



OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES IN PROMOTING THE ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL INTEGRATION FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN VIETNAM

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Abstract:

International integration is an objective trend, strongly attracting the participation of all countries and regions in the world. International integration is strongly affecting all nations, all aspects of socio-economic life. For Vietnam, international integration has brought opportunities and good chances, while it also posed real challenges and risks in promoting the role of the state in the socio-economic development. Therefore, the urgent issue at the present is to identify fully, deeply and to figure out reasonable strategies, to take advantage of opportunities, to overcome risks in order to promote the role of international integration for socio-economic development in Vietnam with important theoretical and practical meanings.

Keywords: challenges, international integration, opportunities, Vietnam

1. Introduction

Today, for countries, it is necessary to combine domestic internal force and international strength, domestic economic development with promoting international economic integration for a sustainable development. For Vietnam, in the recent years, promoting the international integration has made many important achievements in the fields of economy, politics, culture - social, the constantly improving of people's material and spiritual life, the position and power of Vietnam in the international arena; however, there are still limitations and challenges coming along. Therefore, the problem in the current context is that Vietnam to comprehensively identify in the better orientation of effectiveness and efficiency, in order to seize opportunities, overcome challenges, making the process of international integration contribute practically and effectively, becoming

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an effective means for sustainable national development and protection of sovereignty and national security.

The essay focuses on analyzing opportunities and challenges in promoting the role of international integration in the process of socio-economic development, from that, proposes major solutions to promote the role of international integration in the process of socio-economic development in Vietnam now.

2. Opportunities in promoting the role of international integration for socio-economic development in Vietnam

Firstly, in recent years, humanity has been witnessing complicated and potential uncertainties. Tensions, religious, ethnic, separatist conflicts, local wars, territorial disputes, political riots, interference, subversion and terrorism will still be fierce; non-traditional security threats, high-tech crimes in the fields of finance - monetary, electronics - telecommunications, biology, environment... tend to increase with the complexity. However, the political multi-polar world situation has become more and more obvious, international relations have appeared new points such as: besides big countries playing the leading role, small countries have increasingly risen to assert their positions; along with the political and military factors, economic factors became evident and more important with every passing day; the gathering of political forces is intertwined, lax, even temporary on the basis of interests, in which countries attract, manipulate, while restraining each other. Moreover, the world is facing global issues, such as poverty, social inequality, resource depletion, environmental pollution, terrorism, etc. that require countries to solve it together for the survival of mankind. Therefore, in the relations between nations, although there remain many contradictions, the outstanding feature will be a diverse world, the trend of democratization in international relations will continue to develop. Peace, cooperation and development still represent the common trend of mankind today. In this situation, the 12th Party Congress continued to affirm the motto: "*Ensuring nations' and people's interests, on the basis of the basic principles of international law, equality and mutual benefit; multilateralization and diversification in foreign relations; proactive and active international integration; being a friend, a reliable partner and responsible member of the international community*" (Vietnamese Communist Party, 2016, p.153). It is also having a great orientation to promote the role of international integration, in order to take advantage of favorable conditions for us to seize opportunities and overcome all difficulties and challenges.

Secondly, the development of science and technology became a "*direct production force*", especially the appearance of the industrial revolution 4.0 which has been changing both in scale and method of human development in the process of international integration. The Industrial Revolution 4.0 is a fusion of technologies that helps blurring the boundaries between physical, digital and biological fields with a focus on the development of artificial intelligence, robots, internet of things, cloud computing, materials science, biology, wireless mobile technology, nanotechnology, automation, 3-

dimensional printing technology, carrier science extensive interdisciplinary ... with the foundation of the breakthrough of digital technology, meeting the demands of the knowledge society, the knowledge economy is creating a strong, increasing impact on all aspects of social life, leading to the changing the mode of socio-economic management.

Vietnam is a country in the process of industrialization, so the strong industrial revolution 4.0 will open up many opportunities for acquiring and applying advanced technological achievements of mankind. The first is information technology, digital technology, control technology and automation to improve productivity and efficiency in all stages of production and management, thereby creating new products and services with high added value, promoting the creation and development of the industry in the long term; reducing transportation and communication costs, making a more efficient supply chains, reducing trade costs, all of which would expand markets and spur economic growth; At the same time, it is also a great opportunity for industrial production with high level of science and technology. For consumers, the industrial revolution 4.0 offers a great number of benefits by having access to more quality new products and services at lower costs, as well as consumer transparency, *“Contributing to increasing the personal life performance of consumers at almost zero cost”* (Klaus Schwab, 2018, p.29). This is clearly the advantage of latecomers.

In addition, international integration also makes the world market today larger in size, perfecting the operation mechanism. Vietnam has conditions to learn, acquire, exchange, improve the level, management experience, capital source of the world, especially the knowledge to develop a digital economy and participate in the global products supply chain. Through this situation, we have the opportunity to expand production, create jobs, stabilize and improve people's lives, participate in international cooperation and labor division processes. Therefore, Vietnam is required to continue to take initiative international integration, and at the same time strengthen the state management of international economic integration in the direction of effectiveness and efficiency, for international integration serve significantly effective in the process of national development and protection of sovereignty, national security.

Thirdly, for near 35 years of renovation, with guidelines and policies consistent with objective laws, the process of international integration of Vietnam has achieved a lot of practical achievements, step by step carry off difficulties, challenges, creating position and force, synergy, a solid premise for development in the future. From 1986 to 2017, Vietnam's economy achieved an average GDP growth of 6.6% and reached 7.08% in 2018. In particular, the highest growth period was from 1992 - 1997 with the GDP growth rate of 8.1- 9.5%. Comparing to other countries with the fastest growth rate in the world recently, the average GDP growth of Vietnam is only behind China (9.4%), above from South Korea and Malaysia (5.9%), Thailand (5.2%), USA (2.6%), Japan (1.7%) and Germany (1.8%) (Lan Anh 2018). Vietnam's economic scale has increased from only 6.4 billion USD, ranked 90th in the world (in 1990) to 171.2 billion USD, ranked 57th in the world (2013). Vietnam, from one of the poorest countries in the world, became a low-middle-income country in 2008 with an average income of US \$ 1,154. In 2018, the

economy size reached 240.5 billion USD, 34 times higher than the number in 1986, making Vietnam ranked in the top 50 of countries with the strongest economies in the world. The average income in USD according to exchange rate in 1988 in Vietnam was only USD 86 - the lowest in the world, but by 2018 it reached USD 2,590 (General Statistics Office 2019, p.18), which is 30.1 times higher than it was in 1988.

Up to now, Vietnam has established strategic partners with 16 countries, comprehensive partners with 14 countries and special strategic relations with Laos and Cambodia. The strategic partners, comprehensive partners continue to be promoted to develop and promote the positive sides. Vietnam has stepped up and deepened its relations with partners, especially strategic partners for national development and security. Concretizing and putting the established framework in depth are also enhanced, creating a mix of links between Vietnam's interests and other countries. Among 39 strategic partner countries, comprehensive partners, there are 8/10 main export markets of Vietnam, accounting for 60.7% of total export value; 9/10 main import markets, accounting for 74.7% of total import value; 76.7% of total visitors and 74% of total FDI into Vietnam (Doan Tran, 2019). Promoting international integration in all aspects, shifting from "attending" to proactive "participation", actively contributing, building and shaping regional and global institutions to facilitate the international integration process, positively contributing to economic development. In particular, Vietnam has participated in building a strong ASEAN Community with solidarity, cooperation and resilience. In particular, Viet Nam has well assumed a state role in organizing International conferences, in which Vietnam successfully hosted the APEC Year of Vietnam 2017, successfully took advantage of the position of host country, affirming Vietnam's role and ability in dealing with international and regional issues; WEF ASEAN 2018 in Vietnam is considered the most successful conference in the 27-year history of the World Economic Forum; The Second US-Korea Summit (February 2019) ... is a testament to the way that Vietnam is a friend, a reliable partner of the international community, empowering the nation and demonstrating Vietnam's proactive and positive of Vietnam.

Fourthly, international integration also creates opportunities for Vietnam to acquire the elite values of humanity and promote the traditional values of the nation in building the socialist. Traditional values have a very important role to play in building and developing Vietnam's human personality in the context of international integration today in many ways, as "filters" and "antibodies" against human negative impacts of market economy; contribute to building a new personality, associating ideals, ambitions and dreams with the actions of people today, especially the young generation. The new context is creating opportunities for Vietnam to promote traditional values, selectively acquiring the elite values of humanity in building new people for the cause of innovation and development. Therefore, our Party and State pay special attention to people, regard people as the center, goals and motivations of the development and career orientation of building the socialist people of Vietnam associated with building a harmonious development character, inheriting tradition and modernity, both "communist accomplished" and "specialized".

3. Challenges in promoting the role of international integration for socio-economic development in Vietnam

Firstly, the effects of the global economic and financial crisis. The severe and prolonged world economic crisis has caused serious consequences for all countries, including Vietnam. At present, the influence level has significantly decreased but the situation is still quite complicated; Moreover, protectionism tends to increase in many forms. Developed countries, on the one hand, want to speed up the liberalization process to have opportunities to penetrate, dominate ..., on the other hand, they are ready to set up barriers to protect their goods. Competition in economics, trade, competition for resources, energy, markets, technology, capital, high quality human resources, regional integration process takes place strongly and complicatedly... making the struggle between developed and developing countries continue to be fierce which directly affects our country.

It is shown by the reality that, due to its deep integration into the world economy, Vietnam's economy cannot stand outside the general trend of the times. This is evident in the fact that Vietnam's economy has shown signs of recovery but still remains many potential risks. Even our economic growth and macroeconomic stability have made significant progress, the risks are still huge. Vietnam's public debt is a concern at the moment, while the business efficiency of many areas, especially the state-owned enterprises is still low, the banking sector needs to be restructured, ... Along with that, global issues, such as financial security, energy security, food security, climate change, rising sea levels, natural disasters, epidemics ... will continue to evolve complicatedly making the difficulties and challenges in international integration become worse.

Secondly, the impact from the negative side of the industrial revolution 4.0 is one of the major challenges with in promoting the role of international integration in the process of socio-economic development in Vietnam. That the economic development model in our country is mainly based on resource exploitation, cheap labor, backward qualifications of workers increases the impact of the industrial revolution 4.0 with the development of artificial intelligence, automation increased labor replacing simple human labor, making skills and qualities of traditional workers that once occupied an irreplaceable role, are now gradually replaced by robots. As a result, there will be a labor force losing their jobs due to not promptly changing with new job requirements, entailing social, political and national security challenges. Moreover, during the Industrial Revolution 4.0, with individuals having ideas related to technology and innovation, many dollar billionaires have appeared at a very young age, causing the consequence that the inequality income will likely continue to rise as a result of previous revolutions brought when *“half of the world’s total wealth belongs to 1% of the richest people, while half of the world’s population occupies less than 1% of global wealth”* (Klaus Schwab, 2018, p.158-159). This is one of the main causes leading to the increase in inequality, widening the income and assets gap between the unskilled labor or the skills that are easily replaced

by robots, and on the other side are those with ideas or skills that complement the automation and digitization process that is happening at a fast pace.

Along with the rapid development of the Industrial Revolution 4.0, increasingly diversified, sophisticated and clever criminal tactics will penetrate the people's lives to cheat in any form - tricks on all aspects. Currently, Vietnam has become one of the countries with the highest internet development and development speed in the world with about 49.7 million internet users (accounting for 52.1% of the population); ranked 17th in the world for internet users; ranked 1st in Southeast Asia in the number of national domains. Therefore, if confidentiality of personal information, defense and security agencies, databases on finance, banking, transportation, energy, communication ... is stolen, the damage will be hard to estimate without preparation from now on.

In addition, the Government of Vietnam is also facing pressure to change its current approach to policy making and implementation, in which the most importance is to enhancing the role of the people in this process. This will make more sense as Vietnam is entering a very important new stage of development that requires strong innovation in thinking and high determination of the Government to industrialize and modernize.

The above challenges have been instructed by the Directive on strengthening access to the Fourth Industrial Revolution, stating: *"Technology lagging, declining production and business; a surplus of skilled and low-skilled labor disrupt the traditional labor market, affecting the country's socio-economic situation; insecurity, information security, copyright infringement, shortage of highly qualified human resources. On the other hand, there is a possibility of a wave of outdated technology from developed countries to developing and underdeveloped countries"* (Klaus Schwab, 2018, p.120).

Thirdly, the issue of protecting national sovereignty, in the process of international integration, hostile forces took advantage of gaps in the implementation of Vietnam's open and integration policy to implement the strategy of "peaceful evolution" to fight against our country with new, drastic and sophisticated expressions than before. Their sabotages are in all fields of economy, politics, ideology, culture, foreign affairs, security and defense... They constantly encourage and support reactionary opponents, political opportunities at home and abroad to openly oppose the Party's and the State's renovation paths, against the cause of national construction and defense of our people; urgently propagating and distorting the Party's lines and policies, the State's laws as well as the country's achievements in the renovation process; inciting separatist thought; causing doubts, internal divisions, reducing people's confidence in the Party, the State and the socialist regime; inciting, gathering forces, seeking to set up opposition political organizations to change the political regime in Vietnam. This is a risk that cannot be underestimated, in fact, it requires the Vietnamese State to take appropriate measures, methods, countermeasures and measures to avoid falling into a passive and unexpected situation.

Fourthly, international integration also poses challenges with preserving and promoting the values of Vietnamese national traditions. International integration now has new developments, along with the development of science and technology which has

promoted the process of forming an information society. At the same time, it also threatens the preservation and promotion the traditional values of the people of Vietnam. A few large countries are taking advantage of the international integration process to find ways to spread their cultural values, languages, customs, and lifestyles around the world, with the support of tools, multi-platform media, implementing its "cultural hegemony" ploy, leading to the fading the values of national traditions. The anti-value, anti-culture, toxic ideas can easily penetrate, distort the traditional cultural and ethical values. This is an existing and increasing risk for Vietnam as well as localities throughout the country, especially its negative impacts on the young people such as deviant moral standards, hybrid, pragmatic, personal, self-centered, fond of foreign things, separating from the traditional national values in the spiritual life of a part of the youth today. It is a huge challenge for the Vietnamese government to preserve and promote traditional values in developing countries.

4. Some key solutions to promote the role of international integration for socio-economic development in Vietnam now

Firstly, improving the forecasting capacity of the Vietnamese State. In today's context of international integration, both economic and political major changes in the world have had great impacts on countries and regions, so it is necessary to promote research activities, timely accurate analysis, prediction, opportunities and challenges as well as developments of impact factors which will be the basis for the State to adjust and supplement necessary contents to successfully implement the independence and autonomy of the Party, constantly improving the position and strength of the national, bringing the country to develop rapidly and sustainably in the coming time. In order to make this happens, the State needs to improve the quality of forecasting officials by promoting specialization training; simultaneously creating the most favorable conditions for agencies and units performing the forecasting work to have opportunity to exchange and learn experiences from advanced countries, in order to raise the level of analysis and information processing of forecasting officials. It is also a place for promoting cooperation activities with other countries to have a more diverse view of the regional economic, political, social situation and the world.

Secondly, promoting the propagandas on international integration. After all, that the guidelines, policies and resolutions are effective or not depends on the masses of the people, so it is necessary to promote the dissemination and extensive propaganda to the people in all regions of the country, with content that should clarify the advantages, difficulties, opportunities and challenges, about international law, protection of independence, sovereignty and important matters related to the integration issues of Vietnam. It is a need to be aware of the audience, regions, times to select the content, use appropriate propaganda methods. When people's perceptions are rightly, they will become a guideline for their practical activities, a great driving force forming the strength to promote socio-economic development.

Third, continue to give priority to improving the quality of human resources. Focus on building capacity of technical personnel, technology administrators and managers, and business administrators. Implement policies to encourage highly qualified labor in research institutes and universities to transfer to business sector; and enhance the quality of higher education, and vocational training, and ensuring the supply of high-quality labor force to businesses.

Fourth, renew the way of thinking and methods of State management based on high-tech technology to minimize administrative procedures for enterprises, and ensure transparency of activities of state agencies. Full investment must be made to resolutely implement the e-government scheme to reduce social costs, and facilitate citizens and businesses' activities.

Fifth, resolutely carry out administrative reform to make state management agencies clean with simple, accessible and transparent management procedures and enhance public employees' responsibilities and accountability. The reform is an important task of the Party. The Party should successfully lead the reform, and attract and turn out clean and capable public employees who can live up to assigned duties. Create mechanisms for people to strengthen monitoring Party members and public employees (setting up information channels to provide evidence of wrong doing of public employees, protecting effectively witnesses and enhancing public criticism particularly from the press and media).

With the political determination of the Party, the State and the entire people to continue to integrate the country wider and deeper and comprehensively in all fields of social life, in any conditions and cases, our State always promotes the role of social management organization through organizing a synchronized and stable legal system aiming at on the one hand, creating favorable conditions for the members of society with secure feeling and actively participating in all activities of social life; on the other hand, mastering and implementing the Party's point of view about firmly resolving to maintain independence together with the expansion of international cooperation, multilateralization and diversification of foreign relations, to take advantage of opportunities, to overcome risks in order to promote the role of international integration for socio-economic development in Vietnam.

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