



## Vietnam's international integration process from 1986 to 2016

Nguyen Minh Tien

Ho Chi Minh City University of Industry and Trade, Vietnam

\* Corresponding Author: **Nguyen Minh Tien**

---

---

### Article Info

**ISSN (online):** 2582-7138

**Impact Factor:** 5.307 (SJIF)

**Volume:** 05

**Issue:** 01

**January-February 2024**

**Received:** 22-11-2023;

**Accepted:** 26-12-2023

**Page No:** 409-412

### Abstract

The 6th Congress (1986) of the Party opened a period of comprehensive innovation for the country. It was also from the 6th Congress that our Party's awareness of international integration was initially formed. The Party believes that, "to combine the strength of the nation with the strength of the era, our country must participate in the international division of labor" and "a prominent feature of the era is the scientific revolution - technology is taking place strongly, creating a leap forward in the development of production forces and accelerating the process of internationalization of production forces" Following the 7th Congress, the thinking on international integration continued to be affirmed by our Party, that is, "it is necessary to be sensitive to and predict complex developments and profound changes in international relations, the strong development of the productive forces and the internationalization trend of the world economy to have appropriate foreign policy policies."

**Keywords:** international, development, foreign

---

---

### 1. Introduction

Our country's political integration process actually began when Vietnam became a member of the United Nations in 1976. The time of Vietnam's international economic integration can be counted when our country joined the council. Mutual economic assistance (in 1978), although the standards and principles of cooperation are many different from current international cooperation mechanisms. However, the process of developing our Party's thinking on international integration actually only began with the cause of innovation initiated by the 6th Congress (1986).

The 6th Party Congress commented: "A prominent feature of the era is that the scientific and technical revolution is taking place strongly, creating a leap forward in the development of the productive forces and accelerating the process of nationalization" economic of productive forces". The platform for building the country during the transition period to socialism approved by the 7th Congress in 1991 affirms "The modern scientific and technological revolution, along with the trend of internationalization of world economic life" The world is an opportunity for development".

### 2. Contents

#### 2.1. The concept of international integration

In terms of semantics, "integration" is derived from "integration" with the most general meaning being the action or process of attaching separate elements together; Bringing together parts into a whole and combining different elements. In that sense, it can be seen that, since World war II, the process of international integration has developed rapidly in many fields; takes place on many levels: bilateral, sub-regional, regional, inter-regional and global; attracts most countries in the world. The level of integration is also becoming deeper and more comprehensive.

At the global level, after World war II, the United Nations and its specialized organizations were established with a membership covering most countries in the world. Since 1995, the process of economic and trade integration has also gradually been promoted with the establishment of the general agreement on trade and tariffs (GATT), later followed by the World Trade Organization (WTO). To date, the WTO has developed a system of "rules of the game" that covers most areas of economic relations between members and has become the foundation of other regional economic agreements around the world.

At the regional level, the integration process began in the 50s of the twentieth century and has especially exploded from the 90s to the present. A series of regional organizations have been established in many fields, especially the economic field. As of May 2012, 511 regional trade agreements (RTAs) had been notified to the WTO. Besides, hundreds of RTAs are in the negotiation process. In particular, the comprehensive integration process within the European Union (EU) has reached a high level, turning this organization into a supranational entity. Countries in the Community of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) are also expanding and deepening the regional integration process more comprehensively through building the ASEAN Community based on three pillars: political - security, economic community and socio - cultural community.

In addition, the integration process is also regulated by bilateral association agreements, in the form of alliance treaties (political, security, defense), strategic partnership agreements, economic agreements - trade,... From the late 90s until now, the trend of signing bilateral agreements (FTAs) has developed particularly strongly. Most countries have signed or are in the process of negotiating bilateral FTAs. Some countries have signed or negotiated dozens of bilateral FTA agreements, such as Singapore, Thailand, Japan, Australia.

Theoretically, there are many approaches to international integration. Theories of integration were initially developed mainly to explain the integration process of European countries, because this was the region that began to integrate very early. The theory of economic integration holds that economic integration is the process of institutional connection between economies; and argues that supranational common markets with the free movement of economic factors between countries will create a natural need for deeper integration, not only economically, but also politically.

"International integration" is a term that is quite commonly used in Vietnam today. In fact, there are many different understandings and definitions of the term international integration. Although there is no definition that has received complete consensus in the academic and policy-making world, international integration is often understood as a process in which countries conduct activities to strengthen the bond between countries with each other, through participating in international and regional organizations, based on shared interests, goals, resources, power, values... However, principles and laws must be complied with play together within the framework of that regional and international organization.

International integration can take place in each field of social life (politics, economics, culture, security - defense, education...), or take place in many fields with different characteristics different quality, scope, and form. The main subjects of international integration are countries that have the capacity and authority to negotiate, sign and implement international commitments once they have signed to participate. International integration is a major, inevitable trend and an important feature of the world today. International integration brings countries not only benefits in all aspects, but also puts countries before challenges and disadvantages. However, there is no other path to development for countries in the era of globalization than participating in international integration.

## 2.2. The Party's views and policies on international economic integration

International economic integration is the central content of international integration. Over the past 30 years, the Party's views and policies on international economic integration have been consistent, systematic, always updated and inherited through congresses. The 6th Party Congress in 1986 opened the country's reform period. Our Party proposes a policy of comprehensive and profound innovation in all areas of the economy. Vietnam's innovation process is being carried out in the international context of many profound changes and a new world order and situation is forming, in which countries with different political regimes are both fighting and fighting cooperate. The Party has issued a policy of taking advantage of favorable conditions for economic and scientific and technical cooperation, participating more widely in international assignment and cooperation in the "Council for Mutual Economic Assistance and Expansion with other countries".

By the 7th Congress in 1991, our Party oriented: "Independence, autonomy, multilateralization, diversification of foreign relations" with the motto "Vietnam wants to be friends with all countries in the international community, strive for peace, independence and development". This is an important milestone marking the beginning of Vietnam's participation in international economic integration in the new era. Thanks to this policy, Vietnam has repelled the policy of encirclement and isolation of hostile forces, constantly expanding bilateral and multilateral foreign economic cooperation after the socialist system in Eastern Europe disintegrated.

At the 8th Party Congress in 1996, the term "integration" began to be mentioned in Party documents: "Building an open economy, integrating with the region and the world". This is the first time the Party's Resolution mentions accelerating the process of international economic integration with the goal of serving the country's development. This marks a fundamental shift in awareness of the need for positive, proactive international economic integration.

The 9th Congress of the Party in 2001 emphasized "proactive international and regional economic integration in the spirit of maximizing internal resources, improving the effectiveness of international cooperation, ensuring independence, autonomy and orientation". The Party Congress affirmed the necessity and assessed the nature of globalization and the opportunities and challenges for Vietnam when participating in this process.

The Party clearly points out that the risk of falling further behind economically than many countries in the region and the world is one of four risks and we can take advantage of the opportunities that international economic integration brings to avoid it from this risk. On November 27, 2001, the IX Politburo issued Resolution No. 07-NQ/TW "On international economic integration".

At the 10th Congress in 2006, our Party emphasized the policy of "proactively and actively integrating into the international economy, while expanding cooperation in other fields". After Vietnam joined the World Trade Organization (WTO) in January 2007, the Party Central Committee issued Resolution 08-NQ/TW dated February 5, 2007 on a number of policies and guidelines. Big policy for the economy to develop quickly and sustainably when Vietnam is a member of the WTO.

The 11th Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam set

out Vietnam's foreign policy in the new period of development, including the very important policy of "proactive and positive international integration". From "international economic integration" of previous congresses, moving to comprehensive "international integration" is an important development in our Party's foreign policy thinking at the 11th Congress.

To concretize this policy, on April 10, 2013, the Politburo issued Resolution No. 22-NQ/TW on international integration. With Resolution 22-NQ/TW, the country's international economic integration process has moved to a new phase, a phase of comprehensive integration in both basic fields: Economy; Politics, Defense and Security; Culture, society, Science and technology and Education and training.

Developing the orientation for international integration from the 11th National Congress, the Resolution of the 12th National Congress of the Party continues to require strong implementation of a proactive and active strategic orientation for international integration, in that economic integration is the focus. Specifically: "Improve the effectiveness of international economic integration, fully implement international commitments, build and implement strategies for participating in free trade areas with economic and trade partners" important; proactively and actively integrate into the international economy; diversify and multilateralize international economic relations, avoid dependence on one market, one specific partner; review and improve the legal system, mechanisms and policies to effectively implement free trade agreements that Vietnam has signed.

The 12th Party Central Committee issued Resolution No. 06-NQ/TW on effectively implementing the process of international economic integration, maintaining political and social stability in the context of our country's participation in international economic integration new generation free trade agreement. Resolution 06 - NQ/TW term, taking advantage of more capital, technology, knowledge, and management experience, ensuring rapid and sustainable development, improving people's lives, preserving and promoting national cultural identity; maintain independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity; enhance Vietnam's reputation and position in the international arena.

Vietnam's international economic integration process over the past 30 years has made important progress. Having gone through the period of implementing initial commitments, the process of international economic integration is now increasingly deepening. It can be said that, under the Party's direction, Vietnam has actively and proactively expanded its markets abroad and gradually asserted its role in the regional and international economy.

### **2.3. Results achieved after 30 years of international integration**

With the motto "diversify and multilateralize foreign relations. Vietnam is ready to be a friend of all countries in the international community, striving for peace, independence and development" Vietnam always consistently implements a foreign policy of independence, autonomy, peace, cooperation and development; open foreign policy, multilateralization and diversification of international relations, while expanding cooperation in many fields. Vietnam is a friend and trusted partner of countries in the international community, actively participating in the process of international and regional cooperation. In there:

Regarding bilateral cooperation. With the reform policy, our country has expanded and strengthened foreign relations, overcome market difficulties caused by the fluctuations of the former soviet union and eastern Europe, and created a favorable international environment for industry the construction and defense of the homeland, enhancing the country's position in the international arena. Up to now, Vietnam has established diplomatic relations with about 180 countries around the world, expanded trade relations, exported goods to over 230 markets of countries and territories, and signed nearly 100 agreements. Bilateral trade agreements, over 60 investment promotion and protection agreements, about 70 double taxation avoidance agreements and many bilateral cultural cooperation agreements with other countries and international organizations.

Regarding multilateral and regional cooperation. Vietnam has had positive relationships with many international financial institutions, specifically: on September 15, 1976, Vietnam became an official member of the International monetary fund (IMF). On September 21, 1976, Vietnam became an official member of the World Bank (WB), and on September 23, 1976, Vietnam joined the Asian Development Bank (ADB). In July 1995, Vietnam joined the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and officially joined the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) from January 1, 1996. This is an event marking Vietnam's breakthrough in the process of international economic integration. Next, in 1996, Vietnam participated in the founding of the Asia-Europe Cooperation Forum (ASEM) and in 1998, Vietnam was recognized as a member of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum (APEC). In particular, on January 11, 2007, Vietnam became a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Vietnam's international economic integration process has been raised to a higher level through participation in signing multilateral and bilateral economic agreements. Implementing the Party's major guidelines and policies on international economic integration, Vietnam has become a member of many trade agreements and is also participating in negotiating a number of other important trade agreements. Specifically: By the end of 2016, Vietnam had signed and implemented 10 FTAs, finished negotiating 2 FTAs, and is negotiating 4 other FTAs. Of the 10 signed and implemented FTAs, there are 6 FTAs signed as ASEAN members (including AFTA, 5 FTAs between ASEAN and partners China, Korea, India, Japan, Australia and New Zealand), 4 FTAs signed as an independent party (Chile, Japan, Korea, Eurasian Economic Union). The two FTAs that have concluded negotiations are the FTA with the European Union, and the Trans-Pacific Strategic Partnership Agreement (TPP). The remaining four FTAs being negotiated include: Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), ASEAN-Hong Kong FTA, FTA with Israel and FTA with the European Free Trade Area (EFTA). Implementing the policy of opening the economy, foreign investment (FDI) has continuously grown in terms of total capital, number of projects, and capital/project scale... The period 1991 - 1997 took place. The first wave of FDI into Vietnam with 2,230 projects and registered capital of 16.244 billion USD. The implementation of international economic integration commitments, especially the commitment to join the WTO, has helped improve and make the legal system transparent, enhancing Vietnam's attractiveness to foreign investors. FDI capital in 2007 had a growth rate of 75.3% and in 2008 it was 42.6%.

In 2013, total FDI investment in Vietnam reached 22.35 billion USD. The FDI enterprise sector has created jobs for more than 2 million direct workers, and tens of millions of indirect workers, accounting for more than 60% of the country's total export turnover, contributing to increasing development investment capital Society, increasing export turnover, developing socio-economic infrastructure and solving social problems.

The domestic legal system is also constantly being amended to be consistent with international practices to create a more open and transparent business environment, ensuring equality between economic sectors and between businesses domestic and foreign. In the past 10 years, to implement commitments to join the WTO such as liberalizing export and import business rights, eliminating export and import restrictions, and eliminating distorting export subsidies. competition, minimizing State intervention in business operations, commitments to open markets for goods and services, transparency of policies our legal system has been and continues to be improved improving in the direction of becoming increasingly clearer and more transparent, creating a fair business environment in the country.

### 3. Conclusion

International integration involves accepting, participating in the development and implementation of international standards, including: widely accepted institutions, laws, practices, principles and common standards. These standards can be formed from the process of international cooperation, through agreements and agreements between states or standards and practices set by recognized non-governmental organizations and associations widely accepted by organizations and individuals around the world. Regarding goals, international integration as well as other forms of international cooperation are for the benefit of the nation and people. Countries participate in this process basically because they see it as beneficial to the country. Therefore, participation must be based on a number of criteria with appropriate levels and roadmaps.

### 4. References

1. Documents of the Party Congress in the period of innovation and integration, Publishing House National Politics, Hanoi, 2008, 27.
2. Resolution No. 07-NQ/TW dated November 27, 2001 of the Politburo on international economic integration, website: [www.cpv.org](http://www.cpv.org), accessed, 2012.
3. Dang Dinh Quy. Further discussion on the concept of International integration of Vietnam in the new period, Communist Magazine, 2012.
4. Hai An. Viewpoints and policies of the Party on international economic integration through Congresses, Electronic information portal of the Ministry of Finance, 2016.
5. Department of International Finance and Integration Policy. Results achieved after 30 years of innovation in international economic integration, Electronic information portal of the Ministry of Finance, 2017.
6. Electronic information page of the Central Theoretical Council. Vietnam's international economic integration in the years of innovation, 2019.