

Diplomatic Relations Between Vietnam And The United States As Seen From Us's Covid-19 Vaccine Aid Policy To Vietnam

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Abstract

Vietnam and the United States are two countries with diplomatic relations many years ago. During the cold war, the Vietnam War (1961 - 1975) caused the relationship between Vietnam and the US to crack and the US had to withdraw from Vietnam in 1975. Since 1995, the two countries have resumed foreign relations and the United States has become an important country with Vietnam in economic development and has friendly diplomatic relations in all fields.

The covid 19 pandemic has caused many health and life losses around the world, and vaccines are seen as the key to solving the difficulties caused by the covid 19 pandemic. Vietnam has to go through a lot of difficulties in dealing with the pandemic because of the scarcity of covid 19 vaccine resources. In that context, the help of a covid 19 vaccine from the United States is very important and necessary. As of March 2022, the United States is the largest vaccine donor to Vietnam. This affirms that the diplomatic relations between the two countries are in the best period, especially during the period when President Joe Biden focused on Southeast Asia, including Vietnam.

Keywords: Vietnam, The United States, diplomacy, COVID-19 vaccine, Asia

1. Overview of diplomatic relations between Vietnam and the US

After the Vietnam War, the US and Vietnam restored diplomatic relations in 1995 and began to take diplomatic steps to serve the development strategy of both countries. The US has increased its economic support and aid to Vietnam. The impressive statistics increase year by year and the US has become a very important country in the economic development of Vietnam.

In an effort to build Vietnam's self-reliance, the United States works to spur further growth and trade competitiveness, combat pandemic threats, promote renewable energy, address war legacy issues, and conserve Vietnam's forests and biodiversity.

U.S. assistance in Vietnam focuses on consolidating gains to ensure sustainable economic development while promoting good governance and the rule of law. Assistance projects aim to deepen regulatory reforms, improve the capacity and independence of Vietnam's judicial and legislative bodies, and promote more effective public participation in the law and regulation-making processes. The United States also assists the Government of Vietnam to bring its laws and practices into compliance with international labor standards and effectively enforce labor laws and uphold workers' rights. U.S. assistance seeks to support Vietnam's response to climate change and other environmental challenges, including remediating Agent Orange/dioxin contamination, strengthening the country's health and education systems,

and assisting vulnerable populations. The United States and Vietnam successfully concluded the first phase of dioxin remediation at Danang International Airport in 2017, and in December 2019 commenced a 10-year remediation project at Bien Hoa Air Base as well as a \$65 million initiative to provide assistance to persons with disabilities in conflict-affected provinces.

Since entry into force of the U.S.-Vietnam bilateral trade agreement in 2001, trade between the two countries and U.S. investment in Vietnam have grown dramatically. The United States and Vietnam have concluded a trade and investment framework agreement; they also have signed textile, air transport, customs, and maritime agreements. U.S. exports to Vietnam include machinery, computers and electronics, yarn/fabric, agricultural products, and vehicles. U.S. imports from Vietnam include apparel, footwear, furniture and bedding, agricultural products, seafood, and electrical machinery. U.S.-Vietnam bilateral trade has grown from \$451 million in 1995 to over \$90 billion in 2020. U.S. goods exports to Vietnam were worth over \$10 billion in 2020, and U.S. goods imports in 2020 were worth \$79.6 billion. U.S. investment in Vietnam was \$2.6 billion in 2019 (U.S. Embassy and Consulate in Vietnam, 2021).

2. Situation of the Covid 19 Pandemic in Vietnam

In 2020, Vietnam was cited by global media as having one of the best-organized epidemic control programs in the world. This success has been attributed to several factors, including a well-developed public health system, a decisive central government, and a proactive containment strategy based on comprehensive testing, tracing, and quarantining.

From the end of April 2021, Vietnam experienced “a fast-spreading outbreak” of

more than 350,000 cases. Clusters have been found in industrial parks in Bac Giang province and then in at least ten major hospitals in the country. As the epidemic has spread to many provinces in Vietnam, many outbreaks are occurring in many localities at the same time, making it “nearly impossible” to trace and cut the chain of infection. According to WHO, to prepare for the worsening situation, the country has built more than 30 field hospitals with a scale of 1,500 ICU beds and 30,000 non-ICU beds. When total cases reached a few thousands per day, the Central government decided to lock down the entire Southern Region with 35 million people, along with the capital, Hanoi, to contain the spread. On 26 July 2021, for the first time in the country's disease prevention history, Ho Chi Minh City imposed a daily night curfew beginning at 6:00 PM. As a result, no one is permitted to leave the city, and only emergency services are permitted to operate. On 28 July, the National Assembly gave the central government in Hanoi mandate to implement emergency measures for curbing the pandemic locally. The government also mobilized 10,000 troops to the city to enforce the lockdown and deliver food supplies. One of the main reasons for this outbreak is a four-day holiday for Reunification Day and International Workers' Day, which saw many vacation destinations packed with travellers. In addition, gene sequencing results show that the SARS-CoV-2 Delta variant is the dominant variant in this wave, especially among cases in central and southern localities of Vietnam. On 29 August, Vietnamese Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh announced that Vietnam may face a protracted battle and cannot rely on indefinite closures and quarantines. He also acknowledged the possibility that Vietnam will have to live with the virus. This marks a major change in the country's approach to COVID-19.

Table 1: Reported Cases, Deaths and Recovereds in Vietnam and the world

(Newest updated to 12AM GMT+7 March 12 2022)

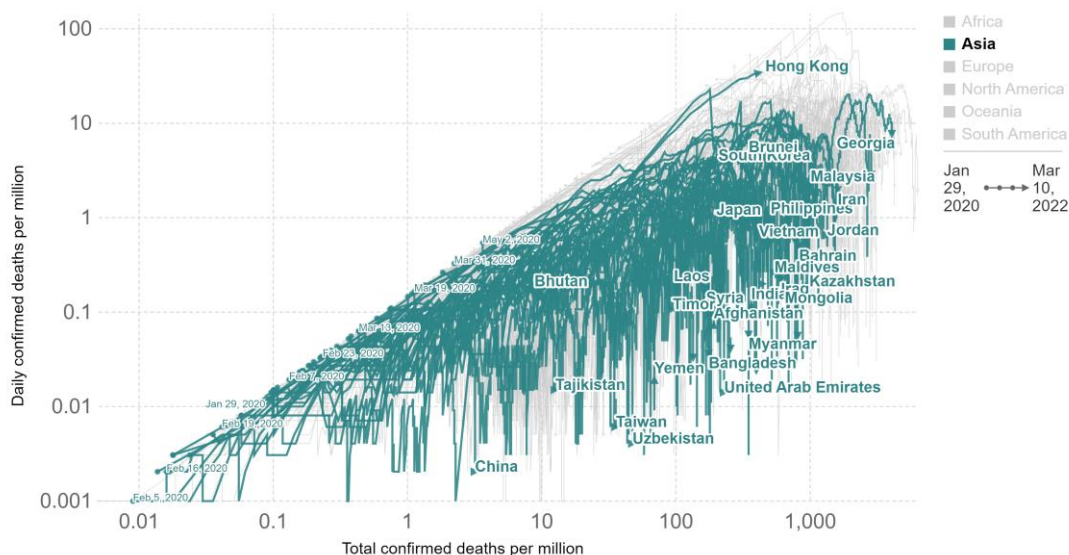
	Vietnam	World
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Cases	5.954.222	457.000.000
Deaths	41.290	6.040.000.

Source: Vietnam Ministry of Health

Daily vs. Total confirmed COVID-19 deaths per million

Shown is the 7-day rolling average of confirmed COVID-19 deaths per million people. Limited testing and challenges in the attribution of the cause of death means that the number of confirmed deaths may not be an accurate count of the true number of deaths from COVID-19.



Source: Johns Hopkins University CSSE COVID-19 Data – Last updated 11 March, 08:05 (London time)
OurWorldInData.org/coronavirus • CC BY

Figures 1: Daily total confirmed COVID-19 deaths per million people

Source: Johns Hopkins University CSSEcovid -19 Data

In response to the covid 19 pandemic, Vietnam has stepped up its covid 19 vaccination campaign¹. In an effort to find a supply of the covid 19 vaccine to fight the pandemic, Vietnam has activated a strategy of covid 19 vaccine diplomacy and achieved some desirable achievements.

On 16 June 2021, Vietnam also received 966,320 doses of AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine donated by Japan. On 25 June, it is announced that Japan will donate another 1 million doses of AstraZeneca vaccine to Vietnam. The first batch of this donation (400,000 doses) arrived at Tân Sơn Nhất International Airport on 2 July, while the second batch

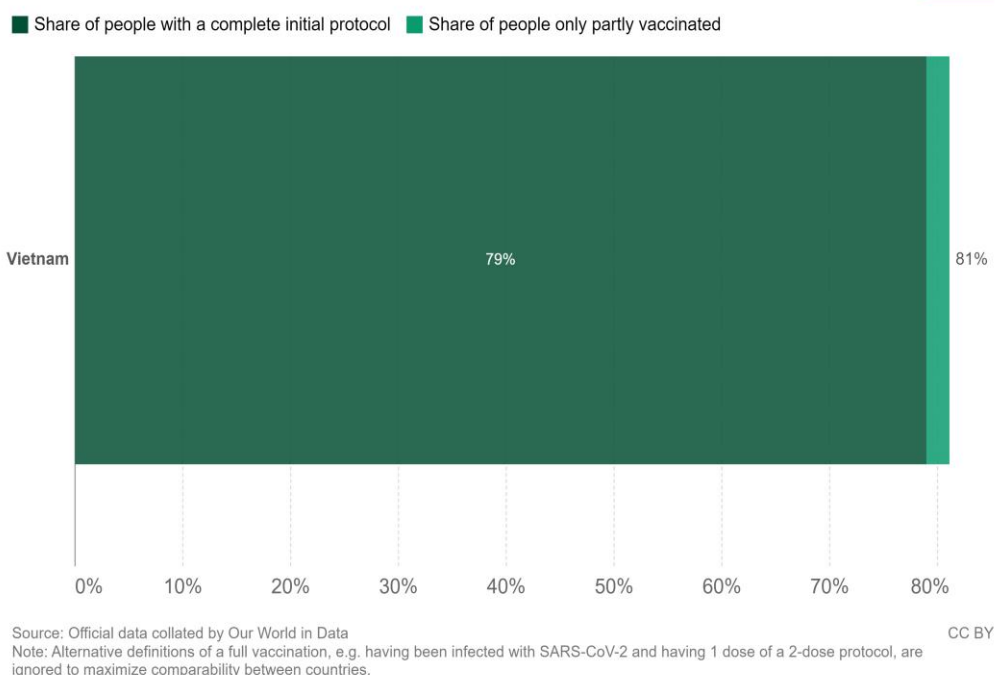
arrived on 9 July. On 16 July, Japan sent another 996,740 doses of AstraZeneca vaccine to Vietnam. On 3 August 2021, Vietnam received 415,000 doses of AstraZeneca vaccine donated by the UK Government. On late August, Vietnam also received 501,600 doses and 300,000 doses of AstraZeneca vaccine donated by Poland and Romania. On 26 August 2021, Vietnam received 404,000 doses of COVID-19 vaccine part of Australia's commitment to provide 1.5 million doses of AstraZeneca vaccine for Vietnam through UNICEF. In total, Vietnam has received 18.92782 million AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine doses.

On July 10, Vietnam received 2,000,040 doses of Moderna COVID-19 vaccine donated to the COVAX Facility by the United States Government.

On 7 July 2021, the first batch of Pfizer's vaccines, containing 97,110 doses, arrived at Nội Bài International Airport. It was later confirmed that Vietnam received 746,460 doses of Pfizer's vaccines that day. A day earlier, on 6 July, it is also confirmed that the United States would send Vietnam two million doses of Moderna COVID-19 vaccine via Covax mechanism. This batch of vaccines arrived in Vietnam on 10 July. Another batch containing 3,000,060 doses of Moderna vaccine donated to COVAX by

the US Government arrived in Hanoi on 24 and 25 July. On 11 August 2021 and 26 August 2021, Vietnam received 217,620 and 770,000 doses of Pfizer's vaccines purchased by the government. On 25–27 August 2021, Vietnam received 1,065,870 doses of Pfizer vaccine donated by the US government. Vietnam received 250,800 doses of AstraZeneca and Moderna COVID-19 vaccine donated by the Czech Republic on 30 August.

Share of people vaccinated against COVID-19, Mar 9, 2022



Figures 2: Share of people vaccinated against Covid-19, Mar 9, 2022

<https://github.com/owid/covid-19-data/tree/master/public/data/vaccinations>

Looking at the above statistics, it shows that vaccination against covid 19 in Vietnam is faster than many other countries in the world.

3. The US's COVID-19 vaccine aid policy for Vietnam

On August 3, the White House released a notice saying that so far, the US has donated and handed over 110 million doses of Covid-19 vaccine to more than 60 countries and territories around the world to

affirm its position “Global leader in support of Covid-19 vaccines”.

According to the United Nations, the number of covid 19 vaccines that the US gives is higher than all the vaccines aided by all other countries combined and shows the generosity of the US. Based on the list attached to the notice by the White House, Vietnam ranks 7th in the list of countries receiving the most vaccines from the US with 5 million doses, after Indonesia (8 million), the Philippines (over 6.2 million

doses).), Colombia (6 million), South Africa (more than 5.6 million), Pakistan (5.5 million doses), Bangladesh (5.5 million).

According to the White House, the US vaccine aid is part of President Joe Biden's strategy to stop the pandemic from spreading globally. Mr. Biden has pledged that the US will become “the army of vaccines for the world”.

The visit of US Vice President Kamala Harris to Vietnam from August 24-26 can be considered a new milestone in the Vietnam - US relations when in the last two consecutive terms, leaders at senior level. The highest ranking officers in the new US administration all visited Vietnam within the first year after taking office. Vice President Kamala Harris announced that the US will continue to support Vietnam with 1 million doses of Pfizer vaccine, bringing the total number of US vaccines for Vietnam to 6 million doses; said it will continue to support Vietnam to access vaccines faster, including vaccines for children. At the same time, support in medical equipment, improve medical capacity to cope with other epidemic risks in the long run.

Through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and other emergency resources, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and CDC provide an additional \$23 million in

technical assistance to Vietnam to respond to the pandemic. COVID-19 pandemic, bringing the total support since the beginning of the pandemic to nearly \$44 million. This support will promote equitable access and safe and effective delivery of a Covid-19 vaccine, strengthen Vietnam's health system to respond to Covid-19 and build capacity to detect, monitor Covid-19 and future disease threats. USAID also donated \$1 million to the Vietnam Red Cross to reduce the impact and prevent the spread of Covid-19 in vulnerable communities.

Vice President Kamala Harris and Vietnamese Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh attended the opening ceremony of the Southeast Asia Regional Office of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Hanoi. The U.S. CDC Office will promote global health security by maintaining a sustained presence in the region, enabling a rapid and effective response to health threats whenever they occur, and reinforces CDC's core mission of protecting the American people. Vietnam is very supportive and grateful to the United States for choosing Hanoi as the location for the Office, thereby demonstrating the good development as well as bright prospects of the diplomatic relations “Comprehensive Partnership United States-Vietnam” and affirmed that Vietnam will create favorable conditions for the Office to operate effectively.



Pic.1: President of Vietnam Mr. Nguyen Xuan Phuc and Vice President of the United States Kamala Harris.

Source: Reuters

Table 3: The amount of vaccines aided for Vietnam

(covid 19 vaccines received compared to commitments)

(Newest updated to March 1 2022)

Countrys & Organization	The amount of vaccines aid for Vietnam
USA	21.000.000
Germany	10.000.000
Japan	6.500.000
COVAX	6.270.000
Australia	2.600.000
Italia	2.000.000
United Kingdom	415.000
China	500.000
Poland	501.600
Romania	300.000
Russia	100.000
Total	49.685.501,6

Source: Vietnam Ministry of Health

Looking at the above statistics, it shows that the United States is the country with the most support for the covid 19 vaccine for Vietnam in dealing with the covid 19 pandemic. The US covid 19 vaccine aid for Vietnam has been helped Vietnam a lot in responding to the pandemic and this action of the United States has given great affection of the Vietnamese government and people to the United States.

4. The causes of the support of the covid 19 vaccine that the US has for Vietnam and the prospects of diplomatic relations between Vietnam and the US

4.1. The competition between China and the US in "Vaccine diplomacy"

According Hotez (2014) Vaccine diplomacy refers to almost any aspect of global health diplomacy that relies on the use or delivery of vaccines and encompasses the important work of the GAVI Alliance, as well as elements of the WHO, the Gates Foundation, and other important international organizations. Central to vaccine diplomacy is its potential as a humanitarian intervention and its

proven role in mediating cessation of hostilities and even cease-fires during vaccination campaigns. Among the initiatives relevant to vaccine diplomacy in the 21st century are international efforts to ensure universal or equitable access for low- and middle-income countries to urgently needed vaccines for diseases of pandemic potential (Hotez, 2014) .

Over a long period of time, vaccines and vaccine diplomacy have been increasingly developed, which is associated with the progress and development of medicine, and also contains political elements. The modern era of American vaccine diplomacy followed on the heels of the Marshall Plan when US technical and scientific resources were first engaged in foreign policy. In the 1950s, when polio epidemics occurred every summer in North America, Europe and the USSR, Albert Sabin began to work closely with Soviet virologists in order to develop, test and license the live polio vaccine. It is not widely known that the attenuated polio strains developed in Sabin's laboratory at the University of Cincinnati were transformed into a clinically useful oral vaccine with the help of Soviet virologists.

Presumably it was the terror that polio inflicted into parents on both sides of the Atlantic that prompted both the Americans and Soviets to set aside their ideological differences in 1956 (Benison, 1982). At the height of the Cold War, leading Soviet virologists travelled to Cincinnati where they obtained a commitment from Dr Sabin to provide them with his vaccine strains. In a landmark reciprocal visit a few months later, Sabin received permission to visit the laboratories of Soviet scientists. Both exchanges proceeded with the tacit approval of a stridently anti-communist Republican Eisenhower administration. What followed was a remarkable example of Cold War diplomacy, in which Soviet children were among the first to receive test doses of the oral polio vaccine. By 1960, millions of Soviet children were vaccinated. Only after its safety had been established in the USSR and validated by Dorothy Horstmann from Yale, was the Sabin vaccine approved and licensed in the USA. Similar co-operation channelled through the WHO led to the introduction of essential smallpox freeze-drying technology (Hotez, 2001).

During the covid 19 pandemic, countries such as the US, China, Russia, and Japan have used vaccine diplomacy as a tool to increase political and economic influence. It is like a series of "soft power" in the pandemic and post-pandemic era. According to Nicholas (2020), As the Biden transition team plots out how best to rebuild the alliances and international cooperation mechanisms that were so badly eroded during the Trump presidency, one early proposal floated by some of Biden's key advisors seems likely to rise to the fore, and could even serve as the centerpiece of a new "Biden Doctrine" in the first 100 days. According to Jake Sullivan, a top Obama era official routinely mentioned as a possible National Security Advisor, Biden should, "put values and democracy back at the center of US foreign policy... Rally[ing] like-minded free democratic nations in common purpose to both push back against authoritarian competitors and also construct and build the kind of long-

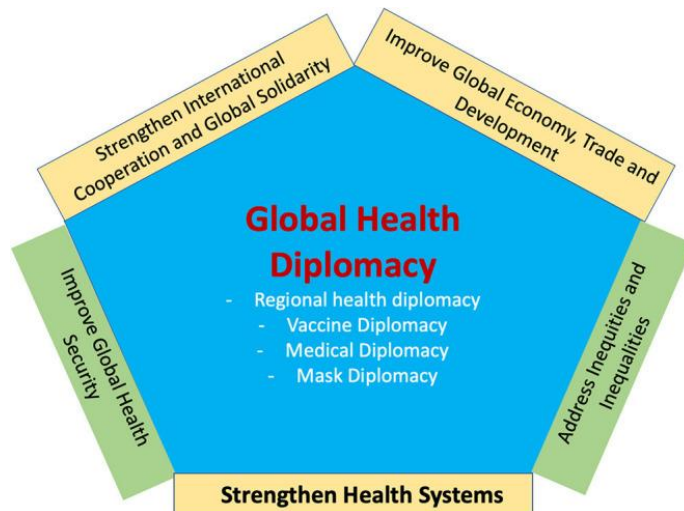
term durable solutions for the challenges that afflict us all." Concretely, this may manifest itself in a US-convened global "summit of democracies" possibly based on the D-10 model, the world's 10 largest democracies, a concept the Atlantic Council has advanced through the work of its Scowcroft Center.

For China, because it was an early producer of the covid 19 vaccine and quickly controlled the pandemic, it quickly implemented vaccine diplomacy as an effective tool of influence. According to Seow Ting Lee (2021) Despite international efforts to address vaccine access, most notably through the creation of COVAX, low- and middle-income countries have struggled to procure vaccines for their populations. The UN, describing the vaccine inequity as a "catastrophic moral failure," found that residents in 10 countries have received 80% of the world's COVID-19 vaccine, as of February 2021—prompting it to launch a new global campaign, Only Together, to advance fair and equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines worldwide (UN launches Only Together 2021). Leveraging on the vaccine inequity, China has targeted the low- and middle-income countries largely left behind as rich nations scooped up most of the pricey vaccines produced by Pfizer and Moderna, and capitalized on slower-than-hoped-for deliveries by U.S. and European vaccine makers (Seow Ting Lee, 2021)

Although India was severely impacted by the covid 19 pandemic, it quickly entered into vaccine production and aid abroad with the desire not to be left behind in the race to aid in the covid 19 vaccine. Being a leader in vaccine manufacturing, India's ability to offer complimentary COVID-19 vaccines to low-income countries, especially the immediate neighbors, will not only help strengthen its ties with partner countries but also achieve equitable access to vaccines. Furthermore, India's move to provide vaccine assistance to low- and middle-income countries will boost the efforts in achieving global vaccination coverage. India's ability to develop and manufacture cost-effective

COVID-19 vaccines on a large scale will help to meet the global vaccine

requirements without causing an additional economic burden (Taghizade et al, 2021).



Pic.2: Global health diplomacy and the five key areas of impact

Source: Varshney, S. K., & Prasanna, N. K. (2021). Vaccine diplomacy: Exploring the benefits of international collaboration. *Current Trends in Biotechnology and Pharmacy*, 15(1), 110-114.

Thus, it can be seen that, in addition to the humanitarian reasons, there is competition between powerful countries such as the US, China and India, through vaccine diplomacy through vaccine diplomacy... Bollyky, T. J., Murray, C. J., & Reiner (2021) said that Renewed state-to-state systemic competition between the two largest economies today will have an important effect on the overall ability of the world to combat COVID-19, as well as recover economically from the detrimental economic effects of lockdowns, which will in turn impact countries' future ability to manage a major health crises (Bollyky et al, 2021).

World bank (2021) warns that In the first two months of 2021, the production of COVID-19 vaccines has suffered

setbacks delaying the implementation of national inoculation strategies. These delays have revealed the concentration of vaccine manufacture in a small club of producer nations, which in turn has implications for the degree to which cross-border value chains can deter more aggressive forms of Vaccine Nationalism, such as export curbs. During 2017–19, vaccine producing nations sourced 88 percent of their key vaccine ingredients from other vaccine producing trading partners. Combined with the growing number of mutations of COVID-19 and the realization that this coronavirus is likely to become a permanent endemic global health threat, this finding calls for a rethink of the policy calculus towards ramping up the production and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines, its ingredients, and the various items needed to deliver them. The more approved vaccines that are safely produced, the smaller will be the temptation to succumb to zero-sum Vaccine Nationalism (Simon J et al, 2021).

Vietnam is a country in the Asia-Pacific region, bordering China and having traditional diplomatic relations with this country. Besides, at present, Vietnam has friendly diplomatic relations and cooperation in many fields with the US. Therefore, during the covid 19 pandemic, Vietnam implementing a vaccine diplomacy strategy should pay attention to its relationship with both these countries.

China: In the context of Southeast Asian countries struggling to order vaccines from scarce supplies in the world, the covid 19 vaccine that China soon sponsored and provided to Southeast Asian countries has enhanced the position of China. China, it reinforces the image of a responsible "neighborhood". Sinovac's first batch of 200,000 doses of covid 19 vaccine has arrived in Bangkok, the vaccination campaign in Thailand will kick off this week. Similarly, the Philippines is also ready to deploy vaccination when a shipment of 600,000 vaccines is also from Sinovac. If all goes well, Thailand and the Philippines, along with Indonesia, Laos and Cambodia, will become 5 out of 10 ASEAN countries that launch a large-scale vaccination campaign, all of which use vaccines manufactured by China. . Previously, in January, Indonesia launched Sinovac's vaccination campaign, while Laos and Cambodia also deployed vaccination using Sinopharm's vaccine on January 27, 2021 and October 10, respectively. February 2021. Brunei also received a vaccine aid batch from Sinopharm in February 2021. China's covid 19 vaccine has somewhat worked in some countries, but with the pandemic spreading strongly in countries using the sinovac vaccine and the pandemic also returning in China, the Questions about the quality of the Chinese-made covid 19 vaccine are raised more than ever.

In addition, there is concern that Beijing could use vaccine supply as leverage to achieve geopolitical goals in the region, or cut off supplies if disagreements arise. China also used the vaccine to ask the Brazilian and Dominican governments to withdraw their decision to exclude Huawei

from their 5G network development plans. In Honduras, in order to have a vaccine against Covid-19, President Juan Orlando Hernandez had to commit to opening a commercial office in China.

US: From the end of 2020 to the beginning of this year, when the US and Europe were focusing on dealing with the crisis of the pandemic, China took advantage of the opportunity to deploy "vaccine diplomacy", China provided more than 300 million domestically produced dose for over 80 countries. However, the situation changed when the US basically controlled the epidemic situation in the country. President Biden declared to the world "America is back" and ready to play the role of a responsible power. The core and cross-cutting foreign policy goal of the administration of President J. Biden over the next four years is to gradually re-establish America's global leadership position, and at the same time realize three strategic goals in the relationship with the US and China. China, it is to contain China militarily; maintain peace and stability in the South China Sea in accordance with international law and change China's perception of relations with the US (Thuy, 2021).

On the eve of the G7 summit, President Biden announced the aid of 500 million doses of the US Pfizer vaccine to the poorest countries. He stressed that this donation does not come with any pressure to support or make concessions. This contrasts with China's use of a Covid-19 vaccine to promote its own political and economic interests. It is expected that the US vaccine donation will start from August. According to the plan, the US will donate a total of 200 million doses by the end of 2021 and continue to donate 300 million doses in the first half of next year. Previously, on May 17, 2021, President Biden announced that by the end of June 2021, he would donate about 80 million doses to countries, including 20 million doses produced by Pfizer, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson corporations and 60 million doses. million doses of AstraZeneca that the US has pledged to support

countries. Following the US pioneering step, G7 leaders pledged to expand production, sharing at least 1 billion doses of vaccine with the world through existing mechanisms and bilateral aid. This will be the largest relief operation of the G7 after World War II. It has opened up a new area of competition between the US and China.

Vietnam's vaccine diplomacy stands in the face of fierce competition from the US and China, but Vietnamese people have skepticism towards China's covid 19 vaccine, as evidenced by only 500,000 doses China's Covid-19 vaccine in Vietnam and this vaccine is only given to Chinese citizens in Vietnam and some people who do business at the Vietnam-China border. In July 2021, a company in Vietnam imported about 5 million doses of Sinopharm vaccine but not a single dose has been used yet due to the rejection reaction of the Vietnamese people. The US is the country that donates the most Covid-19 vaccine to Vietnam, which puts Vietnam in a diplomatic difficulty that is facing conflicts between the US and China. That requires Vietnam to have a smart diplomatic strategy to be able to ensure its interests when receiving COVID-19 vaccine aid.

4.2. US Foreign Policy under President Joe Biden towards Southeast Asia

Based on the first steps of the US government after the election, it can be seen that the administration of President J. Biden will pursue a number of diplomatic measures as follows:

Regarding bilateral cooperation: the administration of President J. Biden will continue to strengthen bilateral relations with countries in the Asia-Pacific region to promote the signing of FTAs with six countries, including: Japan, South Korea, Australia, Vietnam, New Zealand and Indonesia in the period of 2021 - 2022. At the same time, the administration of President J. Biden will also conduct bilateral diplomatic activities with allies and partners. cooperation on issues such as: trade wars, currency manipulation, and

negotiations to extend the new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) with Russia.

Regarding multilateral cooperation, despite the commitment to abandon a number of foreign-defense initiatives under the D. Trump administration, such as the prosperous economic network, the Indo-Pacific Treaty organization ..., but the administration of President J. Biden will still maintain initiatives such as the Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy (FOIP), the Asian High Quality Infrastructure Initiative. In addition, the US will also make efforts to negotiate to join other multilateral organizations such as the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership RCEP).

Thus, in the coming time, the administration of President J. Biden will still inherit some of the policies of the previous Trump administration, but will basically make adjustments to suit the conditions and circumstances of the country. America today when the US commits to "reconciliation" instead of "confrontation", "cooperation" instead of "antagonism" and "conflict". However, whether this new foreign policy can be implemented or not depends a lot on the economic potential, the role of the United States and the policy-making ability of the administration of President J. Biden.

With its geo-strategic location, Southeast Asia is in the midst of a spiral of strategic competition of major countries. In particular, the number one US adversary in the region, China, considers Southeast Asia a starting point to deploy the "Belt and Road Initiative" (BRI), in order to expand political influence, maintain the stabilize and affirm China's influence in the region.

The US "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy" (FOIP) is deployed to protect national interests, freedom and maritime security, maintain the balance of forces, promote diplomatic activities and socio-cultural exchanges in the region, and at the same time, challenge the strong rise

of China. This is a global strategy that determines the prospect of Washington's position and strength in the world order and in the Asian region in the present and in the future. In particular, the US takes Southeast Asia as the focal point connecting the two oceans.

Inheriting the vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific region under the Trump administration, President Biden's administration has taken steps to adjust and supplement its approach. in a more skillful and methodical way to achieve the collective goal and increase the collective strength in handling challenges.

For Southeast Asian countries, the Biden administration attaches great importance to the Strategic Partnership with ASEAN, supports the central role of ASEAN and ASEAN's View of the Indo-Pacific (AOIP), promotes promote the strengthening of US-ASEAN cooperation and cooperation between ASEAN member countries and the countries of the "Quad"² group to solve the challenges posed. The US will closely coordinate to contribute to maintaining peace, security and stability in the region, including maritime security and safety in the East Sea.

The United States continues to contribute to ASEAN's regional cooperation mechanisms such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM+) and the East Asia Summit (EAS). The US actively supports ASEAN's efforts to negotiate a Code of Conduct in the East Sea (COC) with China in accordance with international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

Over the years, the US-ASEAN has had many diverse cooperation activities in many fields such as science, health, education, and livelihoods. Existing cooperation programs and initiatives such as the ASEAN-US Trade and Investment Framework, the ASEAN-US Connectivity

Initiative, the ASEAN-US Smart Cities Partnership, the Southeast Young Leaders Initiative Asia (YEASLI) and cooperation programs on trade-investment, human resource development, renewable energy, maritime cooperation, disaster response, climate change, support ASEAN response to Covid- 19,... The US-ASEAN cooperation action plan for the period 2021-2025 has also been implemented.

Therefore, the support of covid 19 vaccines for Vietnam and some Southeast Asian countries such as Vietnam, the Philippines, and Thailand represents a vision in a policy towards Southeast Asia under US President Biden.

5. Conclusion

Vietnam is experiencing the outbreak of the covid 19 pandemic and the situation is very difficult right now. In that context, international support is very important, especially the source of the covid 19 vaccine. The covid 19 vaccine aid from the United States has made a very important contribution to the response to the covid-19 pandemic in Vietnam. The help from the US shows that the foreign policy under US President Joe Biden has had certain interests in Southeast Asia, considering it a very important area in expanding US influence in Asia. and worldwide. This is also an area where China is currently expanding its influence and now has huge covid 19 vaccine support for Indonesia, Cambodia and Malaysia. The US has given a huge aid to Vietnam, Thailand, and the Philippines to help fight the pandemic. It can be said that the competition "vaccine diplomacy" that the US and China are carrying out has helped Southeast Asian countries access vaccines to overcome the covid-19 pandemic, but it has also caused political effects. and diplomacy of countries in Southeast Asia, including Vietnam. Hopefully in the future, the conflict between China and the US will "cool down" and the two countries will join hands to fight the epidemic, only then will the Southeast Asian countries including

Vietnam is not subject to one of the largest geopolitical disputes in history.

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