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**CONTENTS**

*Page*

Prospects of South Korea's Nuclear Policy

*Nguyen Hong Quan 2*

Factors Affecting Vietnam – Japan Relations since the Cold War

*Hoang Van Hien, Tran Thi Hoi, Nguyen Van Tuan 12*

Japan's Multilateral Defense and Security Cooperation in Southeast Asia from the Beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century to the Present and Policy Implications for Vietnam

*Bui Thi Thao , Le Thi Qui Duc 29*

Contribution of Prime Minister Abe Shinzo for National Security and Defense Cooperation between Vietnam and Japan (2012-2020)

*Nguyen Van Sang , Duong Bui Vinh 41*

Japan Adjusts its Strategy towards Asia - Pacific and Its Impacts on Japan - Vietnam Political Relations

*Nguyen Tuan Binh, Tran Thi Hai Le, Le Thi Hoai Thanh 52*

Japan's Presence in the East Sea - Causes and Practice of Deployment

*Pham Thi Yen 61*

A Policy-Making Process to Promote the Growth of Taiwan's Small and Medium Enterprises

*Nguyen Duc Chien, Ngo Van Vu,  
Nguyen Thi Ngan, Le Quy Duong 71*

# Factors Affecting Vietnam – Japan Relations since the Cold War

Hoang Van Hien<sup>1</sup>, Tran Thi Hoi<sup>2</sup>, Nguyen Van Tuan<sup>3</sup>

**Abstract:** The cooperative relationship between Vietnam and Japan, which has been interrupted for a period of time since the Cold War, has developed strongly for many reasons, has developed strongly from a normal partner to a "Trusted, Long-term Stable Partner" (April 2002), to a "Strategic Partnership" (April 2009), especially to an "Extensive Strategic Partnership" (March 2014) up to now and presented in many fields. The development of this relationship has been influenced by important external factors as well as internal determinants that need to be thoroughly analyzed and interpreted.

**Keywords:** Affecting factors, cooperative relations, Japan, Vietnam

Ten years ago (2013), when being interviewed by the Vietnamese press, Japanese Ambassador to Vietnam Tanizaki Yasuaki affirmed that: "Vietnam - Japan relations have developed well in recent times and it is very natural and inevitable for the two countries to upgrade their relationship to become a strategic partnership"<sup>4</sup>. Ten years have passed, the advancement of Vietnam - Japan relations has further reinforced this statement of the Ambassador. Analyzing and explaining the factors affecting the relationship between the two countries post the Cold War (from 1991 to present) is thought to contribute to the process of extensive

research on the relationship between these two political subjects.

## 1. Context of the world and the Asia-Pacific region

### 1.1. World context

After the Cold War, many new factors appeared in the world, greatly affecting Vietnam and Japan as well as Vietnam - Japan relations.

Firstly, with the ending of the Cold War and the ending of the Yalta bipolar world order (1989-1991), the gradual determination of the positions of great powers with new foreign strategies along with the impact of other factors, a new world order is gradually forming in the direction of multipolarity, multi-center and that is increasingly taking shape more clearly. The economic factor becomes the decisive factor in the nation's overall strength and the main driving force in the trend of regionalization and globalization. In that new world order, "countries are and will be moving from confrontation to dialogue, detente, normalization, diversification and multilateralization of

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<sup>4</sup> Cited from: Nguyen Van Lich (2013), "40 years of Vietnam - Japan relations at the height of strategic partnership", Proceedings of the Scientific Conference "40 years of Vietnam - Japan relations: Achievements and Prospects", University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnam National University, Ho Chi Minh City, p. 5.

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