealing elections.

The Venezuelan case demonstrates how the US invokes human rights and democracy to justify regime change operations against enemies. And yet, despite its recent slide into authoritarianism, Venezuela is still more democratic than Vietnam. Between 2015-2020, Venezuelan opposition parties held 112 of 167 seats in the country's parliament.<sup>59</sup> Over the same period Vietnam had zero political opposition parties and zero opposition politicians in its National Assembly. Political opposition groups continue to be criminalized in Vietnam, and candidates who have attempted to nominate themselves to run in elections independently of the CPV, have been harassed, detained, and imprisoned.<sup>60</sup> Unlike Venezuela, however, US strategists believe that Vietnam can play a useful role in containing its main geostrategic rival, China, and have turned a blind eye to human rights abuses in the country.

The contrast between US policy on Vietnam and Venezuela exposes how democratic ideals are selectively weaponized by the US against its enemies, while conveniently forgotten when it comes to those it perceives as its allies and partners. The instability of US policy is not lost on the CPV. With the Venezuelan case looming large and its own memory of a US invasion still fresh, Hanoi has good reasons to view US democracy promotion efforts with suspicion and prepare for direct conflict with the US. The 2nd US Invasion Plan shows Hanoi will not join a US-led anti-China coalition and is instead preparing to resist potential US aggression once its break with Washington's strategy in the Asia-Pacific becomes clear.

The US, for its part, has at times courted such perceptions of hostility. For example, in 2004, then-US ambassador to Vietnam, Raymond Burghardt, commenting on a senior party leadership contest, emphasized the link between Peaceful Evolution and civil society development. Burghardt predicted that, although 'the Public Security

types still don't trust us', the long-term trend was toward closer ties between the two countries.<sup>61</sup>

[W]e will continue to see in Vietnam a rapidly growing private sector, stronger rule of law, increased foreign influence, the erosion of government control over people's lives, deepening cynicism or indifference toward the Communist Party, and the budding of a civil society.

Stoking Hanoi's fears about US meddling in Vietnamese affairs, Burghardt added that 'we should continue to encourage these powerful trends' and posited that Peaceful Evolution was already underway. This was not due to US government policy, but rather happening as if by a law of nature. He writes, 'the CPV's hardliners in fact are right [p]eaceful evolution is happening. Meanwhile we could remind ourselves that Nixon also was right: Peaceful evolution is not a government policy or strategy: it is the inexorable trend of history'.

Burghardt's predictions have not been borne out. Not only does the prospect for so-called Peaceful Evolution appear more remote than ever, the 'public security types' now run Vietnam. Former Minister of Public Security, To Lam, is the General Secretary of the CPV. Under To Lam's leadership, Vietnam's government weakened the rule of law, curtailed foreign influence, and increased its control over people's lives, all while reinforcing the CPV's legitimacy and crushing civil society.

Furthermore, the US' recent reluctance to hold Vietnam accountable for violating human rights has been implicitly justified as part of a strategic calculus to woo the country to its anti-China coalition. Former Deputy Secretary of State Kurt Campbell explained the logic of this strategy in his 2016 book, *The Pivot*, arguing that:

On security, the United States should increase exercises, exchanges, and training with Vietnam; bolster cooperation on [...] maritime domain awareness; and soften or outright lift its ban on lethal military sales to Vietnam. The United States, currently Vietnam's largest export market, should also undertake negotiations with Vietnam

on lifting its designation of Vietnam as a nonmarket economy. Finally, a sustainable and stable relationship with Vietnam will require a pragmatic approach to human rights. The United States should forgo public shaming in favor of dialogue, private counsel, and support for Vietnamese reforms.<sup>62</sup>

The US government has followed this policy prescription with fidelity. In 2016, the US lifted its arms embargo on Vietnam and since then has been more muted in its criticism of the country's human rights record. The US State Department, in its annual human rights reports, failed to document the new wave of repression instigated by the CPV since 2020. Further, in 2024, the State Department upgraded Vietnam's Trafficking in Persons ranking, despite the clear and carefully documented evidence submitted to it by Project88 showing that Vietnam had lied about the measures it was taking to address the problem.<sup>63</sup>

## CONCLUSION

The 2nd US Invasion Plan provides one of the most clear-eyed insights yet into Vietnam's foreign policy. It shows that far from viewing the US as a strategic partner, Hanoi sees Washington as an existential threat and has no intention of joining its anti-China alliance.

Project88's analysis of the plan makes clear that Vietnam's undisclosed national security policy is based on at least four key tenets: the US is a threat, the Indo-Pacific strategy is a new form of colonial domination, human rights and democracy promotion is an attempt to undermine the CPV, and Vietnam is linked to a shared fate with China. These positions overturn more than a decade of America's Vietnam policy, which was buttressed by uncritical media coverage, and which was premised on the idea that Vietnam could be courted to join an anti-China coalition.

The idea of a 2nd US Invasion of Vietnam might seem absurd to some, but Hanoi's fears are more justified than it may at first appear. Indeed, US policy deserves a share of the blame for Hanoi's extremely dim view of human rights and democracy promotion efforts. Not only has Vietnam itself already suffered the brunt of US bombing and occupation, but the US government has elsewhere instrumentalized human rights and democracy issues in pursuit of geopolitical and economic goals. Nowhere is this clearer than in the case of Venezuela, where US meddling first delegitimized the democratic process and then escalated to sanctions, coup attempts, illegal military strikes, and seems now poised for a regime change military intervention.

Taken together, US policy is undermining human rights and democracy in Vietnam in two interrelated ways. First, by militarizing the region and ratcheting up tensions with China, the US is contributing to securitization. Second, by subordinating its commitments to democracy and human rights to geopolitical aims, the US

legitimizes the narratives used by authoritarian regimes to silence dissent and target opponents as alleged agents of US interference.

The 2nd US Invasion Plan should therefore be read alongside the Project to Prevent Color Revolutions and the wave of civil society repression that accompanied it as evidence that the CPV is determined not to join the US' anti-China coalition. Rather, Hanoi is preparing itself for a confrontation with the US.

# ANNEX 1 - THE 2ND US INVASION PLAN (357/KH-BTL)

**MINISTRY OF DEFENSE  
NAVY**

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No. 357/KH-BTL

**SECRET**

**SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM  
Independence - Freedom – Happiness**

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*Hai Phong, August 1, 2024*

## **PLAN**

### **Countering US and Allied forces in the Asia-Pacific region: new methods and tactics of US and Allied forces when invading Vietnam from the sea**

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Based upon the Announcement on the Situation of Military Intelligence and Intelligence Work in the First Six Months of 2024, the General Department of Defense Intelligence 2/ Ministry of Defense.

Based upon the 2024 Military and Defense Work Order of the Commander of the Navy.

Based upon the Proposal for Military Intelligence Work from the General Department of Defense Intelligence and the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Based upon the Announcement of the Training Program for Army Officers on Combat and Military Intelligence in 2024.

To ensure effective prevention, countermeasures, and containment of surprise scenarios from the sea. The Command implements the Plan to Counter US and Allied forces in the Asia-Pacific region: new methods, tactics, and use of US and Allied forces when invading Vietnam from the sea.

In addition to its objective of strengthening deterrence against China, the US and its allies are ready to apply unconventional forms of warfare and military intervention and even conduct large-scale invasions against countries and territories that “deviate from its orbit”. In such cases, a seaborne invasion which relies on its naval strength continues to be the top choice of the US and its allies.

## **I. MAIN FEATURES OF THE TREND OF AMASSING US and ALLIED FORCES IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC**

### **1. The role of the Asia-Pacific region in the US-allied force assessment**

**a) Regarding economy and trade,** the Asia-Pacific is the most dynamic economic axis in the world, it is a focal point of many leading economies, abundant with resources, and dominating one of the most important maritime routes that could fundamentally control the economic and trade power of the US and its allies. In particular, the rise and robust development of the Chinese economy is threatening the global influence of the US and many Western “former colonial” countries through the “Belt and Road Initiative”.

*Regarding trade, the maritime route through the South China Sea is estimated to be worth about 5.3 trillion USD. According to statistics from the US Department of Energy, one-third of crude oil and more than one-half of liquefied natural gas are transported through the South China Sea, 15 times more than the amount that is transported through the Panama Canal. The East Sea also carries a large volume of goods exported from countries such as Japan (about 45%), Australia (40%), and South Korea (nearly 35%). China alone accounts for about 60% of export goods and 70% of imported oil.*

**b) Regarding defense and security:** Unlike the relatively stable Europe-Atlantic, which is characterized by the binding links of the NATO Alliance Treaty and the EU system, and unlike the Middle East - Islam, which is easily influenced and controlled despite constant instability due to conflict and religious terrorism; the Asia-Pacific region always faces security risks and the potential for instability, such as the North Korean nuclear issue, the Taiwan Strait, the Senkaku Islands, sovereignty disputes in the East Sea, China's competition in the South Pacific...All these risks more

or less originate from China's influence. For this reason, once a security crisis occurs, especially a war or military conflict, the US is forced to participate, and the US-allied military force, as well as US bases in the region, may suffer significant losses. Thus, to proactively amass forces and strengthen military integration with allies is an existential issue for the United States today.

**c) In terms of politics and diplomacy**, after the Cold War and the transformation of the socialist system, political and diplomatic relations based on ideological factors along the "vertical axis" no longer play a leading role, these factors have been replaced by national interests, with countries both cooperating and struggling at the same time. In Asia-Pacific, in addition to the above features, there are also still deep disagreements between China and the countries of India, South Korea, Japan, Australia, Taiwan, as well as others concerning disputes in the East Sea... Because of these, the US has burrowed deep into regional conflicts, thoroughly exploiting them to amass forces by deploying a policy and strategy of political and diplomatic interference which relies on the strength of media to propagandize democratic values and global influence.

## **2. US-allied force deployment progress**

### **a) On overall US policy**

Over the past ten years, the overall US engagement strategy has dramatically changed. The US has shifted from a "pivot to Asia" (2011) policy characterized by "unilateral action", to an "Indo-Pacific" strategy (2017, 2022), which emphasizes "collective action" based on coordination and shared interests with allies and partners in and outside the region. Specifically:

- During President Barack Obama's term, the US consolidated its influence in the Asia-Pacific by shoring up relations with traditional regional allies to contain China's influence, employing the method of "step by step, observe and assess."

- Under President Donald Trump, with his "America First" policy, the character of US's force-amassing was more direct and based on two basic foundations: First, to establish the "Diamond Quartet" made up of the US, Japan, Australia, and India, to operationalize the Indo-Pacific Strategy. This had diverse impacts on the region in

terms of security, defense, diplomacy, economics, science and technology. The quartet drew on their advantages to create a trade and technology war to deter and contain China. Second, promoting bilateral cooperation with allies and partners that have capabilities and long-standing conflicts with US's "rivals", including China, [such partners] include Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Australia. The chief objective is to deploy military power, incite an arms race, and expand the export market for US military equipment and technology. During this period, relations with allies such as Thailand and the Philippines were not prioritized, which is one of the points explaining why China's influence over the Philippines under President Duterte increased.

- However, under President Joe Biden, the US's method and goals of amassing forces underwent notable adjustments, both systematically and at scale. Based on the comprehensive nature of the new Indo-Pacific Strategy (2022), a series of European and Asian allies have developed their own strategies and initiatives. These strategies are built on the US's strategy of creating a cohesive element of action and shared interests. Accordingly:

- Regarding security, the US identifies three areas of focus: First, taking the US-Japan military alliance as the "pillar", while continuing to build and strengthen new security arrangements between the US, Japan, and South Korea; the US, Japan, and the Philippines; the US, Australia, and the Philippines; and the US, UK, and Australia (AUKUS). In particular, the "New Security Quad" (SQUAD) consisting of the US, Japan, Australia, and the Philippines, has been gradually established, replacing the "security integrity" of the old Quad when India was not an ally of the US. China views these moves as the establishment a new NATO in Asia to deter and militarily encircle it. Second, the US is increasing deployment of its military forces to its bases and allies in the Western Pacific, supporting and strengthening Taiwan's defense capabilities and securing an agreement to access nine bases in the Philippines. Third, creating extensive connections in security and field activities between Asian allies and key members of NATO, gradually establishing a coordination mechanism to share military command experience between the East and the West, thereby facilitating multinational joint operations.

+ Regarding economics and trade, the aim is to turn the Asia-Pacific region into a Western-style liberalized economic bloc that serves as a market for US and Allies' vehicles, high-tech equipment, and weapons. By guaranteeing the security of economic corridors and international shipping routes, they plan to gradually sever China's supply chains and narrow its market access.

+ In terms of politics and diplomacy, the US has moved from a Cold War mentality of containing countries "with different ambitions", to building relationships whose chief objective is to "form a front against China". This strategy involves using political, diplomatic, and media pressure as "instruments of influence", and viewing Taiwan and ASEAN countries --above all the four countries in the East Sea dispute with China who fall under the Indo-Pacific Strategy (the Philippines, Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia)-- as the "targets of influence". Meanwhile, the US enlists other allies in and outside of the region to increase support for "targets of influence" with the intent of forming "blocs" and preparing for a future multi-polar confrontation scenario.

+ Regarding European and NATO allies, the US has rallied key members, including the UK, France, Germany, the Netherlands, and Canada, to join a "common action policy", while promoting relations with the Asia-Pacific in terms of economic investment, trade, and defense cooperation, especially by maintaining a naval presence in "hot spots" such as the Taiwan Strait and the East Sea. In exchange for following the US, its partners from the "former Western colonial countries", regain the influence they lost centuries ago.

### **b) US and allied military redeployment and integration**

- After ratifying its new National Defense Strategy, which recognized that "China is the only nation with sufficient means and motivation to reshape the international order", and "a conflict in the Indo-Pacific may be the most dangerous scenario the US may face", and coordinating the "Indo-Pacific Strategy" military and defense priorities, the US military force redeployment activities since 2022 has sought to achieve three targets: First, increase the force posture to Asia-Pacific at a ratio of six to four in relation to Europe-Atlantic so as to increase deterrence against China and other

hostile countries. Second, strengthen traditional alliances and expand the establishment of new military and political alliances in Asia (with Japan, Australia, and the Philippines) that are grounded in joint training exercises and joint patrols by naval forces. Third, to encourage NATO members (the UK, Germany, France, Canada, etc.) to deploy naval forces to the East Sea and Taiwan Strait in order to shift the security and military structure of the alliance from Europe to the Asia-Pacific region, to mutually benefit from their military presence and to prepare for a potential future military conflict scenario.

Regarding the presence of forces: The Air Force rotates B-2 and B-52 bombers to bases like Diego Garcia and Guam, deploys MQ-4C reconnaissance UAVs to Okinawa, and field tested surveillance radars and SM-6 missiles (500-2,700 km range) in the Philippines during the 2024 Balikatan exercises. The Navy has roughly 65% of its forces under Pacific Fleet Command, with an additional aircraft carrier group (sometimes two) rotated since 2017, deploying F-35B/C and F/A-18E/F jets on carriers and landing craft for enhanced training. Additionally, a steady deterrent against the Chinese navy is maintained by deploying five nuclear submarines, three cruisers, 8-10 destroyers, and 3-5 littoral combat ships in coordination with allied forces. The Marine Corps is intensifying the modernization of its weapons and equipment, and is carrying out new missions such as protecting diplomatic facilities, establishing more units in Guam and Australia, supporting training in Taiwan, and preparing for deployment in the Philippines.

- Enlisting countries outside the region to support the US's efforts in the Indo-Pacific, many NATO countries (UK, France, Germany - September 16, 2020, Australia - July 23, 2020, New Zealand - August 2, 2021, Japan - January 19, 2021) have engaged in interventionist conduct in the region to oppose China's sovereignty claims. These countries have announced initiatives and strategies on the Indo-Pacific (France - June 2019, Netherlands - November 2020, Germany - September 2020, UK - March 2021, Canada - December 2022, EU - April 2021) and deployed forces in the East Sea and the Western Pacific region (UK - September 2018, Spain - April 2019, Germany - August

2021, the Netherlands - March 2024, France - May 2019, Italy - April 2023, Turkey - April 2024, Canada - March 2017... ).

**Notably, from 2021 to the present**, the number of joint training activities in the East Sea between the U.S Navy and the navies of Asia-Pacific allies and NATO has increased significantly (from 20 sessions between 2017-2020 to 30 sessions between 2021-2024). These training exercises have focused on sensitive disputed areas in the East Sea such as the Scarborough Shoal, the Spratly Islands, and the waters surrounding Vietnam-Indonesia-Malaysia. The U.S has also focused on expanding the scale of joint exercises such as Malabar (with India and Japan), Balikatan (with the Philippines), Rimpac, Cobra Gold (multinational)...

Currently, the US continues to strengthen ties with strategic allies within the framework of the SQUAD [US, Japan, Australia, the Philippines Partnership]; the AUKUS [Australia, UK, and US Partnership] trilateral security partnership; and the JAPHUS (Japan, the Philippines, and US Partnership) tripartite alliance; to guarantee the capacity for mutual resupply of ordnance, technology, and supply chains. Regarding naval cooperation, the US has created the basis for forming a "new military alliance" and establishing "new military bases" in Asia (regarding military bases, in 2023, the U.S reached an agreement to access four new bases, bringing the total number of bases that it has access to in the Philippines to nine).

## **II. NEW CHARACTERISTICS OF US AND US-ALLIED METHODS, BATTLE TACTICS AND FORCE EMPLOYMENT FOR A SEABORNE INVASION OF VIETNAM**

The US sees Vietnam as a partner and an important link in its Indo-Pacific strategy, as well as an ally in its plan to encircle and contain China from the East Sea. At the same time, the US wants to use increased cooperation with Vietnam to spread and impose its values regarding freedom, democracy, human rights, ethnicity, and religion, thereby gradually changing the socialist regime of our country. Thus, when the US fails to accomplish its aims, it may take advantage of these issues, alongside the use of diplomatic and economic tricks, and above all invade or militarily intervene in Vietnam.

While there is currently little risk of a war against Vietnam, due to the US's belligerent nature, we need to be vigilant to prevent the US and its allies from "creating a pretext" to launch an invasion of our country at different scales. The US and its allies could fully exploit the geographic and natural features of Vietnam's vast seas and long coastlines, with the superior strength of its navy, to conduct military operations against our country.

### **1. General methods**

When invading a country or territory, the US seeks to legitimize its actions by creating pretexts, luring allies to use superior forces and means, while simultaneously attacking on many fronts (air, land, sea, space, electromagnetic, and cyberspace), implementing "quick strikes and quick victories." Using the Navy to blockade, encircle, and divide enemy forces at sea and on island battlefields, while conducting kinetic strikes with high-tech weapons, in combination with cyber and electromagnetic warfare, to weaken the enemy's defense capabilities. The US will also practice seaborne and airborne landings to capture strategic targets and strong points.

### **2. New characteristics of present battle methods.**

*- Firstly, high-tech long range precision artillery, non-contact, high destructive capacity with diversity of utilization, means of warfare play a deterrent role, weakening the opponent's resolve and creating an immediate battlefield strength advantage.*

+ Accordingly, the US and its allies rely on such advantages as multi-layered reconnaissance, long-range precision weapons, air, submarine, and surface ship defense capabilities, electromagnetic warfare, and special operations forces... to completely block the air and sea routes, launch waves of non-contact kinetic strikes right from the early stages of conflict or war to destroy important political and military targets (command centers, warning systems, air defense, maritime surveillance, communication systems, bases, seaports, aircraft, ships, logistics warehouses, shelters, evacuation areas of coastal air forces and navies; aircraft and navy ships operating at sea).

+ In relation to high-tech weapons, the US continues to use precision weapons (accurate to within 3m). These include: Tomahawk cruise missiles (from 1998 to 2021, the US Navy has deployed a total of 5,219 missiles, worth \$6,631 billion); SM-6 medium-range air defense missiles (1,800 missiles currently stockpiled, with a planned increase to 2,234 by 2025); new NSM anti-ship missiles with a range of 300 nautical miles (planned to increase to 207 missiles by 2025).

+ Blockade of air and sea routes, and long-range firepower: the US and its allies basically rely on the strength of Nimitz and Gerald R. Ford-class aircraft carrier groups, amphibious assault ships (carrying fighter aircraft), nuclear attack submarines, combat surface ships (destroyers, cruisers, coastal combat ships) and naval air fleet (F-35, F/A-18 fighter jets, long-range strategic bombers...). Aircraft carriers can ensure fighter aircraft take off at a high frequency of 250 - 300 sorties/day (Nimitz-class ships) to nearly 400 sorties/day (Gerald R. Ford class ships). In reality, in unilateral and multilateral training exercises, the US focuses on improving coordination between air, land, and sea forces, concentrating on coordination between aircraft carrier groups (CVN) and amphibious assault ships (LHA/LHD), and between tactical naval air forces (F/A-18, F-35B and F-35C), strategic bombers (B2, B-52) and strategic refueling aircraft (KC-135).

- *Using unmanned combat vehicles in the air, at sea, and undersea, employing artificial intelligence (AI) and electromagnetic warfare combined with manned vehicles and equipment, is an essential and inseparable part of maritime warfare.*

+ Currently in use: High-altitude UAVs are increasingly used by the US and its allies, and continue to play a role in a multi-layered surveillance network, these include 24/7 space satellites, high-altitude surveillance UAVs, low-altitude manned aircraft, and surface craft. The US maintains about 24 surveillance satellites (radar, optical) and 11 electronic signals intelligence (ELINT) satellites launched from 2005 to the present. On average, every three days, a satellite flies over any fixed position on Earth. As such, with 24 surveillance satellites, on average a US satellite flies over the East Sea once every three hours. In addition to the satellites and submarines... a picture is formed according to the theory of a "transparent battlefield," creating opportunities to rotate

forces and employ large scale firepower in combat. Notably, since 2019, the US has mobilized MQ-4C Triton UAVs in coordination with P-8A anti-submarine aircraft, RC-135 electromagnetic reconnaissance aircraft, and surface combat ships to create a widespread reconnaissance network at sea, connecting surveillance data with the intelligence and combat integration network of the seventh Fleet.

+ Future development: The US-allies are prioritizing the development of UAVs, USVs, and UUVs that can use artificial intelligence (AI) to undertake reconnaissance, single attack and swarm attack missions from the sea, to take advantage of favorable conditions in terms of cost, rapid deployment, flexibility, surprise and the ability to penetrate deep into the enemy's defense system. In particular, the US continues to develop eight models of UAV, such as MQ-4C, MQ-25A, MQ-9, MQ-8C, RQ-21; four types of USVs (X class, Harbor, Snorkeler, Fleet) and some types of UUVs. For the period 2023-2030, US Navy proposed to develop 54 submarines and 204 large unmanned surface ships. By 2045, the plan is to deploy 150 USVs that use AI in seven international seas [including the Western Pacific], establish a USV Division, and increase the ratio of unmanned-manned aircraft on aircraft carriers to four-sixths.

- Amphibious assault is the leading form of attack, aiming to create a safe zone to rapidly deploy ground combat forces to expand the area of control, thereby achieving victory on the battlefield. Given that the priority is to modernize weapons of the marine corps, it is likely that the US and its allies will in the future use this force in the role of establishing a bridgehead, creating a safe zone, or creating opportunities to bring mechanized infantry forces ashore. In amphibious operations, depending on battlefield conditions, paratrooper or amphibious landing tactics beyond the horizon will increase in scope and frequency to become the chief operational form, with paratrooper drops and bypassing operations accounting for half the scale of US and allied landing forces.

- *Multi-environment warfare*

In addition to kinetic strikes, internet neutralization, large-scale electromagnetic warfare, and control of insurgent forces and reconnaissance

commando forces conducting sabotage in the interior are increasingly important and commonplace tactics.

The The US Department of Defense has established a specialized command for the battle environments of the Asia-Pacific region, which include the US Army Pacific Command (USARPAC), the Pacific Air Force Command (PACAF), the Pacific Fleet (3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> Fleets), the Pacific Military Command, and the Pacific Defense Command. In addition, the Space Force, the Strategic Missile Force, the Electromagnetic Warfare Force, and the Cyber Warfare Force coordinate operations with the US Navy, Army, and Air Force in the Indo-Pacific theater. Military satellites, high-resolution commercial imaging satellites, such as World View-1,2; Geo Eye-1, QuickBird-2, and Planet..., can also be used in military operations to increase the amount of intelligence and shorten reconnaissance time.

In battle, the US synchronizes combat methods according to the C5ISR system (command, control, communications, computers, cyber warfare, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance) to coordinate forces and support the forward command to make more accurate and timely decisions. According to statistics, in training and exercises, the US military has deployed a large number of robots, sensors, and other technical means to support soldiers, including robots in the air, on the ground, and at sea, wired drones, anti-drone systems, and some radio signal simulation devices to disrupt the enemy. The US military has also used more than 240 technologies in exercises, including products from allied countries such as the UK, Canada, Australia, France, and Japan.

- Establishing a unified naval combat command system based on the NATO model between the US Navy and its allies is the crucial condition to provide joint command of lower-level naval forces. When battles occur in the Asia-Pacific region, to achieve its “dual targets,” the US will coordinate with allies in and outside the region to conduct operations under the main US command in Guam (the naval base supporting all HD-7 operations covering the West Pacific and Indian Ocean regions).

+ Allies in the region include: Japan with approximately 55,227 US troops (Army 2,626, Navy 20,392, Marine Corps 19,607 and Air Force 12,602) deployed at 13 bases

(Yokosuka, Kadena, Sasebo, White Beach, Misawa, Yokota, Shariki, Kyogamisaki, Iwakuni, Zama, Atsugi, Futenma and Torii Station); South Korea with approximately 23,468 US troops in six units; Australia with approximately 200 Marine Corps troops in Darwin; countries in the Southeast Asian region: the US is allowed to use Singapore's military facilities to deploy forces and ordnance, US forces are present at nine military bases in the Philippines, and the US has military facilities, including US-built airports in UTapao and a deep-water port in Sattahip in Thailand. The US continues to increase its influence and control so its regional allies and partners depend on it and oppose China, allowing the US to maintain its position as a “superpower” and play the “leading” role in the region as China increases in strength and breadth of influence.

+ Allies outside the region:

To encircle and contain China in the East Sea, the US will not act alone but will actively enlist allies to participate in this strategy (as the US did in the Korean War, the Vietnam War, and the wars launched by the US in the Gulf). Members of the “Quad” Group (Japan, Australia, India), AUKUS (UK, Australia), NATO, EU, the Five Eyes Intelligence Alliance ... and other US allies in the region will be “seeds” in supporting and realizing the strategy of a “free and open Indo-Pacific.” The US may enlist allies to conduct activities to implement its “comprehensive deterrence” strategy to encircle and contain China by, for example, increasing its military presence in the East Sea and around Taiwan through “freedom of navigation” patrols, training, and joint exercises. Specifically: there were five sessions in 2017; two sessions in 2018; six sessions in 2019; seven sessions in 2020; 14 sessions in 2021; six sessions in 2022; five sessions in 2023; five sessions in 2024 (until May).

In fact, in recent years, the joint training and exercise activities of the US Navy and its allies in the Asia region have gradually approached a unification of the US-led command system, and technical integration is continuously being tightened. In addition, the navies of several major NATO countries also participate in activities at sea to share in joint command interaction experience.

- Using the chain of military bases of allied countries along the axis from Japan - Korea - the Philippines - Australia - Singapore - Thailand combined with bases at sea.

In addition to maintaining US forces, facilities, and equipment at military bases in countries in the region, thereby forming a continuous chain in conducting combat operations and logistics supply, the US also uses military ships T-ESB, T-ESD, RO/RO (T-AK) as floating bases for repairing and supplying surface ships at sea.

### **3. US and Allied tactics and force utilization in a naval invasion of Vietnam**

#### *a. Force posture in the Asia-Pacific*

When deploying forces in the Asia-Pacific, the US can establish Expeditionary Force Groups based upon Navy, Army, Air Force, or Marine Corps forces under the coordination of the Indo-Pacific Command. Among these, the Pacific Fleet and the 7th Fleet, in particular, play a pivotal role in the command and control of these operations.

- Pacific Fleet: Is the central agency coordinating the Naval forces (surface ships, submarines, naval air force) and the Marine Corps. It is the advisory agency for the Indo-Pacific Command on the organization and use of forces in the Expeditionary Force Group to participate in combat operations on the battlefield. With a current staff of over 37,000 troops, 1,100 aircraft, 96 combat ships of various types (including five aircraft carriers, 28 nuclear attack submarines, 12 cruisers, 43 destroyers), and nearly 100 support ships, including nine amphibious transport ships, nine large supply transport ships, 12 reconnaissance and survey ships...It is forecast that Naval forces deployable to the East Sea could include 2-3 carrier groups, 2-3 amphibious groups, and blockading groups whose decisive element would be littoral combat ships, destroyers, cruisers, and nuclear attack submarines. In addition, the naval forces of US allied countries in the region could assume the roles of supplying logistics at sea, supporting the provision of intelligence and providing airport and port infrastructure and logistics for use as forward operating bases.

- For the seventh Fleet in the Expeditionary Force Group: as a battlefield-level combat command, the seventh Fleet directly commands the mobile forces at sea (including aircraft carrier groups, amphibious ship groups, and blockade groups), the tactical Navy Air Force, and logistics and technical support activities, as well as deploying forces to forward bases in allied countries. The Fleet supports the mobile

forces on land (marine corps, infantry, mechanized infantry...) and the Navy's special operations and special forces (SEALs) to participate in sabotage missions at sea, in coastal areas, on islands, and to penetrate deeply into combat areas. At the same time, it commands the forces that support air attack operations of strategic bombers on the battlefield.

- When landing by sea, the US Navy can organize at the following deployment scales: Marine Expeditionary Force Group at Marine Division level with 45,000 troops with guaranteed logistics for 60 days. Marine Expeditionary Brigade with 19,000 troops, self-supporting combat logistics for around 30 days. Marine Expeditionary Battalion with 2,400 troops, with guaranteed logistics for 15 days.

*b. The scale of force used in a seaborne invasion of Vietnam*

It is predicted that in a seaborne attack on Vietnam, the US could establish 2-3 Expeditionary Combat Force Groups, mainly from the Navy and Marine Corps, with the coordination of infantry and mechanized infantry, strategic bombers, and allied navies. Composition: 2-3 aircraft carrier groups for landing assaults; 2-3 strike groups (submarines, cruisers, destroyers); 3-4 division-level landing units (centered on 3-4 Marine brigades). Allied navies may participate in secondary attacks, escorting transport ships, logistics, and troop transfers.

*c. Foreseen actions in each phase:*

Air and sea blockade phase: Use reconnaissance aircraft from bases in Japan, Guam, the Philippines, and Thailand in combination with fighter aircraft (F-35C, F/A-18), early warning reconnaissance (E-2C/D), combined with helicopters from aircraft carriers, to gain control of the air, and air defense for the maritime forces. In the future, unmanned vehicles will be used primarily to infiltrate and surveil tactical and operational targets deep inside enemy territory. Surveillance and blockade activities in the air and at sea will take place continuously and in real time with an increase in the frequency of take-offs of fighter jets from aircraft carriers (at a frequency of nearly 400 sorties/day from G.Ford class ships compared to 250 - 300 sorties/day for Nimitz class ships as at present) combined with solid firepower from surface combat ships (destroyers - DDG, littoral combat ships - LCS) and nuclear attack submarines.

### **Amphibious landing phase:**

+ Before landing, the US will use Tomahawk cruise missiles, JDAM guided smart bombs, ship artillery, and armed helicopters to fiercely attack our offensive and defensive forces in the landing area and surrounding vicinity. Air reconnaissance and continuous surveillance of the landing area will also be used.

+ Landing execution: coordinate amphibious and airborne landing to deliver the marine corps forces to capture coastal areas and islands of the enemy as a “springboard” for the infantry and mechanized infantry forces to expand their land attacks.

Presently and in the future, landing will take place by new and modern means, mainly MV-22 helicopters, CH-53, and hovercraft; landing beyond the horizon (25 - 30 nautical miles from shore) is the basic method. The landing process will use UAVs, USVs for suicide attacks, and high frequency “swarms” to maximize the advantages of mobility and speed of troop transport vehicles, shorten the landing time, and minimize human casualties.

In addition, when landing, the aircraft carrier formation can approach 50-100 nautical miles from the shore, providing fire support.

#### *d. Combat tactics*

- Increase maritime reconnaissance activities using satellites, drones, electronic reconnaissance aircraft, surface ships, and submarines that are equipped with modern weapons can expand the reconnaissance range, improve accuracy, and simultaneously collect data on the enemy's operational situation in combat environments.

*(New point: From 2020 to now, with the deployment of MQ-4C reconnaissance UAVs to the Western Pacific, the US has integrated reconnaissance data of MQ-4C UAVs with P-8A anti-submarine reconnaissance aircraft, RC-135 radar signals reconnaissance aircraft, and T-AGOS ocean surveillance ship with the Indo-Pacific Command in Hawaii to consolidate data on “transparent combat environment”).*

- The US will take advantage of the size of its force and its materiel to implement air and sea blockades and non-contact attacks with high-tech weapons combined

with powerful electronic countermeasures, cyber warfare... to paralyze the primary targets, including the enemy's command system. In the future, it will be possible to combine manned attack vehicles with unmanned vehicles (UAV, USV, UUV) that use AI right from the beginning of the war. UAVs and USVs will play a crucial role in attacking unmanned targets - *a notable new point*.

*(Currently, LCS - littoral combat ships can approach deep into the enemy's coast thanks to their stealth features, "modularization" of weapon systems, and the ability to deploy many types of unmanned vehicles in the air, on the sea and under the sea. They will be the primary combat vehicle responsible for preemptive attacks to put pressure in the pre-war stage; forcing the enemy to accept compromises from the beginning).*

- Implementing amphibious and airborne landing to capture critical targets, hold positions, and develop ground attacks in combination with special operations forces and domestic reactionary forces supporting from within. In unfavorable situations, the US may use biochemical and tactical nuclear weapons, executing quick strikes for quick victory to avoid getting bogged down./.

The above content refers only to the most basic and core issues related to combat and in the process of battle many other situations may occur on the battlefield.

The Head of the Command requests agencies and units to adjust combat plans, especially those in the Gulf of Tonkin, Spratly Islands, and DK rigs, based on information from TC2 and the military intelligence department.

The time to complete the plan adjustment and approve the Head of the Command is before August 15, 2024. Upon receiving the Plan, thoroughly implement it and report within the prescribed time.

Recipients:

- Chief of General Staff, TC2;
- Chief of Command;
- General Staff, CCT; CHC, CKT:
- The 5 Regions: General Staff Information Offices;
- Military Service Communications Unit:
- File: TC. M44.

TM

**COMMANDER**

**Vice Admiral Tran Thanh Nghiem**

**THE NAVY  
REGION 1 COMMAND**

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**No.: 679/BTL-SY**

Recipients:

- Recipients: TT BTL;
- PTM. PCT. PHC-KT.
- Affiliated units:
- File: TC. T22

TM

**NOTARIZED COPY**

*Hai Phong, August 03, 2024*

**COMMANDER**

**Rear Admiral Vu Van Nam**

# ANNEX 2 - REPORT: IMPLEMENTATION RESULTS OF THE PROJECT TO “PREVENT AND DETER COLOR REVOLUTIONS IN VIETNAM” FROM APRIL 2020 TO PRESENT

**MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SECURITY**

**SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM**

**DEPARTMENT OF INTERNAL SECURITY**

**Independence - Freedom – Happiness**

No: /BC-A02

*Hanoi, November..., 2021*

## **REPORT**

### **Results of the implementation of the Project to “Prevent and deter color revolutions in Vietnam” from April 2020 to present**

To: Deputy Minister Luong Tam Quang

“Peaceful evolution” and promoting “color revolutions” are the basic, long-term strategies of hostile forces, led by the US and the West, to overthrow Vietnam's socialist regime and eliminate the leadership role of the Communist Party of Vietnam. On April 15, 2020, the Prime Minister signed Decision No. 24/QĐ-TTg approving the Project to “Prevent and deter color revolutions in Vietnam”, assigning the Ministry of Public Security the lead role in managing the project and coordinating with other ministries, departments, branches, and local government to implement 9 solutions, which have been specified into 49 tasks (19 temporary tasks and 30 regular tasks) from 2020 - 2025. These tasks include: raising awareness about color revolutions

among officials, party members and people of all walks of life; diplomacy with partners; promoting economic development, ensuring social security to improve the material and spiritual life of the people; building and consolidating a clean and robust local political system; strengthening the Party's leadership, improving the effectiveness and efficiency of state management, assigning roles to all levels and sectors, from the central committee to the locales, in preventing and deterring color revolutions; ensuring effective state management of press, publishing, information, communications, and the internet; refining laws on preventing and deterring color revolutions; monitoring and strictly managing associations and NGOs; researching color revolutions in the world; allocating resources and people, developing plans and rehearsing color revolution prevention and deterrence...Through summarizing the situation, the Department of Internal Security respectfully reports the following results:

## **1. Project implementation results**

1.1. Implementation organization: Immediately after the Prime Minister signed Decision No. 24/QD-TTg dated April 15, 2020, promulgating the project to "Prevent and Deter Color Revolutions in Vietnam," the Ministry of Public Security urgently disseminated it to 18/18 ministries and 63/63 provinces. Preliminary results have helped leaders and officials of the ministries, branches, and locales to more profoundly understand the dangers posed by "color revolutions" and from there to confirm project implementation as a crucial task connected to socio-economic development.

### 1.2. Results of implementing critical tasks and solutions

- Situation monitoring: Ministries, departments, and branches -- led by the Ministry of Public Security, Foreign Affairs, and National Defense-- have proactively deployed measures to detect plots to carry out "color revolutions" by hostile forces, typically activities supporting domestic reactionaries; taking advantage of

negotiations on trade and economic cooperation agreements to transform politics; taking advantage of democracy, human rights, ethnicity, religion --especially shortcomings in implementing social security for people facing difficulties due to the Covid-19 pandemic-- to incite protests and riots. Ministries, departments, and branches --led by the Ministry of Public Security, Foreign Affairs, and National Defense-- have proactively detected and dealt with hundreds of officials and party members who violated discipline and have degraded in terms of politics, morality, and lifestyle.

- Prevention work: Do a good job of political and ideological education, raise awareness among officials, party members, and the masses about the plots and tricks of hostile forces to carry out “color revolutions” in our country, while encouraging people to take responsibility to build the fatherland. Refute the distorted arguments of hostile forces, create a wave of condemnation, and boycott the sabotage activities of reactionaries, especially in cyberspace. Effectively enlist ethnic and religious dignitaries to prevent those intending to take advantage of religion and ethnicity to sabotage. Regularly review, supplement, and adjust protest and riot prevention plans to prevent protests and riots to ensure feasibility and effectiveness.

- The fight to prevent the risk of a “color revolution”: The Ministry of Public Security has identified reactionary subjects as the core of the “color revolution,” and since the project commenced, the ministry has: criminally prosecuted 75 individuals; neutralized 809 individuals; dealt with 3,272 domestic bases of exiled reactionaries, 1,235 individuals at their places of residence; and disbanded 19 illegal associations and groups. The Ministry of Public Security has coordinated with relevant ministries, departments, branches, and localities to eliminate risks that cause complications in religion, ethnicity, and society. Typical examples include the struggle to force the Vatican to make Bishop Nguyen Thai Hop retire; dealt with the leaders of the “Mong State”; strictly managed 670 FULRO members; nullified 4,620 grievance petitions; definitively resolved 27 incidents that risked becoming “hot spots”; requested foreign countries to not tolerate individuals engaged in anti-Vietnam activities; mobilized the

Vietnamese community abroad to support the Party and State's guidelines and policies; and proposed to temporarily suspend the execution of sentences for several foreign prisoners to serve foreign affairs requirements.

The Ministry of Public Security has developed and effectively implemented Plan No. 03/PA-BCA-V01 and Plan No. 04/PA-BCA-A02 to proactively prevent crime, prevent and handle complicated cases, large gatherings, and protests that disrupt security and order during and after the Covid-19 pandemic, thereby controlling the situation and preventing the formation of "hot spots" of security and order.

### 1.3. Results of implementing tasks in the Project

Of the 49 activities assigned under the project, 29 out of 49 are regular tasks; nine tasks to be implemented from 2020-2025 are currently being implemented; 11 tasks were completed in 2020, 2021, nine tasks have been completed on schedule, one task (developing the Law on Protection of Important Works Related to National Security chaired by the Ministry of Public Security) has been proposed to be transferred to 2022, one task is being implemented (amending and supplementing Decree No. 45/2010/ND-CP regulating the organization, operation, and management of associations chaired by the Ministry of Home Affairs).

## **2. Comments, forecasts, and critical work directions**

### 2.1. Comments, assessments

- Advantages: <sup>(1)</sup>Vietnam's political and economic prestige is continuing to rise, supported by international friends and the overseas Vietnamese community; <sup>(2)</sup>The Prime Minister is directing the project, so there is close coordination between ministries, branches and localities; <sup>(3)</sup>The system of positions and orders from the Party and the legal basis for the fight against the "color revolutions" is continuing to be specified and perfected/improved; <sup>(4)</sup>The Ministry of Public Security has organized regular police in 100% of communes, wards and towns to contribute to preventing

the occurrence of "color revolutions" by addressing known risk factors..

- Difficulties: <sup>(1)</sup>Preventing sabotage activities on cyberspace, and financial support from abroad is difficult because of insufficient technical means; unreliable legal grounds for blocking and forfeiting money; <sup>(2)</sup>Resolving complex issues of religion, ethnicity, and social security in key areas still faces many difficulties; <sup>(3)</sup>Coordination between ministries, branches, and localities in implementing the project is, at times, lacking; <sup>(4)</sup>The work of combating the activities of hostile forces is difficult because these forces are intertwined with economic, social, and community interests; <sup>(5)</sup>Material and human resources have received attention and investment, but are still not commensurate with the requirements and tasks of implementing the project.

## 2.2. Forecast and key work directions

- Forecast: Hostile and reactionary forces will continue to implement the strategy of "peaceful evolution," inciting protests, riots, and regime-overthrow to eliminate the leadership role of the Party and the socialist regime in Vietnam following the "color revolution" playbook. Although we have controlled the COVID-19 pandemic, the consequences of the pandemic are very severe, especially those relating to social security, unemployment, and increased crime... These are the risk factors, posing complex dangers to security and order, capable of creating a spillover effect that can be exploited by hostile forces in order to cause a "color revolution" to overthrow the current political regime in Vietnam.

- Key work directions<sup>(1)</sup> Strengthening the leadership of Party committees and the management of authorities at all levels in the work of preventing and stopping "color revolutions";<sup>(2)</sup> Proactively understand the situation, detect the plots and intentions of hostile and reactionary forces that seek to carry out "color revolutions" in order to deploy preventive measures; <sup>(3)</sup> Improve the effectiveness of state management in all fields, especially in cyberspace, promptly prevent and remove offending content, inciting protests and riots; <sup>(4)</sup> Effectively engage in diplomatic struggle, and combine it with the promotion of the image of the country and Vietnamese people with

international partners to serve as a basis to contain the sabotage activities of hostile and reactionary forces; <sup>(5)</sup>Continue to complete the tasks in the list attached to the Project to ensure progress and quality.

The Department of Internal Security respectfully reports to the Deputy Minister./.

***Recipients:***

- As above;
- The Director of the department (for report);
- File: VT, A02.

**ON BEHALF OF THE DIRECTOR**

**VIC DIRECTOR**

**Major General Doan Minh Ly**

# ANNEX 3: GENERAL DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE COUNTER INTELLIGENCE REPORT

## CONTENT

In the past, the Party committees and commanders of agencies and units in the Region have grasped and implemented the work of protecting internal politics, protecting secrets, ensuring security and safety, and contributing to building an absolutely safe political Region.

To further improve the quality and effectiveness of protecting internal politics, protecting secrets, and ensuring security and safety for agencies and units in the Region in the coming period, the Political Department has prepared a synthesis on the topic **“Some measures to strengthen the work of protecting internal politics, keeping secrets, ensuring security and safety of agencies and units”**<sup>1</sup> to inform and thoroughly educate comrades about the recent plots and tricks of foreign special agencies; highlighting past key issues regarding the work of protecting the internal political system, protecting secrets, ensuring security and safety in the Military, Branch, and Region (focusing on 2023); propose some specific measures to help Party committees and commanders implement them in agencies and units, to contribute to building politically solid agencies and units, and to prevent violations of law and discipline.

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<sup>1</sup> Documents are managed and used in accordance with Confidential material status.

## **Part 1: SOME ISSUES REGARDING INTERNAL SECURITY WORK, AND ENSURING THE SAFETY AND SECURITY OF AGENCIES AND UNITS**

The agencies and units of Naval Region 1 are stationed in 22 communes, wards, and towns in 31 districts of 05 provinces and cities. Among these are critical areas of security and national defense (Hai Phong - Quang Ninh is the counterintelligence line of the security agency); areas with complicated religious and rural security (Thanh Hoa, Nghe An, Ha Tinh). Some units are stationed spread out, far from the center, on coastal islands (stations of Regiment 151, Brigade 169...). The agencies and units of the Naval branch, in general, and Region 1, is always the critical target of intelligence and espionage activities, a site for foreign special agencies to make contacts. In addition, given complicated developments in the world, region, and East Sea, the plots and sabotage tricks of hostile forces, the adverse effects of the market economy have had a significant impact on the internal political situation of the unit, placing increasing demands on the work of protecting internal politics, keeping secrets, ensuring security and safety.

### **I. RECENT PLOT, METHODS, AND TACTICAL ACTIVITIES OF SOME FOREIGN SPECIAL AGENCIES TO INFILTRATE MILITARY SECURITY AND NATIONAL SECURITY**

#### **1. US intelligence agencies**

To carry out the plot to eliminate the leadership role of the Communist Party of Vietnam and overthrow the socialist regime of Vietnam, US intelligence agencies will use any means to achieve a political transformation. In the field of national defense and security, US intelligence agencies have increased military intelligence gathering through such public activities as: diplomatic contacts with individuals and units in the military; pushing Vietnam to expand the scope and fields of bilateral and multilateral defense cooperation to enlist Vietnam to participate in US military institutions in the region; increase the US military presence through military ship repair activities; and

humanitarian assistance programs, which aim to improve the Vietnamese people's perception of the US military.

Notably, America continues to maintain close relations with several military attachés of countries allied with the US (*Japan, South Korea, Thailand, UK, Australia...*) to collect and share intelligence on Vietnam's military, as well as foreign policy on ASEAN countries, China, the US, and countries related to US interests.

**\* Recently, some of the US intelligence agencies' operations in Vietnam have emerged as follows:**

***Regarding intelligence coordination activities,*** previously, CIA representatives in Vietnam only had relations with agents from South Korea, Australia, England, and Singapore. Recently, in addition to agents from countries, the CIA in Vietnam has met and established relations with agents and embassy staff from many other countries, including China, Thailand, Russia, Ukraine, and Bulgaria. We discovered that US intelligence agencies are collecting information through relationships with embassy staff from third countries in Vietnam.

***Regarding intelligence gathering activities:*** The US has stepped up information gathering activities related to our internal affairs to ensure US interests prevail in relations with Vietnam. The focus of these activities include: the situation of high-level officials, the foreign affairs situation, economy and finance, risks of instability to Vietnamese society, the influence of major countries such as Russia, China, India, Japan... on Vietnam; increased contact with opportunistic and opposition groups to collect information on democracy, human rights, ethnicity, and religion in Vietnam. Especially with the support of information technology, recently, these actors have also promoted technical intelligence-gathering activities through the internet to infiltrate and attack the network systems of our key agencies and departments to take control of the information collection systems and at the same time, use modern equipment to intercept signals and steal our classified information.

**Regarding the activities of contacting and recruiting intelligence and espionage networks:** The activities of contacting and selecting US espionage assets in Vietnam have recently been adjusted, with expanded targets and more sophisticated tactics:

- Taking advantage of working sessions, direct contacts, organizing receptions, conferences, and seminars;

- Through negotiations and signing contracts to contact and solicit information or to approach, get acquainted, and create relationships with our cadres, in order to recruit them to create an opportunity to send them to study in America through programs sponsored by the US;

- Through training courses and seminars on security cooperation and law enforcement sponsored by the US to establish relationships with cadres in the police and military sectors to approach and select sources to create underground networks;

- Using Vietnamese people working in US diplomatic agencies and foreign organizations to contact, select sources, and introduce them to US intelligence.

## **2. Chinese Special Agencies**

Over the years, Vietnam-China relations have continued to develop in all areas of politics, economics, culture, society, national defense, and security. However, to carry out their intentions, Chinese intelligence agencies continue to carry out “people's intelligence” and “wide intelligence” to collect all kinds of news and documents when possible, increase activities that make contacts, enlist, and create networks of Vietnamese citizens to plant espionage assets, as well as creating internal pro-China elements. The activities of Chinese intelligence agencies are very closely coordinated, taking advantage of many different names and then setting traps to capture, control, and build espionage operations to collect intelligence information most effectively. Their main methods of recruitment and base establishment are:

- Through invitations to visit China for tourism, medical treatment, and business transactions to make contact, grasp the situation, create excuses to capture, exploit, and delegate tasks; systematically exploit the number of Vietnamese people residing and working in China and the number of Chinese people trading and doing business at border markets to transfer documents and introduce contacts to Chinese intelligence agencies.

- Thoroughly exploit the cover of diplomatic missions, economic, commercial, cultural, and military representative offices in Vietnam to approach, collect information, and influence political opinions; take advantage of bilateral cooperation in various fields, bring people into Vietnam under various disguised names, usually tourism, market research, seminars, art performances, etc. as an opportunity to travel and make extensive contact in various sectors; through negotiations, seminars, project contract signing ceremonies, contacting cadres of ministries, departments and branches to collect intelligence and information about the internal situation and identify leads to lure them to China for exploitation and recruitment. The subjects of selection are cadres working in Party organizations, government agencies, and armed forces at the central and local levels; those working in crucial, confidential departments or having the ability to influence the strategic policy-making of the Party, State, and Military, as well as cadres and party members with pro-China views.

- Notably, in recent times, implementing the open foreign policy of the Party and State, the Military has also sent many cadres to study and work abroad, especially in China. Due to the nature of the work and the position of work after returning home, military students studying abroad have always been targeted and contacted by Chinese intelligence agencies. They often take advantage of the exchange activities of organizations and unions in schools to find ways to meet, contact, and help to establish relationships, asking our soldiers to provide internal information and military secrets such as information about economic and defense development issues in Vietnam, the internal military situation and foreign relations between Vietnam and other countries. In many incidents, they take advantage when Vietnamese students

in China violate local laws, or they use women, money, and materials to bribe, control, and build a long-term espionage operation network within our organization.

### **3. Special agencies of Western countries**

Intelligence agencies of these countries often take advantage of the cover of embassy staff, military attaches, and members of temporary delegations to find ways to meet and contact our soldiers. These actors often pay attention to those who have worked or studied in their country or are on mission to develop relations with partners. After getting acquainted, they solicit phone numbers and arrange to meet at restaurants, hotels, cafes, or at the offices of the agents.

**\* French intelligence agencies:** Although they do not oppose us fiercely, France's political plot against Vietnam has not changed. Like some countries in the EU, France considers human rights a priority in its foreign policy towards Vietnam. It continues to carry out the “peaceful evolution” plot to carry out regime change, eliminate the leadership role of the Communist Party, and gradually steer Vietnam toward the orbit of capitalist countries.

French special agencies, through cultural, scientific and technical, education, training, technology transfer activities, etc., take advantage of official activities to send special agents to infiltrate into our country to conduct intelligence collection, recruit spy networks, sabotage ideology, support and build political opposition organizations in the country.

**\* Russian intelligence agencies:** To restore and maintain their influence in the region, Russian intelligence agencies have and will continue to thoroughly exploit the close relationship in all fields with Vietnam to conduct intelligence gathering activities, especially military intelligence, make contacts to build spy networks and plant assets in our internal affairs to serve their interests.

Information collected by Russian intelligence agencies includes Vietnam-China relations, Vietnam-US relations, Vietnam-Laos-Cambodia relations; Vietnamese public opinion on the East Sea situation; Cam Ranh Port, people expressing grievances and protesting in some localities; the military officer and cadre pay scale policies; the sending of military officers for training in China, the US and Western countries; ordnance conditions and Vietnam's arms procurement policies.

In addition, intelligence agencies of **Sweden, Germany, and the UK** also use investment and aid activities and implement projects to monitor the situation, put pressure on Vietnam on issues of democracy and human rights, promote liberalization of the capitalist market economy, seek to impose and influence our internal affairs and promote cooperation activities with the intention of forcing Vietnam to depend on their policies.

#### **4. Japanese intelligence agencies**

As an ally of the US in the Asia-Pacific region, Japan is also a country that the US has exploited to deploy and implement its regional and global strategies. Although it has not directly revealed plots or intentions to directly sabotage and overthrow Vietnam, Japan still has to work with the US to implement an anti-Vietnam policy and, through cooperative relations, to influence and steer Vietnam in line with the intentions of the US and Japan.

To achieve its goals and intentions, the Japanese special agency has specified its goals and tasks in organizing and implementing espionage plans in Vietnam, such as arranging and planting intelligence officers, infiltrating the staff of the Japanese permanent office in Vietnam to collect information on the political, economic, and national security and defense situation, to help Japan promote its policy of national security and defense cooperation with Vietnam, thereby enhancing Japan's position in the region and containing China.

## **II. SOME NOTEWORTHY ISSUES RECENTLY ARISING FROM INTERNAL POLITICAL PROTECTION WORK, MAINTAINING CONFIDENTIALITY, ENSURING SECURITY, AND AGENCY SAFETY IN REGION'S MILITARY UNITS AND BRANCHES**

### **1. Internal political protection work**

In recent years, Party committees and commanders of agencies and units in the entire Region have thoroughly grasped and thoughtfully implemented resolutions, directives, regulations, and rules on internal political protection work, contributing to ensuring internal stability, political purity, and successful completion of assigned tasks. Reviewing and assessing political personnel standards to serve the work of party development, military recruitment, recruitment and selection of people entering agencies and units, and critical confidential positions; planning, appointing cadres... has achieved certain results. The work of examining, verifying, and concluding political standards for cadres and party members has been carried out more thoughtfully and effectively, promptly serving the tasks of the Region. The work of grasping and managing the internal political situation, preventing and stopping hostile forces' plots and tricks to lure, plant, contact, and conduct internal sabotage in agencies and units has been maintained regularly and implemented effectively; the internal solidarity and unity of agencies and units is high.

#### **However, through monitoring, some limitations have emerged:**

- Some Party committees and commanders of agencies and units have not yet firmly grasped and deeply understood the regulations on internal political protection work, especially the new regulations,<sup>2</sup> The work of examining, verifying, concluding on political standards and considering, arranging, using, and managing several incidents

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<sup>2</sup> Regulation No. 58-QD/TW dated February 8, 2022, of the Political Bureau on "some issues on protecting internal Party politics"; Regulation No. 1818-OD/QUTW dated March 9, 2023 of the Standing Committee of the Central Military Commission on some contents implementing Regulation No. 58-QD/TW dated February 8, 2022 of the Political Bureau.

of cadres and party members with political problems; party members linked to foreign elements; religious party members...is still confusing.

- The coordination between responsible agencies (cadres, military forces, security...) is not regular and tight; the implementation of the process of reviewing, assessing, and ensuring political standards for people working in agencies, units, and critical confidential positions is still formal, not substantial; there are individual incidents in which either the assessment records are completed after the decision to transfer or appoint has been made or there is no assessment form from the security protecting agency as prescribed.

- Some cadres and party members do not have a firm grasp of the regulations and have not voluntarily and promptly reported to their workplace Party Committee and Party organization about changes to their personal and family information, especially issues related to foreign elements.

- Efforts to grasp and manage the internal political situation are still superficial and untimely; leading to delays in detecting and addressing incidents and issues relating to internal affairs.

***\* In addition to the existence of general shortcomings, the internal political situation of agencies and units in the Region is still complex and requires strengthened monitoring and management, such as:***

According to the summary reports of the units, as of October 2023:

- The whole Region has 143 comrades who have declared external debts, of which 42 are officers, and 101 are career soldiers, with a total loaned amount of over 43.3 billion VND, and a current debt of over 30.4 billion VND (*in reality it may be higher because many individuals have not voluntarily declared to the unit*); among these are 13 incidents of debts of 500 million VND or more; two incidents of debts of over 1 billion VND, with the highest individual loan at 2.6 billion VND). The primary reasons

for borrowing are to buy land, build houses, buy cars, treat illnesses, cover living expenses, support families, and invest in external businesses to increase income... these are legitimate activities. However, a lack of control and management of officers' debts can cause personal pressure and affect the work process at the unit, and borrowing beyond the ability to pay can easily lead to legal and disciplinary violations (*which have happened in reality*).

- There are 51 incidents of contributions, investment, and outside business with a total amount of over 4 billion VND; the main form of participation is small household business and capital contribution with relatives... according to the unit's reports, the above incidents all operate in accordance with the law. However, through monitoring it has been observed that some Party committees and unit commanders have not paid attention to, followed up, and grasped this activity of the soldiers.

- The whole Region currently has 20 incidents of people who are not at ease in their work, have the idea of demobilization or early retirement, and need continued monitoring, encouragement, and resolution by Party committees and command agencies and units.

- Law enforcement and discipline in some units are still not firm. In 2023, the Region still had three incidents, including one traffic accident that killed one citizen (prosecuted by local police, the Investigation Agency of KVI HQ is investigating and handling); one accident that injured one soldier; one case of disclosing information due to violation of regulations on ensuring information security and safety.

- In addition, the risk of violations related to black market credit; participating in lottery, gambling, and online gambling; violating regulations on information security, regulations on using social networks (*participating in commenting, sharing negative information on cyberspace, posting images related to the unit's activities leading to the revelation of state secrets*) still exists.

**\* Some specific recent violations in the Military Branch (announced by the Department of Security Protection):**

- *First*, illegal contact with foreign organizations and individuals, such as: unauthorized meeting and private contact with foreign experts in violation of regulations; soldiers who have studied abroad and returned to their work units still keep in touch with foreign friends via social networks. In some incidents, they even contacted foreigners to ask for help in applying for scholarships; soldiers who did business and developed relationships with many foreigners were lured by them to leave the country illegally, signs of being contacted and recruited by foreign intelligence agencies.

- *Second*, illegal exit: During the year, the Military Branch discovered three incidents of soldiers illegally leaving the country. Of which, two incidents committed violations in previous years and were only recently discovered (Brigade 602/BTM); one case of a soldier being tricked into going to Cambodia to sell his kidney, being held by bad guys, and demanding ransom from Brigade 954.<sup>(3)</sup>

- *Third*, borrowing money without the ability to pay leads to negative behavior, violating the law, and discipline. In 2023, the Region resolved five incidents of demobilization (three), and early retirement (two) related to the above manifestations (PTM= one; Brigade 147= two; Brigade 679= two; including one military officer and four career soldiers).

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<sup>3</sup> (i) Major CN Pham Xuan Thang, a weapons officer in the Technical Department, Brigade 602, from 2017 to 2020, illegally exited the country twice to China and twice to Cambodia; the declared purpose was to trade goods; Thang's wife, Captain CN Hoang Thi Thu Trang, a warehouse keeper, Technical Department, Brigade 602, illegally exited the country once (with a travel document) to China, the declared purpose was to visit and shop; (ii) Captain Do Quang Lam, military training assistant, Staff Department, Brigade 954, while on family leave, illegally exited the country from July 10 to 13, 2023 to sell his kidney, and was tricked into selling it by the subjects for ransom. After the family sent the ransom, on July 13, 2023, Lam was released by the subjects and returned to Vietnam.

- *Fourth*, anonymous letters and messages reflecting false information originating from personal motives and purposes still occur, causing organizational disruption, suspicion, and tension within the unit.

## **2. The legal and disciplinary situation in the entire military and the Military Branch in 2023**

In 2023,<sup>4</sup> the entire military had 290 incidents of law and discipline violations/277 violators, 164 people were killed (*120 soldiers; four contract employees, one VCQP, and 93 civilians*); 121 people were injured (*69 soldiers; five contract employees, one regular militia, and 46 civilians*). Of these, there were 88 severe violations of law and discipline, 178 incidents of ordinary discipline violations, and 24 other incidents. Through monitoring and evaluation compared to 2022, the situation of law enforcement of the State, military discipline, and ensuring safety in the entire military in 2023 decreased in the number of incidents (*four incidents*), the number of violators (*10 people*), and the number of deaths (*17 people*). However, incidents of law violations related to drugs and property fraud have tended to increase; new and complicated incidents have appeared related to the information technology sector; the situation of officers deserting has increased (*08/13 incidents*); incidents of desertion and unsafe work conditions have not decreased; the number of injured people has increased (*45 people*); incidents of humiliation and assault on comrades have not been stopped. The primary violators are officers and career soldiers (*183/277 people*), accounting for 66.06%.

According to statistics, in 2023, the Military Branch had 34 incidents (*actual data*), killing 15 soldiers and two civilians, injuring nine soldiers and two civilians. These included: 10 traffic accidents; two suicide incidents belonging to the HQ/CCT and

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<sup>4</sup> According to the announcement of the Military Training Bureau in Official Dispatch No. 4694/TB-QH dated November 24, 2023, regarding the state of discipline compliance across the entire army from November 20, 2022, to November 19, 2023.

HVHQ Newspapers; one case of organizing and illegally using drugs belonging to X28/CKT; one case of illegal drug use at the College of Military Economics; 12 incidents of accidents and unsafe living and working conditions; three incidents of unauthorized absence at the Submarine TADD/CHC; HVHQ and Brigade 131; one case of fraud and illegal exit at Brigade 602/BTM; one case of abuse of trust and illegally exiting the country at Region 5; one case of a robbery at the Military Economics Center at Region 2; one case of illegally exiting the country at Brigade 954 and one case of gambling at Region 4 (*the Security Protection Department reported details of the incidents in weekly and monthly meetings*).

According to the assessment, the above incidents have objective and subjective causes. However, the subjective causes still predominate, and are the responsibility of the Party Committees and commanders of some agencies and units in the leadership, direction, and maintenance of discipline management at the unit are still not good; political and ideological education work is still subjective; lack of meticulousness in inspection and monitoring of the unit situation; the self-awareness of some soldiers is still poor, they are hedonistic, want to get rich quickly, and do not strictly comply with the law, discipline and regulations; in labor, work and traffic participation, they are still subjective, leading to insecurity...

In 2023, security protection agencies in the entire military organized verification, investigation, and search for 527 incidents and requested specialists related to the internal political situation of the military and soldiers violating state laws and Army discipline (an increase of 72 incidents compared to 2022). Of which, 83 petitions related to internal politics of the Army were verified; 87 incidents of messages and phone calls to the Head of the Ministry of National Defense, commanders of agencies and units with poor content, causing internal disunity; 32 soldiers had illegal relationships with foreigners, left the country without reporting and showed signs of being contacted and lured by foreign agencies; three incidents of information and documents staged and falsified by foreign countries related to military and national defense were verified and disseminated on cyberspace; action

was taken against 14 subjects verified as impersonating military officers to defraud, and appropriate property for personal gain; 25 incidents of unauthorized soldier absences from their units; nine sources of information and reports on incidents and crimes were received and resolved.

In the Military Branch, the Security Protection agencies of the units verified 31 incidents and issues related to internal politics and security and safety of the Branch; Received and resolved one crime report; coordinated verification and processing of 13 petitions and messages of various types, including eight anonymous petitions and messages.

### **3. Regarding the situation of information and document leakage in agencies and units**

The main violations are using personal computers with Internet connection to draft and store unit documents, using military computers to draft and store unit documents to connect to the Internet via wireless networks, computers infected with malware to steal data and spread it to the Internet... From 2022 to the present, the Military Branch has discovered one case of document leakage at eight agencies and units (*including a case of a soldier in Brigade 170*). In addition, there are violations in drafting, photocopying, providing, transporting, and receiving confidential documents, leading to the risk of disclosure and loss of secrets; using mobile phones or satellite phones to talk about unit tasks, reporting troop numbers, and situations containing confidential content still occur.

## **Part 2: SOME MEASURES TO STRENGTHEN INTERNAL POLITICAL PROTECTION WORK, MAINTAIN CONFIDENTIALITY, ENSURE SECURITY AND SAFETY OF AGENCIES AND UNITS IN THE COMING TIME**

**1. Continue to study and strictly implement regulations on internal political protection work; thoroughly educate soldiers to strictly comply with regulations on confidentiality, security, and safety of agencies and units**

Focus on the following documents and regulations:

**\* *Internal political protection work:***

- Regulation No. 58-QD/TW, dated February 8, 2022, of the Political Bureau “some issues on internal political protecting of the Party”; Regulation No. 1818-QD/QUTW, dated March 9, 2023 of the Standing Committee of the Central Military Commission on some contents of implementing Regulation No. 58-QD/TW dated February 8, 2022 of the Political Bureau.

- Circular No. 263/2013/TT-BQP dated December 31, 2013, of the Ministry of National Defense “Regulations on agencies, units, and important confidential positions in the Army”;

- Joint Circular No. 50/2016/TTLTT-BQP-BCA dated April 15, 2016, of the Ministry of National Defense and the Ministry of Public Security “Regulating political standards in recruiting citizens to serve in the Vietnam People’s Army”;

- Circular No. 05/2019/TT-BQP, dated January 16, 2019, of the Ministry of National Defense “Regulations on political standards of the Military Officers, Career Soldiers, Civil Servants, Public Employees, Defense Workers, And Defense Officials”;

- Official Official Dispatch No. 1764/CT-BVAN, dated September 7, 2020, of the General Department of Customs on “Conclusion on political standards for personnel related to foreign elements.”

**\* *Protecting secrecy, security and safety work***

- Decision No. 12/QD-TTg, dated February 27, 2023 of the Prime Minister promulgating the List of state secrets in the defense sector;

- Circular No. 166/2020/TT-BQP, dated December 25, 2020 of the Ministry of National Defense “Regulations on state secret protection work in the Ministry of National Defense”;

- Circular No. 110/2014/TT-BQP dated August 22, 2014 of the Ministry of National Defense on “Issuing regulations on management, provision and use of Internet services in the Vietnam People’s Army”;

- Circular No. 56/2020/TT-BQP dated May 5, 2020 of the Ministry of National Defense on “Regulations on management and assurance of information security and network security in the Ministry of National Defense”;

- Directive No. 100/CT-BQP dated November 13, 2019 of the Minister of National Defense on “Management and use of audio and video recording devices in the Army”;

- Decision No. 99/QD-BTL dated January 4, 2013 of the Navy Commander on “Information security, safety and confidentiality in the Navy”;

- Circular No. 03/2019/TT-BQP, dated January 10, 2019 of the Ministry of National Defense on “Regulations on press management in the Ministry of National Defense”;

- Circular No. 130/2019/TT-BQP, dated September 11, 2019 on “Regulations on propaganda about the Spratly and Paracel Islands, DK1 Platform and other seas and islands of Vietnam”;

- Circular No. 183/2017/TT-BQP, dated August 4, 2017 of the Minister of National Defense on “Regulations on speaking and providing information to the press in the Ministry of National Defense”;

- Circular No. 68/2023/TT-BQP dated September 25, 2023 of the Ministry of National Defense on “Issuing regulations on document work in the Ministry of National Defense”;

- Official dispatch No. 4790/VP-TH dated December 24, 2019 of the Office of the Ministry of Public Security on posting images of the Army’s actions on mass media;  
Official dispatch No. 3317/TH-TTBC dated August 17, 2021 of the Propaganda

Department on providing information to the press when there are complicated and sensitive incidents at agencies and units;

**\* *Defense and foreign affairs work***

- Circular No. 152/2021/TT-BQP, dated November 21, 2021, of the Minister of Defense detailing several articles and guiding the implementation of Decree No. 22/2016/ND-CP dated March 31, 2016, of the Government regulating defense foreign affairs;

- Directive No. 5007/CT-BTL, dated April 20, 2020 of the Navy Commander on strengthening internal political protection and confidentiality in implementing projects to purchase and import weapons and equipment of the Service;

- Directive No. 11993/CT-BTL, dated September 23, 2020 of the Navy Political Commissar on strengthening the management of delegations and individuals in the Service going on business trips and studying abroad.

**\* *Regulations on building discipline and discipline management***

- Directive No. 79/CT-BQP, dated July 22, 2022, on building a comprehensively strong unit "Exemplary model" in the entire military;

- Directive No. 103/CT-BQP, dated November 28, 2019 of the Minister of National Defense on continuing to strengthen management, education on discipline enforcement and ensuring safety in the Vietnam People's Army;

- Directive No. 11/CT-TM, dated April 12, 2023 of the Chief of the General Staff on improving the quality of building discipline and discipline management in the entire military;

- Instruction No. 1279/HD-CT, dated June 5, 2023 of the General Staff on Party work and political work in improving the quality of building discipline and discipline management.

## **2. Some specific measures**

### **2.1. Strengthening the work of grasping and strictly managing the internal political situation at agencies and units**

Grasping and managing the internal political situation is part of the work of protecting internal politics; it is the work of collecting intelligence, the political situation, ideology, organization, people, incidents, and phenomena related to the work of protecting internal politics of the Military, thereby proactively preventing openings and shortcomings and fighting against internal sabotage activities of hostile forces and harmful elements.

The content of grasping and managing the internal political situation includes Grasping and managing the political situation of a person, grasping and managing complicated political incidents and phenomena, and grasping and managing the situation of a unit.

In particular, ***grasping and managing a person's political situation*** requires a firm grasp of that person's background and the process of their sociopolitical action. Including (i) Background, previous positions, workplace, strengths and weaknesses during the working process; (ii) their relationships, focusing on finding out which relationships have positive impacts and which relationships have negative impacts on the ideology and awareness of the soldier; (iii) monitoring and grasping the current political attitudes of the soldier, such as: their ideological stance, views on the Party line and policies, on the Party's present enterprise of renovation; compliance with Government laws, military discipline and unit tasks; (iv) finally grasping the moral qualities and lifestyle of the soldier (*in which it should be noted that those with bad moral qualities themselves are likely to violate discipline, causing complicated problems within the unit*).

***Grasping and managing complicated political incidents and phenomena*** are incidents and phenomena which are suspected of related to the plots, methods,

and tricks of sabotage activities of the enemy and harmful elements, or these negative factors generate wrong thoughts and viewpoints contrary to the Party line and policies. The above incidents and phenomena may have occurred, causing specific harms; sometimes, they are just public opinions but have serious harms. In the unit, there are often the following types of incidents and phenomena:

- Incidents and phenomena related to the activities of infiltration, contacting, luring, and bribery by the enemy and harmful elements;
- Incidents and phenomena related to activities of harming cadres and soldiers or related to activities of sabotaging weapons and military-technical equipment;
- Incidents and phenomena related to psychological warfare activities, spreading false rumors, spreading false information, distributing reactionary and oppositional documents;
- Incidents and phenomena related to leaks and loss of secrecy;
- Negative phenomena of dissatisfaction and opposition of some cadres and soldiers.

***Grasping and managing a unit's situation*** includes grasping the unit's history, traditions, and organizational structure, the political tasks of the unit, the current personnel situation, and the situation of the unit's military area.

***\* Methods of grasping and managing the internal political situation***

Grasp the situation through cadres and soldiers in the unit. The Party Committee and unit commanders need to strengthen education and raise revolutionary vigilance for soldiers so that they can identify their obligations and responsibilities to protect themselves and the unit, and detect and report to the unit commander about things they know and suspect internally.

Grasp the situation through administrative and command measures. This is based on the compliance and implementation of regimes, rules, and regulations through briefings reflecting the situation of the unit to grasp and evaluate internally. Through the activities of the team of Party Committee Secretaries in charge of protection work and soldiers at the local units to grasp the situation according to the prescribed duties and *responsibilities (will be explicitly presented in the following section)*.

It should be noted that the information and documents initially grasped about a particular incident or phenomenon only reflect the external phenomenon, which may or may not be correct and may only be partially correct. Therefore, it is necessary to check whether the source of information is correct or incorrect, and from there to research, evaluate, and propose a method to resolve the information in accordance with the nature of the problem, incident, or phenomenon. Requirements: The work of grasping the situation must be regular, timely, and comprehensive in all issues related to soldiers, units, and areas; comprehensively apply measures; and be the responsibility of all organizations and individuals in the unit. In reality, incidents and issues related to internal politics, disciplinary violations, and loss of security and safety have all developed rapidly. The signs are tricky to grasp and recognize (*in thoughts and ideas; suicides often occur in soldiers who are withdrawn, have little interaction or confide in others; during leave, taking advantage of the situation; soldiers who have just returned to the unit; individuals who violate the law often actively cover up...*). Therefore, the Party Committee and commanders of agencies and units must show the utmost concern, always stay close to the unit, be close to the soldiers, absolutely must not be subjective or negligent in any circumstances; at the same time, they must promote the responsibility of all individuals, Party organizations, and Military Branch organizations in the unit in grasping the situation.

**2.2. Strictly implement the process of appraisal, selection, and assignment of people to work in essential and confidential agencies and units** (*according to*

*the provisions of Circular 263/2013/TT-BQP dated December 31, 2013, of the Ministry of National Defense).*

- When there is a request to select and assign people to work in essential and confidential agencies, units, and positions (*according to the list specified in Decision No. 10.098/QD-BTL, dated September 9, 2014 of the Navy Commander*), the Party Committee, Political Commissar (CTV), and commander of the agency or unit shall direct the personnel agency or military agency to coordinate with the Security Protection agency to study the records and review the criteria for selection.

- The personnel agency or military agency selecting and assigning the unit shall provide the records of the person selected and assigned to the Security Protection agency at the same level for coordination in studying and assessing the political criteria.

- The Security Protection Agency conducts research and assessment and concludes in writing on the political standards for the person intended to be selected or transferred and sends it to the personnel agency or the military force.

- After concluding the political standards of the person intended to be selected or transferred, the personnel agency or the military force synthesizes and reports to the Party Committee or unit commander for consideration and decision or proposes to the superior to consider and decide according to their authority.

*Note: In places where there is no agency (assistant) specializing in Security Protection work, the head of the political agency or political assistant (in places where there is no political agency) is responsible for researching, assessing, and concluding on the political standards of the person intended to be selected or transferred. The written conclusion on the political standards is kept at the Security Protection Agency and the file of the selected or transferred person.*

### **2.3. Promoting the role and effectiveness of the security protecting team at the unit in carrying out internal political protecting work, keeping secrets, and ensuring security and safety of the agency and unit**

To promote the role and effectiveness of the security protecting team at the unit, the Party Committee Secretary must maintain a regular schedule of activities, listen to reports and feedback from the security protecting team, and assign tasks to the security protection team according to the unit's mission requirements. Before conducting activities with the security protection team, the Party Committee Secretary must fully prepare the content of the activities, such as: Characteristics of the unit's situation, location and requirements of security protecting work; training content, assignment of tasks, evaluation of performance results for each security protection soldier,... expected location and time for the next activity.

#### **\* Content of activities:**

- The Party Committee Secretary listens to the security guard soldiers report on the unit's situation, the stationed area, and the results of the security protection tasks assigned in the previous meeting. The order of reflection is for each person, and the party committee in charge must record the contents that the security protection soldiers have recounted.

- The Party Committee Secretary reports on the situation of compliance with discipline and regime in the unit (including compliance by Party Committee members, commanders and officers, soldiers and employees in the unit), the situation of the area, and the requirements of the security protection work tasks.

- The Party Committee Secretary assigns tasks to the security protection soldiers. The content of the tasks must be specific, avoid assigning general and vague tasks; the tasks must be suitable for the capabilities of the security protection soldiers and not affect the implementation of professional tasks at the unit. For complex and complicated tasks, it is necessary to foster the working experience of the security

protection soldiers in approaching the subjects and targets to grasp the situation in the unit.

- Disseminate regulations on ensuring confidentiality and safety when performing tasks.

- Encourage or propose timely rewards for security protection soldiers who have completed their tasks well or remind those who have not.

***\* Some contents to note during the activities of the Security Protection Party Committee Secretary and the Security Protection Soldiers***

- The activities between the Security Protection Party Committee Secretary and the Security Protection Soldiers are registered in a separate book managed by the Party Committee Secretary.

- All activities of the security guard members and security guards must comply with the provisions of the law, the orders governing the soldiers, the regulations of the agency or unit... for internal protection, ensure confidentiality and safety of the agency and unit, do not take advantage for personal purposes.

- The information reported and recounted by security protection soldiers must be verified for authenticity before use. Information that does not meet the conditions for verification and clarification can be reported to the superior Party Committee, the Security Guard agency, or the officer to coordinate verification.

- The use of information reported and recounted by soldiers must be reasonable, not allowing people who are not responsible know the source of the information, affecting the work, life, and relationships of security protection soldiers at the unit.

**2.4. Effectively and systematically maintain the situation reporting regime, educate and raise the vigilance of soldiers against the plots, tricks and activities**

**of hostile forces and all kinds of crimes; seriously learn from incidents occurring in the Military and the Branch to raise the understanding, awareness and self-consciousness of discipline and law compliance for officers and soldiers**

Currently, each week, month and quarter, the Regional Political Department and the Political Department have bulletins announcing the security and order situation, the situation related to the Military; periodically every month, quarter, six months and year, the Navy General Staff and the Military Training Department have announcements on the situation of discipline compliance in the entire Army. Based on the announcements of competent agencies, agencies, and units through various forms of concentrated activities, meetings, and situation reports... educate and raise the vigilance of soldiers against the plots and activities of hostile forces and all kinds of crimes; Actively fight and prevent violations of law, discipline, and insecurity in the unit.

### **CONCLUSION**

In the coming time, the activities of planting, connecting, and cyber espionage to collect intelligence and sabotage by special agencies and hostile foreign forces will increase in scale, intensity, and focus on essential and confidential areas, locations, and strategic areas of national defense and security, border lines, and islands. On the other hand, the situation in the East Sea is forecast to continue to have complex and unpredictable developments. The agencies and units of the Navy, in general, and Region 1, in particular, are some of the critical targets that intelligence agencies and hostile forces focus on infiltrating and collecting secret military information. Based on the above situation, to strengthen the work of protecting internal politics, keeping secrets, and ensuring security and safety of agencies and units, it is recommended that Party committees, commanders of agencies and units and each officer and soldier in the entire Region raise the spirit of vigilance, strictly implement regulations and rules on ensuring security and safety, proactively prevent and stop incidents that

cause internal political insecurity, risk of revealing secrets, contributing to ensuring absolute safety for the Region's activities./.

# ANNEX 4 - GUIDANCE NOTE ON RESOLUTION 28-NQ/TW

## Part Two: CONTENT

### I. The Party's Perspective on Partners and Adversaries of the Vietnamese Revolution in the New Context

#### 1. The Process of Forming the Party's Perspective on Partners and Adversaries

Distinguishing between partners and adversaries is a highly sensitive issue in international relations, but it cannot be avoided or overlooked. Failing to identify partners clearly may prevent us from fully leveraging opportunities for development, while failing to identify adversaries may lead to ambiguity and a lack of vigilance. This is an extremely challenging task, requiring comprehensive, scientific, and objective analysis based on an accurate assessment of the global and regional situation, with a deep strategic vision.

During the reform period, the key question was: How can Vietnam open up and integrate, attract foreign investment, while maintaining independence, sovereignty, unity, territorial integrity, hold tight to our core national interests, security, and social order? The 6th Party Congress outlined a comprehensive reform policy, promoting international integration and building and defending the Fatherland. Standing firmly on the working-class standpoint, deeply rooted in Marxism-Leninism, Ho Chi Minh's Thought, national traditions, and global experiences, the Party developed its perspective on partners and adversaries in understanding and handling international relations.

The 1991 Political Platform established a fundamental and guiding principle regarding partners and adversaries. Accordingly, forces that infringe upon national independence or obstruct the six objectives of building socialism are the adversaries of the Vietnamese people. The adversaries directly confronting us were

“neo-colonialism and hostile forces opposing national independence and socialism”; our military and people were to combat and struggle against those adversaries in order to “oppose imperialist intervention and aggression to protect national independence and sovereignty.”

This perspective was further clarified, supplemented, and developed during the 7th and 8th Party Congresses, affirming the policy of continuing to “embrace the revolutionary offensive spirit, proactively and actively countering all plots and activities aimed at undermining us.”

Subsequently, the 8th Central Committee Resolution of the 11th Party Congress on the “Strategy to Protect the Fatherland New Situation” elevated this principle into a formal perspective: *“Those who respect Vietnam’s independence and sovereignty, establish and expand friendly, cooperative, equal, and mutually beneficial relations with Vietnam are partners; any forces who scheme or act to undermine Vietnam’s objectives of building and defending the Fatherland are adversaries. However, in the rapidly evolving and complex current situation, a dialectical approach is needed: within each adversary, there may be aspects to leverage or cooperate with; within each partner, there may be contradictions with our interests that require struggle.”*

With this new thinking, the 8th Central Committee Resolution of the 9th Party Congress on the “Strategy to Protect the Fatherland in the New Situation” summarized this into a principle, reflecting a new and unified view of partners and adversaries. After the resolution was issued, the principle of identifying and handling partner-adversary relations was tested and proven correct.

The perspective on partners and adversaries is a standout feature, marking a breakthrough in the Party’s new thinking on fatherland defense. It maintains principles while remaining flexible in international relations, promptly identifying opportunities to exploit and challenges to address, avoiding passivity or surprise.

The handling of partner-adversary relations is based on a holistic perspective, prioritizing the fundamental and long-term interests of the nation and people, without sacrificing fundamental long-term benefits for partial gains. While strengthening partnerships, we persistently struggle to satisfactorily resolve emerging issues, complex situations, contradictions, and disputes, contributing to maintaining and consolidating a peaceful and stable environment for national development.

## **2. The Concept of Partners**

**Partner:** The term refers to a collaborative relationship at a higher and more specific level than mere cooperation. A partnership involves two or more parties working together to achieve common goals or mutually aligned interests.

*Vietnam's partners in the new context are countries, organizations, and entities that respect Vietnam's independence and sovereignty, and establish and expand friendly, cooperative, equal, and mutually beneficial relations with Vietnam. In this context, Vietnam is a friend, a reliable partner, and a responsible member of the international community, contributing to peace, cooperation, and development.*

Currently, foreign relations can categorize partners by the level of engagement, such as traditional partners, reliable partners, comprehensive partners, and comprehensive strategic partners:

- Traditional and reliable partners are those less likely to be swayed into opposing Vietnam.
- Cautious partners are those that could potentially become adversaries.
- Partners who are also adversaries are those cooperating with Vietnam but simultaneously harboring schemes and actions to undermine us.

*Strategic partners* refer to important cooperative relationships aimed at specific goals while aspiring for long-term engagement. Strategic partnerships are not limited by space or time, and are applicable to various entities and fields of cooperation, not necessarily limited to a security or defense capacity.

*Strategic partnerships* signify a higher commitment than ordinary bilateral relations but do not form military alliances. They reflect the interwoven and interconnected interests of entities in international relations, surpassing mere friendship and cooperation but not reaching the level of legal obligations. Strategic partnerships have four basic characteristics:

*First*, there must be a framework for broad cooperation, formalized through high-level declarations or official statements, depending on the political will and cooperative aspirations of the parties.

*Second*, there must be operational mechanisms, including high-level meetings, both regular and ad hoc, to build strategic trust and strengthen comprehensive friendship and cooperation.

*Third*, strategic partnerships had previously been built and deployed with an emphasis on politics, security, and defense. Currently, there are situations in which a single or a few fields might be selected, as long as the partnership benefits both sides and doesn't lead to forming military alliances.

*Fourth*, there must be deep, broad, and extraordinarily close economic cooperation, which clearly distinguishes ordinary cooperation from partnership, and which fosters relatively stable interwoven interests over a certain period of time. Partnerships must be based on respect for international law, mutual non-aggression, non-alignment against other countries, non-interference in internal affairs, and mutual trust.

Regarding the levels of strategic partnerships, there are three tiers:

- The highest level is the comprehensive strategic partnership, where parties commit to long-term intertwined interests, mutual support, and deep cooperation across all mutually beneficial fields, building strategic trust.
- A lower level is the strategic partnership in specific fields.
- The lowest level is the comprehensive partnership, where regular relations between entities have achieved strategic depth in one or more areas but lack uniformity across aspects of cooperation. Due either to insufficient mutual trust or premature timing, the entities decide instead to construct a framework for comprehensive partnership, with the intention to emphasize collaboration, and to continue reinforce trust-building and together face the future.

The goal of strategic partnerships is to pursue fundamental, long-term national interests. Strategic partnerships are flexible, they are not unchanging, rather they develop based on specific partners, timing, fields, and approaches.

Regarding form: strategic partnerships can proceed flexibly and openly. They can be formal or informal, bilateral or multilateral, and vary in scope, depth, and participation..

To date, Vietnam has established comprehensive strategic partnerships with three nations; strategic partnerships with 14 nations and comprehensive partnerships with 14 nations. Specifically:

- The four comprehensive strategic partnerships include: China (2008), Russia (2012), India (2016), and South Korea (2022).
- The 17 strategic partnerships include: Russia (2001), India (2007), China (2008), Japan, South Korea, Spain (2009), the UK (2010), Germany (2011), Italy, Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore, France (2013), Malaysia, Philippines (2015), Australia (2018), and New Zealand (2020).
- The 14 comprehensive partnerships include: South Africa (2004), Chile, Brazil, Venezuela (2007), Argentina (2010), Ukraine (2011), the European Union (2012),

the United States (2013), Denmark (2013), Myanmar (2017), Canada (2017), Hungary (2018), Brunei (2019), and the Netherlands (2019).

### **3. The Concept of Adversaries**

*The adversaries of the Vietnamese revolution in the new context are forces with schemes and actions to undermine Vietnam's objectives in building and defending the fatherland. These include schemes and actions to wage wars of aggression, promote "peaceful evolution", incite riots to overthrow the regime, or infringe upon Vietnam's independence, sovereignty, unity, territorial integrity, and national interests through armed or non-armed means, from both external and internal sources.*

Among them, there are three types: Ideologically opposed entities with conspiracies and actions aimed at overthrowing the socialist regime in our country; entities who for narrow national interests plan to infringe upon our country's sovereignty and territorial integrity; and entities that may be manipulated by major powers, and conspire or act to sabotage us.

- *Ideologically opposed adversaries who conspire or act to eliminate the leadership role of the Communist Party of Vietnam and the socialist regime in our country are imperialists and hostile, reactionary forces.*

With an inherently opposed ideology, this adversary leads allied countries and employs numerous sinister tactics and measures to eliminate the leadership role of the Communist Party of Vietnam and abolish the socialist regime in our country. Through activities such as "peaceful evolution", subversive riots, and various other forms of intervention (even including armed intervention), they aim to negate the leadership role of the Communist Party of Vietnam, enticing, bribing, coercing, or forcing Vietnam to abandon its socialist-oriented goals. Their ultimate aim is to overthrow the government and establish a new regime that aligns with their strategic interests. The primary and immediate objective of this entity is to eradicate socialism

in our country through unarmed activities combined with economic measures, propaganda, and creating pretexts. If we make mistakes in handling strategic issues that leads our country into a confrontation, they may seize the opportunity to rally allies and engage in wars of subversion, intervention, or invasion. This adversary has been clearly identified, and we must always remain vigilant and take measures to counter it.

- *Adversaries who infringe upon our country's sovereignty and territorial integrity for their own narrow national interests.*

This adversary may share ideological alignment, unite with us on the path toward socialism, and jointly struggle with us to protect the existence of socialism. However, due to narrow nationalist interests, they have shown signs of infringing upon our country's sovereignty and territorial rights, which, at a higher level, could lead to armed conflict and war.

However, this is a diplomatically “sensitive” adversary, intertwined with aspects of partnership that need to be leveraged for cooperation and development. With this type of adversary, in terms of strategic objectives, we must steadfastly uphold the principle of national independence and ensure the integrity of our sovereignty and territorial rights. In terms of strategic measures, we must act with astuteness, flexibility, and persistence in building strategic trust, capitalizing on shared aspects, and maximizing the partnership for peaceful coexistence and development, while gradually narrowing differences based on international law, equality, and mutual respect for each other's interests. On the other hand, we also need to thoroughly study this entity and implement preventive measures to avoid mistakes in handling certain strategic situations, ensuring we are not caught off guard or unprepared.

- *Adversaries that may be manipulated, bribed, or coerced into actions that undermine us.*

These are certain countries that have traditionally friendly relations with Vietnam but may be manipulated by larger powers for their own interests. Under normal conditions, they are good partners with aligned interests, despite potential differences in political systems or foreign policy interests...However, in complex circumstances, they could be swayed, manipulated, into intervening or acting against us. With this group of adversaries, it is necessary to conduct accurate, thorough, and specific analyses and assessments to devise appropriate strategic policies and measures to build lasting solidarity and friendship among nations, maximize aspects of partnership aspect to strengthen cooperation and development, and prevent the transformation of partners into adversaries that could disadvantage us.

Thus, the types of entities mentioned above are all ones that we must continuously and consistently confront and guard against. However, we cannot treat all entities the same; instead, we must tailor our foreign policy approaches and solutions to suit each specific adversary.

#### **4. The Dialectical Relationship Between Partners and Adversaries**

The Party's perspective not only identifies key indicators for recognizing partners for expanded cooperation and adversaries for vigilant struggle but also demonstrates a profound, comprehensive dialectical approach suitable for the rapidly evolving and complex current situation. The 8th Central Committee Resolution of the 9th Party Congress states: 'In some partners, there may be differences or contradictions with our interests'; it further clarifies the dual nature and mutual transformation between partners and adversaries, noting that [sic] within each adversary, there may be aspects to leverage or cooperate with; within each partner, there may be contradictions with our interests requiring struggle'.

The Party's dialectical thinking is evident in addressing the partner-adversary relationship with specific entities. When recognizing both partner and adversary aspects within a single entity, the goal of "building and firmly defending the socialist

Vietnamese fatherland” serves as the criterion for determining the level of cooperation. This means that, while expanding partnerships, vigilance must be maintained to detect and address emerging contradictions. Meanwhile, in the struggle against adversaries, confrontation is not the goal; instead, opportunities for mutual understanding and trust-building should be pursued to foster 'respect for each other’s sovereignty' and promote equal, mutually beneficial cooperation. The fundamental, long-term goal is to strengthen solidarity, expand friendly cooperation, maximize partnership aspects, and minimize adversary aspects, while rejecting a rigid and mechanical conception that only views partners only for cooperation and adversaries for isolation or struggle.

Implementing the 8th Central Committee Resolution of the 9th Party Congress requires not only correctly identifying partners and adversaries based on established principles but also applying this perspective effectively in practice across various fields, times, and revolutionary stages. It is critical to recognize the dialectical nature, interwoven existence, and flexible transformation between partners and adversaries in the current context of international integration. One-sided assessments of partners and adversaries must be absolutely avoided. If we only focus on confirming the positive, but miss the negative aspects and conflicts with partners, that would be incorrect. Likewise, to only see the negative aspects, conflicts, and disagreements, while missing the agreements and positive aspects of each adversary would also be an error.

Correctly understanding the partner-adversary relationship is a crucial guide for all levels, sectors, and fields to handle issues and situations in international cooperation accurately, flexibly, and creatively. This approach increases consensus, reduces differences, and promotes national interests, contributing to Vietnam’s uninterrupted development, defense of independence, sovereignty, unity, territorial integrity, and regional and global peace and stability.

Vietnam is a friend, a reliable partner, and an active, responsible member of the international community. However, in the current context of international integration, utmost vigilance is required. Determining whether permanent partners or adversaries exist is a highly sensitive issue requiring thorough research and consideration. Partners vary in levels, such as: partners, comprehensive partners, strategic partners, comprehensive strategic partners. Likewise, adversaries may be temporary or long-term. In international relations, a country may be an adversary in one context, time, or field but a partner in another. Even countries with differing political systems or territorial disputes can become partners or strategic partners. Conversely, countries sharing ideologies or past alliances may become adversaries in specific contexts. The interwoven and mutable nature of partner-adversary relations demands flexible and creative application of the Party's perspective, adhering to principles while adapting to specific conditions to avoid mechanical and rigid approaches that harm international relations and thereby harm national interests. To correctly understand partners and adversaries, strategic research and forecasting are vital, particularly in analyzing the nature and characteristics of each partner and adversary, as well as potential risks and challenges to peace and stability (both imminent and long term). This enables timely exploitation of shared interests, identify and resolve remaining points of difference, and proactively respond to steadfastly avoid passivity, surprise, confrontation, or isolation.

The Party's perspective prioritizes national interests, with the overarching goal of maintaining independence, sovereignty, unity, territorial integrity, the socialist political regime, and a favorable environment for national development. Understanding and handling partner-adversary relations according to the Party's perspective is a fundamental, consistent, and long-term policy.

## **5. The Present Military Adversaries**

Understanding the partners and adversaries of the revolution provides the basis for correctly identifying the combat adversaries of the military in the new context.

Based on the dialectical perspective of the partner-adversary relationship, identifying combat adversaries relies on their schemes and actions. *Any force that undermines the revolution's objectives, wages wars of aggression, promotes "peaceful evolution", incites subversive or armed riots, or infringes upon Vietnam's independence, sovereignty, unity, territorial integrity, or national interests is a combat adversary of our military.*

These can be divided into three groups:

*First group: Any force that conspires or acts to wage a war of aggression against our country in any form.* The identifying signs are that the entity engages in actions to prepare for and conduct war in all forms, promotes alliances, and assembles forces to attack us with military force.

*Second group: Any force that conspires or acts to carry out peaceful evolution to incite subversive riots or armed unrest in our country'.* The identifying signs are that they use the primary tactic of "peaceful evolution" to undermine the goal of building socialism; promote 'depoliticization' of the military and encourage 'self-evolution' and 'self-transformation' within our ranks to change our regime. When conditions and opportunities arise, especially by exploiting our vulnerabilities in handling strategic situations, they will instigate subversive riots, armed conflicts, or wars in new forms such as proxy wars, information warfare, cyberattacks...

*Third group: Any force that conspires and acts to infringe upon Vietnam's independence, sovereignty, unity, and territorial integrity, or to infringe on our national interests through armed or non-armed methods, whether from within or outside the country.* The identifying signs are that the adversary pursues intentions to usurp Vietnam's territorial sovereignty through activities such as encroaching on our borders, seas, and islands under our sovereign territory. They employ every means to constrain and influence our domestic and foreign policies, forcing us to make

concessions on sovereignty and national interests. When opportunities arise, they may provoke armed conflicts or wars to occupy our territory and seize our resources.

## **II. PROPAGANDA AND EDUCATION MEASURES TO ENHANCE AWARENESS OF PARTNERS AND ADVERSARIES AMONG CADRES, SOLDIERS, AND MILITIA IN THE NEW SITUATION**

### **1. Strengthening Leadership and Guidance of Party Committees and Commanders at All Levels in Political and Ideological Education**

To effectively implement the Party's perspective on partners and adversaries, it is necessary to innovate and strengthen the leadership and guidance of Party committees, enhancing the role of commanders in political and ideological education.

Party committees must focus on leading and directing the innovation of content, forms, and methods to improve the quality and effectiveness of political education for cadres, soldiers, and militia; continuously strengthening the Party's ideological front within the militia. Leadership in political education should emphasize the role of entities, forces, and tools, prioritizing the development of political resolve, ethics, and lifestyles for cadres, soldiers, and militia, proactively detecting and resolutely countering the "peaceful evolution" schemes of hostile forces, refuting wrong viewpoints, and preventing "*self-evolution*" and "*self-transformation*" in political ideology. This contributes to building a politically strong militia, enhancing overall strength, combat readiness, and task accomplishment.

Leaders, political commissars, political instructors, and commanders at all levels must thoroughly understand and strictly implement regulations and directives on leading and directing political and ideological education. They must incorporate the leadership of political education into their regular leadership resolutions and regulations and rigorously implement the "Plan to innovate political education at units in the new phase", continuously improving the quality of ideological work in managing the militia and self-defense forces. The organization and implementation

of political and ideological education must be thorough and effective, completely overcoming the tendency to 'delegate' such tasks to political agencies and political cadres.

Along with strengthening the leadership of Party committees and the management of political commissars, political instructors, and commanders at all levels, it is necessary to further promote the role of political agencies, political cadres, and ideological workers in advising, guiding, and inspecting the development of plans, determining programs, content, and organizing propaganda and education at all levels. This ensures correct political orientation, alignment with specific target groups and areas, and achieves practical quality and effectiveness.

Political agencies at all levels, especially propaganda and training agencies, must focus on further enhancing their advisory capacity to Party committees, political commissars, political instructors, and commanders in organizing and implementing political and ideological education. Annually, they must provide specific guidance on conducting political education for each target group to ensure proper implementation by units; proactively coordinate closely with relevant agencies to develop unified plans at each level. During the implementation process, they must promptly identify difficulties and obstacles faced by units to take effective measures to address them.

## **2. Continuing to Renovate the Agenda, Content, Forms, and Methods of Political Education and Ideological Orientation**

Renovating political education programs requires a logical structure of learning modules and mandatory achievable objectives, focusing on raising political awareness, traditional education, task education, discipline, ethics, and lifestyles to build cadres and militia troops with strong political resolve, steadfast commitment to national independence and socialism; to build correct political attitudes, to preserve and extend the militia's traditions and essence; to foster responsibility, determination, and readiness to accomplish any assigned tasks.

The content of political education must thoroughly instill the fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism, Ho Chi Minh's Thought, the Party's line, viewpoint and policies, and state laws; educate on the revolutionary situation and duties, military and national defense tasks, and militia duties; educate to clarify the nature, schemes, and tactics of hostile forces undermining the Vietnamese revolution; promote revolutionary vigilance, combat readiness, and victory in all situations; educate on socialist patriotism, national history, traditions, and cultural identity, as well the glorious revolutionary traditions of the Party, military, militia, units, and localities; educate to equip cadres, soldiers, and militia with essential knowledge on economics, culture, society, life skills, and cultured behavior and communication.

Efforts must focus on innovating and improving the quality of political education forms and methods, incorporating task implementation, emulation movements, campaigns, anniversaries, and cultural activities. Based on the Political Department's guidance, political agencies at all levels should develop tailored curricula, train political instructors and reporters, and ensure correct orientation. Cadres, soldiers, and militia must correctly understand the revolutionary situation, tasks, partners, and adversaries, recognizing their interwoven nature, avoiding naivety or lack of vigilance toward adversaries, and not underestimating or denying partnership aspects. Methods for evaluating results must be reformed to reflect reality and eliminate superficial achievements in training and education.

Cadres at all levels, especially political cadres, must closely adhere to the practical requirements of revolutionary tasks and the duties of the militia and self-defense forces; strengthen strict internal management, thoroughly understand the thoughts and morale of militia and self-defense personnel, accurately analyze and assess the situation, and address emerging issues correctly, promptly, and effectively. They must anticipate and advise leaders and commanders on educational and ideological orientation measures, proactively prevent signs of deterioration in political ideology, morality, and lifestyle, and avoid unexpected issues, particularly ideological surprises,

to ensure the steadfast ideological stability of militia and self-defense personnel within the unit.

In response to complex and sensitive events, Party committees, commanders, and political agencies at all levels must promptly grasp and communicate the situation, providing correct ideological guidance to militia and self-defense personnel, especially to maritime militia and self-defense units directly engaged in combat readiness tasks. Effectively carry out propaganda and mobilization among the local population where units are stationed, combining this with communication on mass media in line with the viewpoints and policies of the Party, State, Central Military Commission, and Ministry of Defense. Promptly guide the ideology and public opinion among militia and self-defense personnel and the public, preventing adversaries from exploiting, distorting, or inciting to undermine ideological stability. Strictly adhere to reporting and feedback regulations and discipline regarding public statements, ensuring no leakage of military or state secrets.

### **3. Leveraging Forces, Tools, and Channels for Propaganda to Orient Public Opinion on Partners and Adversaries**

Consistently promote the effective role of cadres and Party members, especially the team of rapporteurs, propagandists, management cadres, and reporters from military press and media agencies. This team must consist of cadres and Party members directly selected by the Party committee; possessing moral integrity and a clean, healthy lifestyle; being enthusiastic and dedicated to their profession; actively studying and training to improve their expertise, strictly adhering to speech discipline; and receiving professional training. At the same time, they must be comrades who are always proactive and astute on the ideological front; well-versed in the Party's viewpoints, guidelines, and policies, as well as the laws of the State; knowledgeable about current domestic and international political affairs; capable of analyzing and anticipating emerging issues; and closely engaged with the life and activities of the militia and self-defense forces to contribute to propaganda efforts, helping militia and

self-defense personnel enhance their vigilance and combat readiness in the new situation.

Focus on educating this team to have a firm political stance, unwavering loyalty to the goals and ideals of the Party and the revolution, intellectual capacity, comprehensive knowledge, deep specialization in their assigned fields, practical understanding, courage in struggle, enthusiasm, responsibility, and creativity in action; and the ability to organize and effectively carry out information and propaganda work. Strengthen education to enhance their theoretical level, political acumen, and sharpness in judgment. Assess situations accurately, correctly identify the conspiracies and tactics of hostile forces, and thereby build a steadfast ideological stance, resolutely defending Marxism-Leninism, Ho Chi Minh Thought, and the Party's guidelines and viewpoints.

Cadres, Party members, and militia and self-defense forces must uphold their responsibilities, continuously improve their political theory knowledge, comprehensive understanding, and cultivate a steadfast political stance, remaining absolutely loyal to the revolutionary cause. They should actively study and thoroughly grasp the Party's guidelines, viewpoints, policies, and laws of the State, as well as the resolutions and directives of both higher authorities and direct leadership, while promoting their pioneering and exemplary roles in adhering to the Party's guidelines and policies, speaking and acting correctly, effectively implementing resolutions, and strictly maintaining discipline. They must combat to prevent manifestations of ideological degradation and incorrect viewpoints on the internet. Form core force personal websites, develop and expand bloggers within the military and militia and self-defense forces to coordinate in countering and criticizing wrong, reactionary viewpoints, while widely propagating and educating the public on revolutionary vigilance.

To prevent and combat "*self-evolution*" and "*self-transformation*" within our ranks, militia and self-defense force personnel must focus on building strong Party

organizations in terms of politics, ideology, and structure, continuously enhancing leadership capacity and combat strength to meet the demands of their tasks; and developing comprehensively strong, “exemplary, and outstanding” agencies and units. Emphasis must be placed on maintaining internal solidarity and unity, actively addressing and overcoming all manifestations of division, factionalism, parochialism, lack of organization, and indiscipline, especially during significant national political events. In this regard, unit leaders and commanders must focus on educating cadres, Party members, and militia and self-defense personnel who show signs of laziness in learning, lack of self-discipline, particularly in studying political theory; those who speak or act contrary to the Party’s resolutions and directives, or the orders of superiors; those who violate the principles of democratic centralism, state laws, military discipline, or unit regulations, thereby negatively affecting the image of the militia and self-defense forces; and those who are unclear about the revolution’s adversaries and partners, or the enemies and combat adversaries of the military. A close combination of “building” and “countering” must be implemented, with 'building' as the foundation, while decisively, thoroughly, and promptly addressing individuals or organizations showing signs of “*self-evolution*” or “*self-transformation*”. The collective strength of organizations and forces must be leveraged, employing a comprehensive range of forms and methods, and carried out at all times, in all places, and across all areas of work.

## **CONCLUSION**

Those who respect Vietnam’s independence and sovereignty, and who establish and expand friendly, equal, and mutually beneficial cooperative relations with Vietnam, are considered reliable partners. Vietnam, in turn, is a friend, a reliable partner, and a responsible member of the international community, contributing to peace, cooperation, and development.

Forces that conspire and act to undermine the goals of our country in the cause of building and defending the Fatherland are considered adversaries. These include

conspiracies and actions aimed at waging wars of aggression, promoting “peaceful evolution”, inciting subversive riots to overthrow the regime, or infringing upon Vietnam’s independence, sovereignty, unity, territorial integrity, and national and ethnic interests through armed or non-armed means, whether from external or internal sources.

Correctly identifying partners and adversaries in the strategy to defend the Fatherland is of utmost importance, especially in the context of deepening internationalization and globalization today. Therefore, we must thoroughly understand and firmly grasp our Party’s viewpoints on partners and adversaries in the new situation, thereby building a steadfast ideological foundation within agencies and units, ready to receive and excellently accomplish all assigned tasks.

# ANNEX 5 - CYBERSPACE OPERATIONS REPORT

**THE NAVY  
REGION 1 COMMAND**

No. 4258/CL-BTL

**SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM  
Independence - Freedom - Happiness**

*Hai Phong, October 23, 2023*

**SECRET**

## **COMMAND**

### **Navy Region 1 cyberspace operations to protect the Fatherland of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam**

Command center: Tan Duong (20°51'55"-106°41'02") 10.00-10.10.23

Nautical chart 1/300.000 HQNDVN in 2022

To: Units of the region 1 command.

#### **I. SITUATION ASSESSMENT**

##### 1. About the enemy

###### a) Conspiracy

- Recently on cyberspace, the US has stepped up its psychological warfare activities to destabilize our country's political system. Through cyberspace, the US, in coordination with its allies, has taken advantage of democratic, human rights, and religious problems to intensify media operations to spread upsetting information to incite and provoke the people to participate in protests and riots, and to call for the international community to intervene in Vietnam's internal affairs.

- The US has stepped up propaganda activities that use distorted content, images, and video clips about the sovereignty of the islands in the East Sea, including the Paracel and Spratly archipelagos, to promote controversial views to

win support from international public opinion and sow confusion in our country's public discourse. America also blatantly supports reactionary organizations both within the country and among exiles abroad.

- Through cyberspace, the US cooperates with its allies to exploit democratic, human rights, and religious problems; spread upsetting information; incite people to participate in protests and riots; call for the international community to intervene in the internal affairs of Vietnamese provinces and cities. [The US also] supports domestic reactionaries to establish the "Vietnam National Restoration Alliance."

- The US organizes campaigns to spread malware and spyware, to build and strengthen systems of ghost computer networks to scan, exploit, surveil, and infiltrate our cyber infrastructure in key provinces (Hanoi, Hai Phong, Ho Chi Minh City, Da Nang, etc.), as well as the military computer network.

b) Operational targets, forces, and means

\* Operational targets

- Electronic information pages/portals of critical units such as the Government Electronic Information Portal, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, press and media agencies inside and outside the Army; aviation and banking systems.

- Computers containing essential data in the internal networks of units: Q1, QC, Q3, Q4, K13, K14, K17, and B.

- Military data transmission network infrastructure.

- National and military communication infrastructure in the East Sea area (satellite network, 3G network, telecommunications network, high frequency system...).

\* Forces and means

- Expected forces include 1-2 divisions of cyberspace combat force, 1-2 cyberspace protection, and 1-2 national cyber defense divisions under the US Cyber Command (USCYBERCOM). These divisions form a part of the cyberspace combat force staff of the Navy, Army, and Air Force. Troop count at roughly: 1,300 soldiers.

- Hackers, hacker groups supported by the US Government and Army.

- Hostile forces, reactionaries, political opportunists, religious extremists, and reactionary forces of Vietnamese exiles.

- Modern systems for the collection and analysis of large amounts of data, while conducting accurate analysis and assessment. Network scanning tools which are used to scan for vulnerabilities and weaknesses in information systems.

- Common network equipment and hardware (provided by suppliers) that is manufactured in and exported from the US, including equipment in our IT infrastructure. Some of this equipment America has pre-installed with cyber weapons through “back doors.”

- Spyware and malware that can spread themselves and bypass conventional detection mechanisms.

- Command and control server systems that are located in some neutral or pro-Allied countries (the Allies may have taken over some servers under our management to use as command and control servers).

- There is a network of nearly 10,000,000,000 fake accounts on social networks ready to spread documents, news, articles, and videos with false, distorted and provocative content.

c) Combat tactics, predicting enemy actions

\* Tactics

- Using social networking and blogspot sites, the US has partnered with domestic reactionaries and created a network to attack the media by disseminating content, images, and video clips with false and distorted content.

- Using media environments, the US disseminates fraudulent content and fake emails with malicious code that can spread widely and mobilize many botnet networks in our country to serve its cyberattack activities.

- Strengthening surveillance activities by using scanning tools to collect technical information, weaknesses, and vulnerabilities in our information systems as a basis for building attack plans to exploit and take control.

- Strengthening the implementation of targeted attacks (advanced persistent threat), finding every way to spread spyware to steal vital information, focusing on

government ministries: important agencies and units of the Ministry of National Defense, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Ministry of Information and Communications.

- \* Anticipated US and allied actions

- Conduct activities to steal our vital information and data: military secrets, national secrets, databases of Party and State agencies, financial, banking, and civil aviation data, thereby causing severe economic and social instability.

- Prepare all conditions for denial of service attacks, to allow for on demand paralysis of the information systems of our media agencies and critical services (Government Portal, Ministry of National Defense, Ministry of Information and Communications); use malware to attack our IT equipment, distort routing, redirect data from our military network leading to instability and thereby supplying the US with necessary information. In particular, they seek to infiltrate the central information systems, command, operation, and weapon control systems of the Service Branch to neutralize our combat capabilities.

- d) Assessment of the enemy

- \* Strengths

- Highly qualified, methodically trained forces, experience in espionage activities pirating important information and data.

- Persistent attacks, employing a variety of tactics, flexible, focusing on the weaknesses of the individuals operating, exploiting, and using our vital information systems.

- Strong support from the Government and the military, coordination from civilian companies who provide hardware for countries, including ours, with backdoors installed that can be exploited when needed.

- There is information about some products used in the IT and control systems that is provided by foreign suppliers.

- \* Weaknesses

- The US has yet to show signs of successfully exploiting and installing weapons into our military data transmission network because it is protected by multiple layers and is not connected to external networks.

- The US does not have accurate information about our cyber warfare force because information about the number of troops, weapons, and equipment of the Army's cyber warfare force is confidential.

## 2. About us

### a) Organization, staff

- \* Regional cyberspace combat force
- Regional IT team.
- IT unit workforce.

#### Computer security incident response team

- Force 47 units.
- \* Reinforced cyberspace combat force from above.
- Ministry's IT and cyberspace combat force: Command 86.
- The force is coordinated by the Service Branch IT Department.
- Joint force of Q, K, B.

### b) Equipment

- The Region's network infrastructure protection system.
- On-site monitoring system.
- Anti-malware and online malware monitoring system to protect military computer networks.

- An automatic malware analysis system, strengthens the Ministry's perimeter security equipment.

- Monitoring system to detect military computer network incidents.

- Virtual social media accounts of Force 47 (Region 1) to fight against misinformation and distorted views from hostile forces.

### c) Conclusion about us

- \* Strengths

- The IT system that was developed in peacetime has been a solid foundation for adjusting and supplementing the development of the IT system in wartime. The IT and cyberspace combat forces of the Region have been consolidated.

- The IT forces, the mobile forces of the IT Department and the Q, B, and K are ready to coordinate and support the Region in the execution of combat.

- The Internet infrastructure of companies and corporations (VNPT, Mobifone, CMC Telecom, FPT, Viettel Group...) has developed enormously and is ready to serve military and defense tasks.

\* Limitations

- Our cyber warfare capabilities are still more limited than the enemy's in quantity, quality, and technology.

- The IT system is vulnerable to enemy fire, cyber warfare, and electromagnetic warfare, which can cause disruption, loss of connection, and system paralysis.

- The enemy's cyber warfare activities strongly impact the quality and operational capability of military and defense IT systems.

3. Terrain, meteorology, hydrology

\* Advantages

Our country is in the tropical monsoon climate zone, is very sunny, with lots of rain; in the North in winter, fog appears, making it difficult to use high-tech weapons to attack our IT equipment and TSLqs network infrastructure.

\* Difficulties

The rainy and stormy season from June to November; the number of storms increases, lasting for many days, causing floods and damaging our IT equipment and military data transmission network infrastructure, affecting combat operations.

**II. DUTIES**

1. Coordinate with forces inside and outside the military to combat malicious media campaigns in US cyberspace.
2. Strengthen the implementation of IT security solutions to ensure the safe operation of IT systems, especially IT systems serving command and operations.

3. Actively coordinate with the Service Branch IT Department to organize reconnaissance and monitoring in order to assess the situation of cyber space, promptly report, and propose solutions to the Region Commander to prevent surprises.

### **III. FORCE ALLOCATION AND DEPLOYMENT**

#### 1. Force allocation

Six divisions are arranged: Network reconnaissance, network defense, network attack, mobile network, network assurance, and network command (In which Network reconnaissance and network attack are undertaken by BTL 86). These divisions have the following functions:

- Closely coordinate with these divisions, grasp the situation in cyberspace, focus on US activities in the East Sea, activities of US-backed hacker organizations and US cyberspace combat units, promptly advise and propose solutions to the Regional Commander.
- Closely coordinate with the forces to analyze, synthesize, and assess plots and tricks of the US cyberspace combat force.
- Use computers, external storage devices (USB, external hard drives), and smart mobile devices of individuals infected with US malware to create fake targets to lure the enemy into spreading upsetting information so as to discover attack tactics, US countermeasure technologies.
- Flexibly apply defensive plans and ensure backup capacity of our important targets. Strictly implement regulations on ensuring information security and coordinating computer network incident response activities in the Vietnam People's Army issued by the Ministry of National Defense in Circular 58/2015/TT-BQP dated July 26, 2015.

#### 2. Force deployment

Based on the general combat plans, the cyberspace combat force is arranged as follows:

##### a) Network defense force

- Troop count: three IT officers.

- Stationed in the region's server room and affiliated units' server rooms.
- Equipment: a server system, high-speed computers, protection software, and network transmission lines.

b) Mobile network force, network assurance, network command

- Troop count: five soldiers stationed at the Command Center of the Region and units.
- Equipment: Computer system, installation software, network cables, splitter box.

#### **IV. COOPERATIVE AND ASSURANCE MEASURES**

1. Cooperative measures

- Cooperate with IT security associations and enterprises in detecting, analyzing, and removing malware; build malware to attack the enemy and respond to incidents.
- Cooperate with different fields (Operations, Information, Cryptography, Security protection, and others) to develop and deploy a cyberspace combat plan, be ready to organize IT security inspections, disseminate documents to deceive the enemy, and respond to incidents according to the procedures issued by the Ministry.
- Organize and direct subordinate forces and reinforcements, and coordinate to implement the cyberspace combat plan.

2. Assurance measures

- The cyberspace combat members of the Command Center of the Region receive information from the IT Department, grasp the situation, and promptly notify the cyberspace combat forces of the units.
- The units ensure logistics and technical support for the cyberspace combat forces./.

#### **V. TIMELINE**

- On October 2023, units completed construction and reported on the plan for approval.
- On October 2023, coordination between different sectors organized.

- On October 2023, combat readiness achieved./.

Recipients:

- As mentioned above.
  - File: VT, TT.T13 Board.
- M

**ON BEHALF OF COMMANDER  
CHIEF OF STAFF**

**Colonel Nguyen Thinh Tiep**

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